As a child, Arthur was found wandering and near dead from hunger and exhaustion. He was taken to a Welsh knight’s castle and became squire to his ‘brother’ Sir Kay who disliked him and bullied him.

It was a time of great trouble in the land as lords and knights battled for power. One Christmas Day, they were called together for a tournament to decide who would be king.

Arthur and the other squires were kept busy by the knights they served. Just before his fight, Sir Kay sent Arthur back to his lodgings to collect the sword that Arthur had forgotten to bring. Arthur set off, but on the way through the Abbey gardens, he saw a sword sticking out of a stone. He pulled the sword from the stone, planning to put it back after the fight. Kay fought with the sword, and lost. Arthur explains what happened next.

Father had retrieved the sword and was turning it over in his hands.

“This sword, Kay,” he said, “this is the sword from the stone in the Abbey churchyard. I am sure of it.” There was a sudden hush and people began to gather around. Kay got to his feet. He glanced at me, a puzzled frown on him, and then his face lit with a sudden smile. “Of course it is, Father,” he said. “I thought I’d surprise you, that’s all. I couldn’t get a proper grip on it earlier. So I went back later on my own, and I tried again. It came out, just like that, with no trouble at all.”

Father was looking at him hard. “You took the sword from the stone?”

“And why not?” Kay was offended. “Why should it not be me? Am I not good enough?” All this time I said nothing. I couldn’t understand what all the bother was about, nor why it was that Kay was claiming that he had taken the sword from the stone. Why should he be confessing to such a thing, boasting about it even? Thieving was bad enough. But thieving from a churchyard! If Kay wanted to brag about it, let him. I’d keep quiet.

“There is only one way to settle this, Kay,” said Father. “We will go back to the Abbey churchyard, replace the sword in the stone and then see if you can draw it out again. Agreed?”

As we rode back across the bridge I felt Kay’s eyes always on me, and Father too kept twisting in his saddle to look back at me. Somehow he already knew Kay had been lying, that it was I who had pulled the sword from the stone. I looked down to avoid the accusation in his eyes. How could I explain that I had just borrowed it, that I was going to put it back? He wouldn’t believe me, and neither would anyone else.
Once in the churchyard again, we gathered round the stone in silence, our several steaming breaths misting the frosty air around us. Father took the sword and thrust it deep into the stone. A bird sang suddenly and shrill above my head. I looked up. It was my robin again, his red breast fluffed up against the cold.

“Well, Kay,” said Father, standing back. “Go on then. Pull it out.”

Kay stepped up. I could see he did not want to go through with it, but he had no choice. He grasped the hilt with both hands, took a deep breath, and pulled with all his might. The sword stayed firm in the stone. He heaved at it. Red in the face now, he shook it. He wrenched at it. It would not move.

“That’s enough, Kay,” said Father quietly. “You lied. You have always lied. You have shamed me yet again and this time in front of the world. Step down.” And he turned at once to me. “It is your turn, Arthur. Everyone else has already tried.”
1. **Find** and **copy** words which suggest that Kay had already tried to pull the sword from the stone.

2. “*Father was looking at him hard.*”
   In this sentence, tick **one** word that means the same as *hard*.
   - carefully
   - quickly
   - solidly
   - unkindly

3. When Father was talking to Kay, why did Arthur not speak up and say he had taken the sword? Tick the **best** reason.
   - He wanted a chance to fight with the sword himself.
   - He wanted Kay to get into trouble.
   - He wanted to see what would happen next.
   - He was ashamed that he had taken the sword.

4. When Arthur looked down to avoid the accusation in Father’s eyes, what did he think Father would accuse him of?

5. Why do you think Kay didn’t want to go through with the challenge of pulling the sword from the stone?

6. **Find** and **copy** words spoken by Father which tell you that he is disappointed in Kay’s behaviour.
Unit 4  Retelling events from a different character’s viewpoint

Unit overview

In this unit children will:
- read part of the story of King Arthur as retold by Michael Morpurgo
- differentiate key plot points from those which just add additional detail
- consider the impact of First person narrative
- identify how dialogue is used to progress the story
- identify cohesive devices
- plan and write a different version of the story from the perspective of a different first person narrator.

Stage 1: Responding to the text

Activities:
- Establish prior knowledge. Think, pair, share: Ask what children already know about the characters and events in the story of King Arthur, or the Sword in the Stone.
  - Clarify that:
    - the story is part of English and Welsh culture and was first told in the Middle Ages
    - there have been many different versions and retellings, including a Disney film
    - this version is written by Michael Morpurgo – do children know other stories by him? (E.g. War Horse; The Butterfly Lion)
    - as a boy, Arthur pulled the sword from the stone and that made him king
    - Arthur is famous for having a round table so that when his knights sat around it with him, no one was more important than anyone else.
- Write the words that were engraved on the stone: Whoever pulls this sword from the stone is the rightful High King of Britain.
  - Explain that in the Middle Ages, there was a clear hierarchy throughout society with the king as ruler and the knights as the next most important people. When a king died, if he didn’t have a son, the knights battled to decide who would be next king.
  - Each knight had a squire who was like his personal servant and helped him to get ready for his battles. Squires were in training to be knights themselves.
- Introduce the text as an extract from towards the beginning of a story called Arthur, High King of Britain.
  - Ensure the children understand some of the contextual vocabulary such as “tournament”, “Abbey” and (sword) “hilt”.
  - Before reading the story ensure the children understand the meaning of the more unusual words and phrases such as: “confessing” and “accusation”. Help the children remember the meanings of these words by putting them in contextualising sentences, e.g. The thief confessed to the police: he had committed the crime.
- Ask the children to read and talk about the text.
  - Read the introduction which summarises aspects of the story so far.
  - Is this version similar to others the children have read, heard or seen?
- Ask the children to answer the reading comprehension questions to ensure close reading of the text and good understanding.
- Together, share answers to the questions and discuss the strategies children used to answer them.
Stage 2: Analysing the text content

Activities:

- Ask children to read the text aloud to a response partner to revisit the text, develop fluency, ensure accurate pronunciation of all words and to practise reading with expression and a reasonable speaking pace.
- Ask the children to underline any new words/phrases. Take feedback and explain what these mean in context.

Discussing plot development

- Discuss the idea that some events in a story are more significant in the plot than others.
  - Think, pair, share: Ask children to identify two or three events in the introduction and the story that are not main plot points (e.g. squires kept busy; riding across the bridge; breath misting the frosty air; the robin singing, etc.).
  - Talk about why these are not main plot points and why the writer included these details (e.g. makes it seem more real, it makes it easier to relate to the characters; it’s easier to read a less densely written plot).
  - Think, pair, share: Identify main plot points.
    - Ask children to identify between three and five main plot points in the introduction and story. They should write each one on a sticky note (e.g. Arthur becoming a squire; tournament to decide who would be king; Arthur pulling the sword from the stone; Kay saying he had taken it from the stone; Father asking Arthur to pull the sword from the stone again.).
    - Let children place their sticky notes on a board. Group them to show how many of the children identified each plot point.
    - Pick out the five plot points identified by most children and confirm with the class that these are important points in the story.
    - Write them clearly and number them.

Discussing character

- Divide children into two groups and allocate a character to each group: Father or Sir Kay.
- In their character groups:
  - ask children to divide a large piece of paper into four columns and label them: ’Plot point’, ’Did’, ’Said’, ’Thought or felt’. Model finding examples for each column for one of the characters. Ask the children to refer to the story to find evidence of their ideas.
  - children should now consider each of the main plot points you identified earlier through the eyes, thoughts and feelings of their character, e.g.:
    - What might Kay feel having an ‘adopted’ brother who had to be his squire? What might he say, think and do when Arthur forgot his sword, or when Arthur produced a sword that wasn’t his sword?
    - What might Father think when he was asked to take this starved child into his home? Why might he have done it? What might he think of Sir Kay’s treatment of the boy? What might he think when he realised where the sword had come from? How might he feel when Sir Kay lied? Or when he had his suspicions about who had pulled the sword from the stone?
  - ask children to jot agreed notes and outcomes from their discussion on their large sheets of paper.
- Ask children to make groups of four – a minimum of one person from each character group in each smaller group.
  - In these groups ask children to:
    - take it in turns to share their character’s opinions, feelings, actions and speech at each of the plot points.

Resources needed:

- Shared copy of the text (PDF/IWB/visualiser)
  - Each pair needs:
    - sticky notes
  - Each group needs:
    - an enlarged copy of the text and coloured highlighters/pens/pencils
    - large paper
    - scissors
  - Each child needs:
    - their own copy of the text
    - highlighters/pens/pencils in four different colours (ideally, consistent colours for all children).
First person narrative

- Do children know what ‘first person’ means? (E.g. someone talking about themselves.) Which pronouns do they associate with first person? (E.g. I, me, mine, myself, we, us, ours, ourselves.)

- Can children tell you who the narrator is? (The boy, Arthur.)

- In groups, ask children to highlight on their enlarged text, and then cut up words that are the narrator Arthur’s thoughts, rather than descriptions of actions or reports on what other people say or do, e.g.:
  
  “All this time I said nothing. I couldn’t understand what all the bother was about, nor why it was that Kay was claiming that he had taken the sword from the stone. Why should he be confessing to such a thing, boasting about it even? Thieving was bad enough. But thieving from a churchyard! If Kay wanted to brag about it, let him. I’d keep quiet.”

  “Father too kept twisting in his saddle to look back at me. Somehow he already knew Kay had been lying, that it was I who had pulled the sword from the stone. I looked down to avoid the accusation in his eyes. How could I explain that I had just borrowed it, that I was going to put it back? He wouldn’t believe me, and neither would anyone else.”

  “I could see he did not want to go through with it, but he had no choice.”

- In their groups, ask children to discuss why the author might have chosen to write this story using first person narrative. How does it change what the reader knows? E.g.:
  
  we see everything through the eyes of one character
  
  we know what the narrator is thinking, saying and doing; we are not told what the other characters are thinking because the narrator doesn’t know

Take feedback from what the children thought.

- Explore the idea of bias. How would this extract have been different if Sir Kay had been the narrator? How would he have described Arthur? Since Arthur is telling the story, is there bias in what he describes?

- Introduce the term ‘unreliable’ and explain that first person narratives can be unreliable because you don’t have any balance from other characters’ perspectives.

- Ask children whether they like reading first person narratives like this. Can they explain why, using ideas from this text?

Stage 3: Analysing the text structure and language

Activities:

Talking about dialogue

- Ask children to reform their groups where each person represents either Father or Sir Kay.
  
  On an enlarged copy of the text, ask children to highlight Sir Kay’s words in one colour, and Father’s in another. Model this for the paragraph which begins “This sword, Kay…”.

  Ask children to read the text aloud, with one of the children speaking the narrator’s words and the others representing the other two characters.

- In their groups, ask children to role-play the story as we’ve been told it so far, improvising dialogue. Encourage them to go through the events several times, adding new information and detail each time and taking different character roles.

Resources needed:

Shared copy of the text (PDF/IWB/visualiser)

Each pair needs:

- the large paper on which they recorded the characters’ timelines

- an enlarged copy of the text

- sticky notes

Each child needs:

- the copy of the text they have previously annotated

- a flipchart/large paper

- different coloured pens/pencils.
Allow each child in the group the opportunity to say “freeze” at what they think is an interesting moment. When they hear “freeze” the characters should freeze in place. The child who called “freeze” should step out of character and ask everyone else in their group to describe what they are saying and what they are thinking.

• Ask children to return to the text and to highlight all punctuation related to dialogue and then to highlight all of the words and phrases that tell you who spoke and how.
  o Ask them to use thought bubbles to write in the margins what each character is thinking as they speak.

**Talking about movement between paragraphs**

• Ask groups or pairs of children to:
  o use one sticky note to write brief notes about one main plot point in each paragraph
  o on the same sticky note, use another colour to jot down three ways in which the information in the paragraph is linked to the previous paragraph
  o focus on the use of the first person pronouns “I, me, my, mine, we, us, our(s)” used by Arthur as narrator, as well as the third person pronouns when Arthur the narrator is talking about other people and their actions.

• Model finding some of the cohesive devices used in this story then let children continue to work in pairs to find:
  o adverbs or adverbials of time, place or number
  o tense choices which refer to previous events or actions
  o pronouns
  o determiners such as “some, all”
  o any other cohesive device they can spot.

• Let children share the cohesive devices they observed. Clarify any confusion or ambiguity.

**Stage 4: Planning to write: Retelling events from a different character’s viewpoint**

**Activities:**

• Explain that you want the children to write the same events as told in the main text (not including the introduction) but written from the point of view of either Father or Sir Kay. Model doing this for a few ideas for one character.
  o Allow children to choose the character they want to represent and organise them into small groups, all focusing on the same character.
    • Give the different groups the role of focusing either on the moment when Father realises where the sword came from or the scene in the churchyard.
  o In their groups, ask children to sketch the outline of a person on a large sheet of paper. They should then:
    • write notes around the character to show what they did, what they said and what other people did or said in response
    • write notes inside the character to show what they thought or felt.

• Let the groups make a brief presentation of their character to the rest of the class, sharing insights into the character’s thoughts and actions as well as others’ responses to him.

• Distribute the writing framework.

• Ask children to decide first which character’s viewpoint they plan to tell the story from.

• They should then work with others who are sharing the same viewpoint character and:
  o identify four or five plot points they plan to focus on (including the two main ones explored earlier) and make brief notes on those plot points
discuss and note down ideas about the character’s actions, dialogue, thoughts and feelings. Encourage them to include notes about other characters’ reactions too.

- Remind them of how much space they have for each part of their story, e.g. about 4 lines of writing for minor plot points and perhaps 8–10 for either of the major points. Adapt these line numbers for your class – they are clearly dependent on handwriting size and speed.
- With the children’s help, make a list on the board of pronouns you might expect to find in a first person narrative when talking about yourself (e.g. I, me, mine, myself, we, us, ours, ourselves) as well as those you find when talking about others (e.g. he, him, his, himself, they, them, theirs, themselves).
- Give children quiet reflection time (possibly in pairs) for them individually to complete their writing framework, based on the ideas they have planned.
- Ask children to share their ideas with a response partner. Ask the response partner to give feedback on whether the story makes sense.
- Give children the opportunity to ‘talk like a writer’ and to receive peer feedback.
- Ask the children to discuss what makes a successful first person narrative and what they need to include in their story.
- Modify the success criteria (online at My Rising Stars).

### Stage 5: Writing

**Activities:**

- Remind children that they are going to write events from the model text but from a different character’s viewpoint.
- Model writing a paragraph in the first person – ensure the children see how you choose the correct pronouns to create consistency as well as balancing description and dialogue.
- Give children a few minutes to ‘talk like a writer’ and tell another response partner the final part of their story as they plan to write it. If it helps, ask them to use a polite ‘writer’s voice’.
- Let response partners give some brief feedback before children swap roles.
- Read aloud the success criteria (online at My Rising Stars).
- Let the children write.
- Throughout the writing session, quietly let the children know how long they have spent, where in their story they should expect to be now and how long there is left.
- Five minutes before the end of the session, ask all children to stop writing and read their story aloud to themselves. If they find errors, or missing words or words they can improve, they should use this opportunity to make changes.

**Resources needed:**

The success criteria
Each child needs:
- the copy of the text they have previously highlighted
- the completed writing framework.

### Stage 6: Improving, editing, reviewing and sharing the writing

**Activities:**

- Revisit together the success criteria (online at My Rising Stars).
- Model the process below using your work as an example. The children can give you feedback on each step of the process. After you model a step the children should have a go with their partner at editing their own work.

**Resources needed:**

The success criteria
Each child needs:
- the success criteria
- their writing/completed writing framework
- different coloured highlighters/pens/pencils.
• Ask children to reread their texts three times with their response partner:
  o First read through: Children read their partner’s text out loud to them. The child who wrote the text listens to check that their writing makes sense, listens out for obvious errors and checks the text follows their plan. Children then swap roles.
  o Second read through: Children read their partner’s text and highlight the success criteria they have met. They suggest three places where their partner could improve their work (to achieve or further improve on the success criteria).
  o Third read through: Children proofread their partner’s text together with them. They check for errors in punctuation and spelling and correct these as necessary. You should give input at this stage if needed.

Lessons from writing
• Prior to the session, identify errors that were commonly made. Write sample sentences that need to be corrected and ask the children to help you to fix them. These could include:
  o errors in pronouns, switching from first to third person, e.g. So I asked him where he got it but Father came and he said “Look I’ve got the sword from the churchyard.” And Father looked at him and I said, “It was me, really. I pulled it out myself.”
    ■ Together, correct the text so you only have two characters: I and Father.
  o repetition rather than cohesion.
    ■ Ask children to use cohesive devices to clarify events in a muddled retelling, e.g. All the knights and me went into the churchyard. We saw a sword sticking out of a stone. A sword was stuck fast in a stone. All of them had a go at pulling a sword out, but none of them could pull a sword out. The knights and me were confused because none of the knights and me understood why someone would make a sword stick in a stone. The knights and me made the boys clean the knights’ stuff. The boys were silly. The boys were messing about and not doing what the knights and me said. Arthur had left my sword behind in the lodgings. I said Arthur had to go and get my sword quickly. Arthur went away. Arthur came back. Arthur had got a sword. I went to my fight.

Improving the writing
• After the texts have been marked: give the children time to read through your comments, to look at the success criteria and to implement any changes suggested. This should not involve the children rewriting the entire story – just those parts that you would like them to revisit to practise/improve their writing.

Sometimes, children write stories to practise writing stories. Other times, there is a planned reason or an audience. If you want children to share their writing they could:
• work with others presenting different viewpoints to create a playscript of these events
• use the ideas they recorded in a class debate about who was in the wrong or who was in the right.
## Unit 4: Retelling events from a different character’s viewpoint

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character’s name</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What I did</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I thought or felt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I said (and to whom I spoke)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot summary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name: ________________________________  Class:  Date: __________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working at greater depth within the expected standard</th>
<th>Working at the expected standard</th>
<th>Working towards the expected standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characterisation is consistent with the model text.</td>
<td>Dialogue is integrated to convey character and advance the action.</td>
<td>The narrative is based on events from the model text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs are used consistently to organise ideas.</td>
<td>Description of characters is shown through dialogue and other characters' responses and reactions.</td>
<td>Paraphrased are sometimes used to organise ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns, adverbials and prepositional phrases are used appropriately to aid cohesion between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>A wide range of clause structures is used, including relative clauses, sometimes varying their position within the sentence.</td>
<td>At least three different conjunctions are used correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs, prepositional phrases and expanded noun phrases add detail and precision.</td>
<td>Description is achieved mainly by showing, not telling.</td>
<td>Some precise and well-chosen words are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some parentheses are marked with commas, brackets or dashes.</td>
<td>Commas are used for clarity.</td>
<td>Apostrophes are generally used accurately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most words from the Year 5/6 list – or words of equivalent challenge – are correctly spelled.</td>
<td>Legibility, fluency and speed determine which letters are left unjoined.</td>
<td>Taught spelling from the Year 5/6 word lists – or words of equivalent challenge – are correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterisation is consistent with the model text.</td>
<td>Paragraphs are generally used to organise and present ideas sequentially.</td>
<td>The narrative has a clear main character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns and adverbials are used appropriately to aid cohesion between paragraphs.</td>
<td>More precise vocabulary is used to create a character and setting.</td>
<td>Planned events are listed in sequence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fronted adverbials at the beginning of paragraphs are used to indicate change of time or place.</td>
<td>Apostrophes are consistently used correctly.</td>
<td>The text is primarily in the past tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description is often by showing, not telling.</td>
<td>Commas are used after fronted adverbial clauses.</td>
<td>End of sentence punctuation (.?) is generally accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commas are used for clarity.</td>
<td>Many words from the Year 5/6 list – or words of equivalent challenge – are correctly spelled.</td>
<td>Spacing between letters and words allow for good legibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling of all taught words is largely correct.</td>
<td>Handwriting is fluent and legible. Parallel ascenders and descenders aid clarity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>