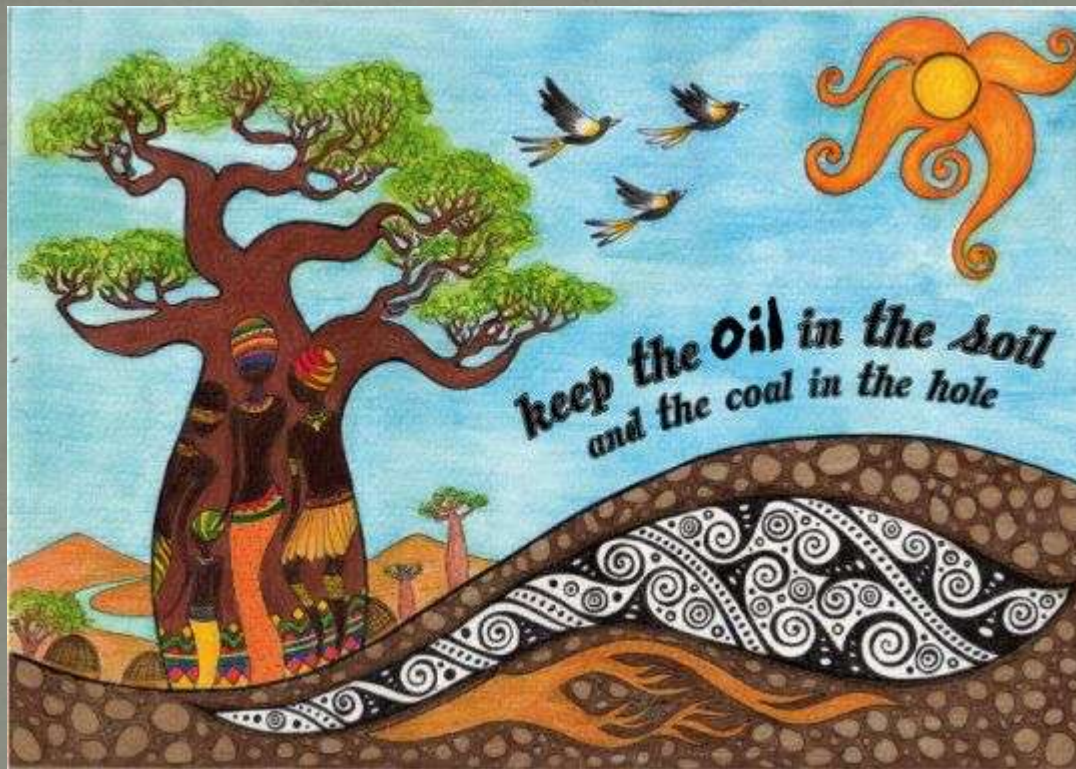


# Creative Writing

S. Lewington



# What is a Narrative?

What is a narrative? It is a way of telling a story. This story may be fact or fantasy. A narrative is not a recount. The main purpose of a recount is to retell past events or experiences. Recounts usually retell events in the order they occurred. Narratives do more than retelling a series of events. They try to create experiences that are shared with the reader. The writer uses many literary techniques to capture the reader's attention.



# Features of Narratives

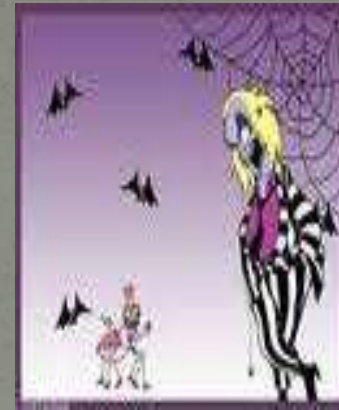
They usually use direct speech.

They may use incomplete sentences. Words and phrases are used for impact.

They contain facts, descriptions and atmosphere. Often designed to entertain.

Narratives have flexibility in their use of tense.





# Ideas

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Many good stories draw heavily on the experiences of the writer.

Create evocative opening paragraphs.

Paragraphs can be from one word long to several sentences.

Don't reveal too much.

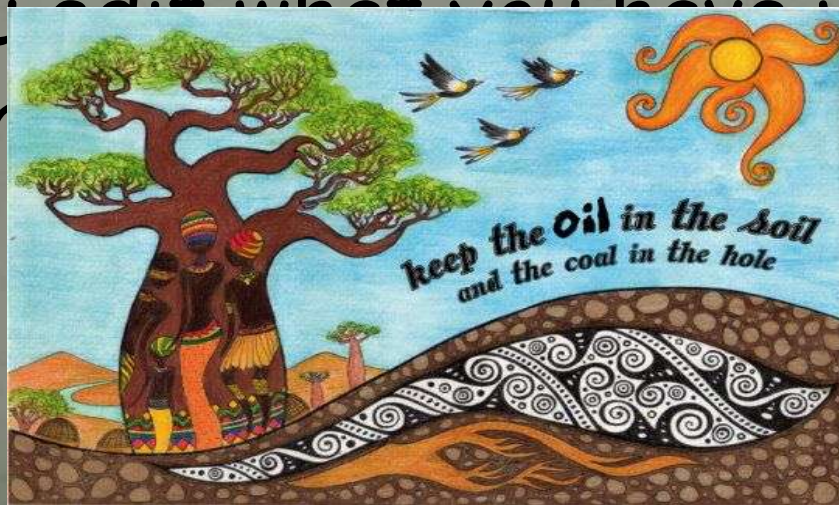
It should intrigue the reader or put questions in their mind.



## Messages?



Try to include themes that encourage higher thinking. Think about issues like global warming, animal activism, human rights, equality etc. Remember that people are influenced by what they read. When you edit what you have written, be aware of the messages.



# The Closing Paragraph

The closing paragraph should tie up the most important threads of your story. The reader should feel satisfied that the ordeals of the characters are over.

Doesn't have to be a happy ending.

**Do not use these endings:**

...and they lived happily ever after. (eeergh)

...then I woke up and found it was all a dream. (aaagh)

# TIP...

The opening paragraph and the title are the first impressions the reader has of your story. They should capture the reader's attention.





# Using Different Sentence Types

- There are four main sentence types, all of which can be used in fiction writing.
- Statement
- Question
- Exclamation
- Command
- n.b. Incomplete sentences are acceptable in narratives but less acceptable in most other writing.





# Rhetorical Questions

The rhetorical question is a device that fiction writers can incorporate into their writing to hold the attention of the reader. We use them all the time in our everyday conversations e.g. “Why didn’t I think of that?”

By using rhetorical questions the writer can put the reader into the character’s mind and share his/her emotions.





# Using variety in sentence length

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The length of sentences in your story writing can have a positive effect on the quality of your writing. Sentence lengths are important for special effects in your story as well as for maintaining reader interest and excitement.



# Use variety in sentence beginnings.

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Any word types can be used for sentence beginnings. They will add sparkle and interest to your story writing.



# Repetition

Repetition is another technique favoured by competent writers but like most techniques you can have too much of a good thing. Repetition must have purpose.

Words can be repeated for emphasis. How does repetition strengthen meaning?

Repetition of a sound, **alliteration**, helps to create atmosphere in your writing. It does not have to be the sound that starts the word



Repetition, Repetition,  
Repetition,



# Using all the senses...

- **Sight** – Many students rely heavily on what is seen. This is important, as sight is one of our most important senses when developing a story. However, it is not the only sense with which we can take in information.
- **What do you feel?** Using the sense of touch can add impact to your story.
- **What do you hear?** Using the sense of hearing can add dramatically to your story.
- **What do you smell?** Using the sense of smell can add to the atmosphere of your story.



# Direct or Indirect Speech.

- Direct speech is when the writer uses the actual words spoken. They are spoken in quotation marks.
- Indirect speech is often called reported speech. The writer uses past tense to report what was said. It is often used in newspapers with the word 'that' in front of it. e.g. The Prime Minister said that taxes had to rise.

# Creating Characters.

- Many writers base their characters loosely on people they know or have met. Characters have a physical appearance, habits, emotions and a cultural heritage that makes each one unique.
- Some writers make a list of the physical features of their characters.
- Be consistent.
- Develop characters.

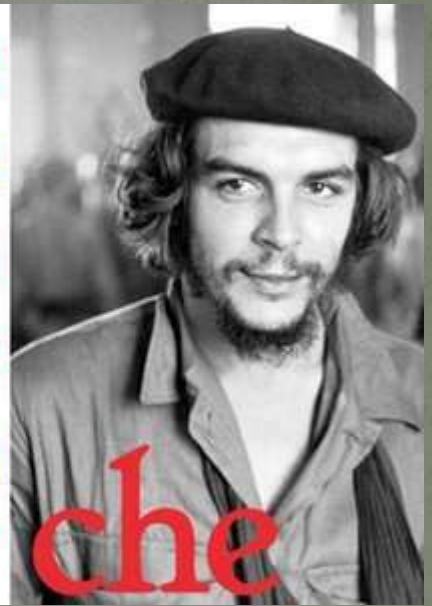




# Giving characters names.

- Getting the right sounding name can be important.
- Find names that suit the character.
- Look for unusual names.
- It is important not to use names that sound or look similar. This may confuse the reader.

“We must  
not let these  
harsh times  
destroy the  
warmth in  
our hearts...”



# Showing not telling

- Many readers try to tell the reader too much and often too quickly. It also helps to arouse the reader's interest if you don't tell them everything at once.





# Point of view

- Before you start writing you should consider who is telling the story. If your story is in the first person, that is, the narrator is telling the story, then the story is from his/her viewpoint. In first person narrative the writer uses such words as 'I', 'me' and 'we' pronouns throughout the story.
- If it is in the first person, than all the action is limited to what the narrator can see, hear and experience.
- Many stories are told in the third person from the viewpoint of one or more of the characters. These stories are told as if the reader is watching the events that are happening and knows what going on in the character's mind.

## Writing Tip

Keep a good  
dictionary on hand  
and use a thesaurus.



# Structure

- The introduction, or beginning captures the reader's interest.
- Complications are introduced which means problems which have to be solved. Three is a good number.
- There is a climax where things come to a head.
- The problems are solved.
- There is a resolution.
- A coda sums up the whole story.
- *All stories do not have to follow this structure.*

# OUTLINE

- An outline or plan is a good idea. This entails writing a short description of the plot of the story that you intend to write. You can change or add to it if you think of more ideas.
- Many writers vary the structure to make their writing more original and interesting. For example a detective story may start off with the problem (murder or robbery) and reveal the setting later.



# Higher language

- Metaphors and similes are two of the main tools of figurative language. They should be used with care. Sometimes a single word can act as a metaphor.
- Similes do not always have to be at the end of a sentence.
- Personification and hyperbole can add impact. Personification is giving human qualities to non-human things and hyperbole is exaggeration for effect.

# What if?

- It is something that adds another level, complication or problem to your story. It can create added tension. It can relate to a person to a change of place or to a change of time.





# Creating Atmosphere

It is the mood  
or feelings a  
story creates  
in the reader's  
mind.



# Edit ,edit, edit!

- It is very important to proof read your work and re-write until you are happy with the result.
- Virginia Woolf famously did this thirty times for each of her novels before she was happy with them.
- You don't have to do it that many times but nevertheless, make sure you edit and re-write until your work is as perfect as you can make it!
- Happy writing!



