

Welcome to Creative Bursts: short creative activities to do at home with your children.

Creative Bursts are created by Sarah Webb and supported by MoLI - Museum of Literature Ireland. Sarah Webb is an award-winning children's writer and children's book champion. Her children's books include *A Sailor Went to Sea, Sea, Sea*, illustrated by Steve McCarthy which won the Irish Book Awards Junior Category and *Blazing a Trail: Irish Women Who Changed the World*, illustrated by Lauren O'Neill which won the Irish Book Awards Senior Category.

Her latest book is *Dare to Dream: Irish People Who Took On the World (and Won!)*, illustrated by Graham Corcoran.

MoLI is committed to youth creativity and alongside the free primary schools tour and workshops programme, we also run Bright Sparks – a series of art and story workshops facilitated by Irish writers and illustrators where families embrace the opportunity to play and create together.

To get lost in a Creative Burst all you need is a pencil or pen and a notebook or piece of paper. The writing games and prompts are aimed at around age 9+ but could be done with younger children if you give them a bit of help. I've also included some more challenging story prompts for older or more experienced writers of around 11+ (every young writer is different).

Remember grown-ups – please join in too! It's great for children to see you being creative, making mistakes and having fun on the page!

Today's theme is: Let's Play with Words

Warm Up

To get started let's warm up those writing muscles.

You could start by writing this week's quote into your writing notebook, copybook or sheet of paper. You could give it a fancy frame or border if you like!

"And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it." Roald Dahl

Creative Burst Challenge Number 1 – Story Prompts

Here's your first story prompt – read it, have a think (make some notes first if you like) and write a short piece inspired by it. If you like, you can draw it instead – or do both!

One day you find a magical ring. When you twist it on your finger your spirit animal appears. But this animal is not a cool and sleek animal like a panther or a snow leopard, it's a...

Extra Challenge (age 11+) – Try This Story Prompt

Your family has been selected to live on Mars as one of its first colonist families. When your parents break the news you are...

(Write about how you feel – excited, scared, anxious, impatient to leave earth – you decide!

You could also write about your first week on Mars – a Mars diary or short story

Diary Challenge

If you are at home this week – try keeping a diary or journal about your experience – it can be fact (what actually happens) or fiction – you decide!

Creative Burst Challenge Number 2 – Word Game

Write a call and response poem about food.

I will give a food prompt or ‘call’ below and you can ‘respond’ with a word that is linked to it.

I say ice-cream, you say... (Put in a word or a ‘response’ here. Pick a word that fits well with ice-cream – like cone, or chocolate!)

I say ice-cream, you say...

Ice-cream...

Ice-cream...

I say pizza, you say...

Pizza...

Pizza...

I say hotdog...

Hotdog...

Hotdog...

Creative Burst Challenge Number 3 – Story Prompt

Write a story or poem inspired by this prompt.

You go down to the fridge one morning and open the door. Inside is something crazy. What is inside and how did it get there?

Creative Burst Challenge Number 4 – Word Game

You will need: a piece of paper that you can rip into small strips or 4 sticky notes.

Write your answers to the below sentences on a piece of paper or a sticky note.

Then move the answers around to create some interesting or unusual answers. Some will be daft and won't make sense but others will. It's a way of creating really interesting similes*! You might like to use one of them in a story or a poem you are writing.

As green as... (Put each answer on a small piece of paper or on a sticky note – then move them around)

As green as...

As strong as...

As loud as...

As dry as...

***Similes and Metaphors**

I always get similes and metaphors mixed up. They are both used to compare something with something else. Similes use the words 'like' or 'as' – as green as a Christmas Tree, as loud as my sister (only joking!).

Metaphors directly say something IS something else: my hair is a bird's nest, love is a battlefield (a great song in fact – you can look it up or ask your grown up!).

If you want to get really fancy – you can't beat Shakespeare, the famous poet and playwright – he liked his metaphors! William Shakespeare was baptised in 1564 (they're not sure of his birth date) and is one of the greatest writers who has ever lived. Romeo and Juliet is my favourite Shakespeare play. When you're in secondary school you might get to study a Shakespeare play.

In his play As You Like It he wrote:

'All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players.' (A metaphor)

He also wrote: 'It is the east and Juliet is the sun' (another metaphor) in his play Romeo and Juliet. Romeo was madly in love with Juliet and to him she was indeed his sun. He's comparing her to a sunrise – warm and beautiful.

Hope you enjoyed the Creative Bursts!

And remember what Einstein said: 'Creativity is intelligence having fun.'

Keep writing,
Sarah

Text copyright Sarah Webb, 2020