

## **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. Also included are 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: Picture This**

#### **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

If you've already got that one in your notebook, how about this one:  
"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are." - Anaïs Nin  
She also said: "Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."  
She was a clever woman!

### **Creative Bursts Challenge #1: People**

Write a story or a poem about the people in the following 3 pictures.  
Or find your own photos at home instead.



First, ask yourself questions about them:

Who are they?  
Where do they live?  
What do they like to do?

Name them – give them both first names and second names – we'll be talking about creating great names for characters in a later Creative Bursts.

Then create a story around them.

Is the baby a magic baby?  
Do the three sisters get on well? What jobs do they have?  
Is the woman with the dog talking to him? What is she saying? What is he saying back?

The facts behind the pictures:

The baby is my great grandfather – Charles Bedell Stanford who died in 1909.

The three women are my grandmother and her two sisters – she was called Dorothy, they are Eva and Rita. In real life Dorothy worked as a teacher until she got married, Rita and Eva were pharmacists all their lives.

The woman with the dog is Penelope Dudley Ward. The photo was taken in 1935 by Sir Alfred Beit and you can see his photographs in Russborough House. (Find out more here: [www.russborough.ie](http://www.russborough.ie))

Extra Story Prompt:

Bored, I turn on the radio in the car and I can't believe my ears.  
It's \_\_\_\_\_ talking to me through the  
speakers.

Who is taking to you? You decide

### **Creative Bursts Challenge #2: Places**



Look at the photograph of the school chemistry lab from 1915.

Really look! Take in all the details – the long curved taps, the Bunsen burners, the wooden stools.

Imagine you walk through a door in your house and you end up in a strange chemistry lab. Describe it using the photograph. And then write what happens next!

Extra Story Prompt:

You are walking in a forest and find a large opening in a tree. You look inside - what do you see?

### **Creative Bursts Challenge #3: Art**

Here is a famous poem by William Blake called The Tyger:

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,  
In the forests of the night;  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp,  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears  
And water'd heaven with their tears:  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,  
In the forests of the night:  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

And here is a famous painting by Henri Rousseau called Surprised, painted in 1891:



Now write your own poem or story about a tiger or about being surprised by a tiger. And where would you be most surprised to find a tiger? In your bathroom, on your doorstep (like in *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* by Judith Kerr), or in your car?

You decide!

**Creative Bursts Challenge #4: Rip It Up!**

Find a newspaper or magazine – make sure it’s from the recycling bin and not new!

Then look through the pages and rip out any photographs or illustrations that catch your eye.

People, animals, buildings – anything that looks interesting.

Write a story or poem, or draw a picture inspired by the photographs. Maybe you can put some of the pictures together – pick a place, a person and a thing – and create a story around them.

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Hope you enjoyed today’s Creative Bursts!

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

Keep writing,  
Sarah

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