



BETTER TUITION

**WORDS ABOUT
WINTER**

**A CREATIVE WRITING
WORKBOOK**

(c) Christine McLaughlin 2018



INTRODUCTION

In this creative writing workbook, we celebrate the beauty of a frosty morning, the mystery of winter's long, dark nights and the warmth of a crackling log in the grate. Winter is an exciting and inspiring time for many children. My aim in producing these resources was to convert this excitement into a creative response through the medium of guided exercises in poetry, prose and drama.

This resource is aimed at children in the age range of 8–12, though some of the activities may also be suitable for older/ younger children.

Teachers may wish to display pages from the workbook on their IWBs, so I have used some colour for fonts and images throughout the book, but if you're printing this document, please be mindful of the environment and print in grayscale.

There are notes for teachers and other educators, but please get in touch if you have any queries about this resource.

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ABOUT BETTER TUITION

Better Tuition is an independent tuition centre in Urmston, Manchester, UK. We help young people aged 5-16 achieve and succeed in school. We specialise in maths, English and entrance exam tuition.

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TIPS FOR CREATIVE WRITERS

1. There is **no wrong way** to write creatively. You are in control, so be as imaginative as you like!
2. **If you find it hard to get started, just set yourself a timed target.** For example, you could give yourself ten minutes to try to fill a page with writing.
3. Sometimes we need to think about the story not the reader. Don't imagine what your teacher will say when s/he reads the story. **Write as if no one will ever read your story or poem** and you will be surprised by the wonderful writing you produce.
4. **Read, reflect and revise.** Never settle for your first draft. Have a pen handy when you read over your work, so that you can annotate it with corrections and new ideas.
5. **Read for inspiration.** Good writers are greedy readers. Reading helps you come up with ideas and shows you examples of adventurous language.



Story Prompt I

The Night Visitors



Darkness fell suddenly that night, bringing with it a blanket of silence which covered the little village, hidden away in the snowy hills. Not a sound could be heard in the narrow cobbled streets: even the baker's dog was quiet. Soon, everyone apart from James was fast asleep, dreaming of space rockets and starry nights. James watched the sky carefully from his bedroom window in the little wooden house on the outskirts of the village. The night wore on. All was still. James yawned, trying not to make a sound. Then it happened. Silently and swiftly, an eery green light swept across the sky, casting an emerald glow across the snowy landscape.

"I knew it," James whispered. "They're here."

Task: Continue the story.

Story Prompt 2

The Wooden Box



It had been a quiet day in the toy shop and Amelia wasn't sorry to be closing up. Time dragged when not many customers came in. It was already dark at four o'clock – and so cold she could see her breath. She'd just got her coat on when she heard the shop bell ring.

“I'm afraid we're cl-”

“This won't take a moment,” said a voice which came from immediately behind her.

Amelia jumped in fright. She hadn't heard footsteps behind her. Turning, she saw a very small man, no higher than her shoulders, dressed in black robes and an old-fashioned top hat which was battered and tattered and altogether ridiculous-looking.

“Do you know what you want to buy?” Amelia asked, still anxious to get home. The man shook his head, with a slight smile.

“Nothing, my dear,” he said in a voice only just louder than a whisper. “It is you who will want to buy from me.”

With that, he held up a carved wooden box.

Task: Continue the story.

Story Prompt 3

The Snow Queen



The following is an extract from The Snow Queen by Hans Christian Anderson.

In the evening when little Kay was at home and half undressed, he crept up on the chair by the window, and peeped out of the little hole. A few snowflakes were falling, and one of these, the biggest, remained on the edge of the window-box. It grew bigger and bigger, till it became the figure of a woman, dressed in the finest white gauze, which appeared to be made of millions of starry flakes. She was delicately lovely, but all ice, glittering, dazzling ice. Still she was alive, her eyes shone like two bright stars, but there was no rest or peace in them. She nodded to the window and waved her hand.

Task: Continue the story. Make a brand new story, even if you already know the story of The Snow Queen. **Page 4**

Writing to Describe: I

A Garden in Winter

1. Nouns

Picture a garden in winter. What items can you see, hear, touch or even smell? Write at least five nouns below:

2. Adjectives

Which adjectives could describe a garden in winter? Write at least five below:

3. Similes

A simile is a comparison of two things. e.g. 'Her smile was as bright as the sun'. Try to come up with two similes to use in your description of a garden in winter.

Now you can use your ideas to write two or three paragraphs describing a garden in winter.

Writing to Describe: 2

A Log Fire

1. Nouns

Picture a log fire. What items can you see, hear, or smell?
Write at least five nouns below:

2. Adjectives

Which adjectives could describe a log fire? Write at least five below:

3. Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia describes words which name sounds, but which also sound like the sound they name, e.g. 'buzz', 'whoosh', 'crack' and 'bang'. Try to come up with a phrase which uses onomatopoeia to use in your description of a log fire.

Now you can use your ideas to write two or three paragraphs describing a log fire.

Writing to Describe: 3

The Polar Bear

1. Verbs

Picture a polar bear. What would s/he do? What would s/he hear, see, think, eat? Write at least five verbs below:

2. Adjectives

Which adjectives could describe a polar bear? Write at least five below:

3. Metaphor

A metaphor is a comparison of two things, but without using 'as' or 'like' e.g. 'Her hands were two frozen cubes of ice'. Try to come up with a metaphor to use in your description of a polar bear.

Now you can use your ideas to write two or three paragraphs describing a polar bear.

WINTER WORDS



BY

What is Poetry?

Do you have a favourite poem? Write its name here, as well as any lines from it you can remember. What do you like about the poem?

Do you know the names of any poets? Write them here. If you don't know the names of any poets, research in the library or online.

True or False?

Write 'T' for 'true' or 'F' for 'false' after each statement.

1. Only 'poets' can write poems.
2. All poetry must rhyme.
3. Poems should be at least one page long.
4. Every poem should tell a story.
5. Every day has a poem in it, waiting to be written.
6. All poems should be unique.

ANSWERS

All of the statements are FALSE, except for number five. That's right, every day has a poem in it, which you can write in any way you like. In this workbook, there are different types of poem, but a poem is whatever you decide it is.

Found Poetry: A Christmas Carol

Found poetry is poetry made up of words you find on a page - from a book, a newspaper or even from the back of a cereal packet.

Here is an extract from A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. I have chosen some words - which are underlined - to make a poem, which you can read below.

Once upon a time -- of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve -- old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them. The city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already -- it had not been light all day: and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighbouring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without, that although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale.

Found Poem:

**Cold, bleak: dark already,
Light and candles upon the air.
Keyhole phantoms drooping
Obscuring Nature.**

Found poems help you come up with images you would never have thought of. What picture does this found poem paint in your mind? Sketch it here:



Found Poetry: Little Women

This extract is from *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. As you can see, I have chosen some words to make another found poem, which you can read below.

"As for you, Amy," continued Meg, "you are altogether too particular and prim. Your airs are funny now, but you'll grow up an affected little **goose**, if you don't take care. I like your nice manners and refined ways of speaking, when you don't try to be elegant. But your absurd words are as bad as Jo's slang."

"If Jo is a tomboy and Amy a **goose**, what am I, please?" asked Beth, ready to share the lecture.

"You're a dear, and nothing else," answered Meg warmly, and no one contradicted her, for the 'Mouse' was the pet of the family.

As young readers like to know 'how people look', we will take this moment to give them a little sketch of the four sisters, who sat knitting away **in the twilight**, while the December **snow fell** quietly without, and the **fire crackled** cheerfully within. It was a comfortable room, though the carpet was faded and the furniture very plain, for a good picture or two hung on the walls, books filled the recesses, chrysanthemums and **Christmas roses** bloomed in the windows, and a pleasant atmosphere of **home** peace pervaded it.

What picture does this found poem paint in your mind? Sketch it below:

Found Poem:

Goose, goose

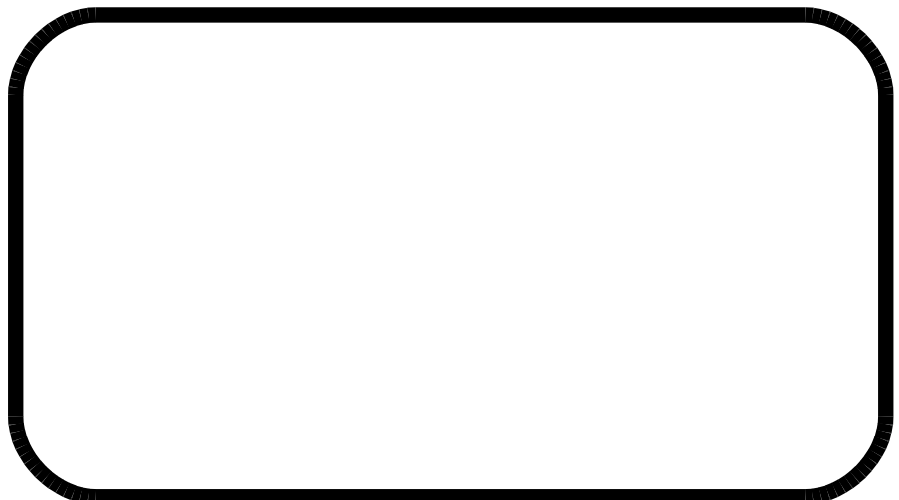
In the twilight.

Snow fell,

fire crackled.

Christmas roses.

Home.



Found Poetry: The Little Match Girl

The following is an extract from The Little Match Girl by Hans Christian Anderson. You are going to use the extract to make your own found poem.

C

It was terribly cold; it snowed and was already almost dark, and evening came on, the last evening of the year and gloom a poor girl, bare headed and barefoot, was walking through the streets. When she left her own house she certainly had had slippers on; but of what use were they? They were very big slippers and her mother had used them till then, so big were they. The little maid lost them as she slipped across the road, where two carriages were rattling by terribly fast. One slipper was not to be found again, and a boy had seized the other, and run away with it. He thought he could use it very well as a cradle, some day when he had children of his own. So now the little girl went with her little naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried a number of matches, and a bundle of them in her hand. No one had bought anything of her all day, and no one had given her a farthing.

C

Write your found poem overleaf.

Next Steps:

You can choose any page of text to make a found poem.

THE LITTLE MATCH

GIRL

FOUND POETRY

Found Poetry: Using a Phrase Bank

This phrase bank was made by opening books at random and choosing the first phrase I read.

Task: try joining some of the following phrases together to form a found poem. You may not change any of the words, but you may add words from your Winter Word Bank (see Appendix I on page 40).

more dappled light	one morning in 1605	I was an obvious target
he was currently reciting	an old painting of a woman	look to the future
i took a bottle from	in the middle of the night	place where ferries depart
she wept bitterly as	competitive mountain biking	we entered the courtyard
a human being is another	in the precincts of the	died in the palace in 1616
add tomatoes and heat	looking towards the dead	love is what matters
rounder and softer	it is hard to understand	into deep eternity
approached her in surprise	i escaped, and three times	fonts, gargoyles, eagle
midsummer of 1927	long haired, surly	from a control tower
with the blanket still	the oldest inhabitant	quanta of energy leap
three-dimensional	within subterranean halls	when you are ready
the egg and eye	planet-sized windows	the trunk of a tree
shivering miserably	a glass ball the size of	prickled with the bitter chill
with giant toothmarks	a clarion call, like	he was getting rusty
wild rabbits in the	a little jar in her pocket	tears began to run down
attacked by parasites	wink of a cosmic eye	seven musical notes
shape-shift at will	the ancient builders	roads taken and then
and woe to any cat with	little puppets on stage	and the light shines out

Acrostic Poems

Acrostics are fun poems in which the first letter of each line spells out a word.

Dazzling,
Enchanted,
Celebrations.
Everyone
Merry.
Bright
Evergreens,
Resplendent.

You can also write longer lines

Dazzling stars light up the darkness,
Enchanted sleigh rides through the snow,
Celebrations of winter starkness,
Embers in the fireplace glow,
Merry making across the land,
Bright packages encased in gold,
Evergreens stand tall and grand,
Regal and mysterious, valiant in the cold.

N.B. Acrostics do not need to rhyme.

Make your own acrostic poems using the templates overleaf.

W



I



N



T



E



R



S

N

O

W

B

A

L

L

HAIKU

Haiku are short, three-line poems which follow a set pattern:

Line 1	5 syllables
Line 2	7 syllables
Line 3	5 syllables

Here is an example:

All the trees are bare
The sky is piercing blue
Snow will fall tonight

Most haiku are about nature.

Try to write your own winter haiku, choosing from the following themes:

- The snowy mountain
- A winter forest
- The fallen leaves
- A starry night

Line 1 (5 syllables)	
Line 2 (7 syllables)	
Line 3 (5 syllables)	

Line 1 (5 syllables)	
Line 2 (7 syllables)	
Line 3 (5 syllables)	

You can write your neat draft on the template overleaf.

HAIKU

by _____



TANKA

A tanka is longer than a haiku, with five lines, but still follows a set pattern:

Line 1	5 syllables
Line 2	7 syllables
Line 3	5 syllables
Line 4	7 syllables
Line 5	7 syllables

Here is an example:

Snow fell heavily
On the pathways and mountains
But I was alone
Shivering in the night air
Waiting for morning to come

Tankas often focus on emotion as well as nature. Write your own winter tanka, choosing from the following themes:

A hibernating squirrel	The first frost	The darkest day
------------------------	-----------------	-----------------

Line 1 (5 syllables)	
Line 2 (7 syllables)	
Line 3 (5 syllables)	
Line 4 (7 syllables)	
Line 5 (7 syllables)	

TANKA

by _____

短歌

A Five Senses Poem

Read this example of a five-senses poem:

Autumn

Autumn is a silver star on a dark night
It is a wild wind, whistling through the streets
It is a new pair of gloves, snug and warm
It is the smell of a bonfire, blazing in the dark
Autumn is the first taste of apple pie, fresh from the oven

Based on the example, what do you think a five-sense poem is?



Write your own five-sense poem about one of the following:

- Snow
- Winter
- New Year
- Darkness
- Fire

Use the snowflake planner overleaf to plan your poem.

A FIVE-SENSES POEM

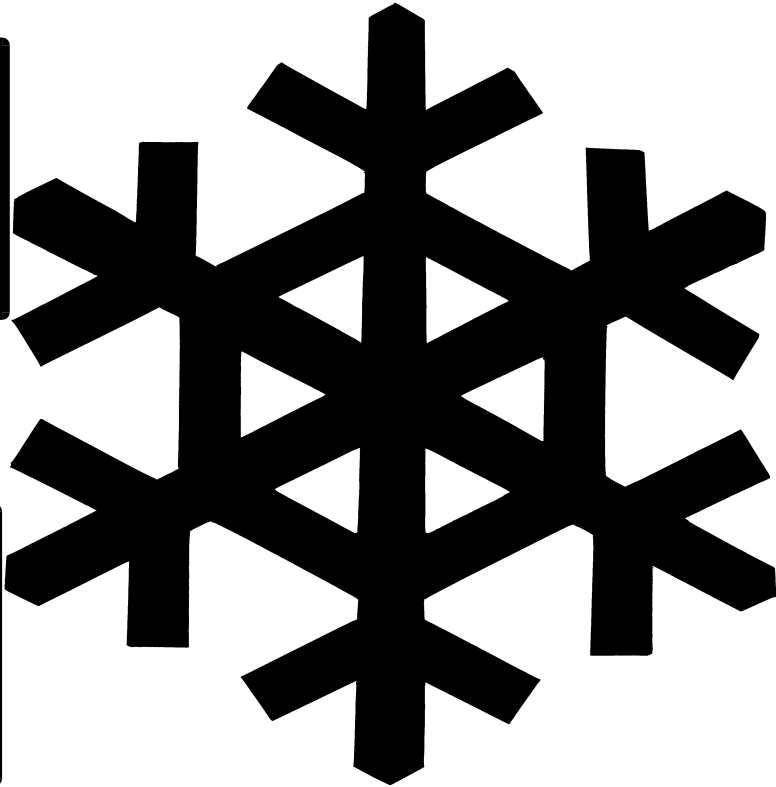
Title:

Sight:

Sound:

Taste:

Touch:



Smell:

A FIVE-SENSES POEM

.....

BY

.....

The Art of Revising and Editing your Work

Never stop at just one draft: Roald Dahl used to write and rewrite, sometimes changing his stories 150 times! We are going to look at how to change a piece of writing.

Task: read 'The night is darkening round me' by Emily Brontë. Some of the words have been removed. Choose words to fill the gaps, using the words on the following page. You may also use your own words to fill the gaps.

The night is darkening round me

by Emily Brontë

The night is darkening round _____,
The _____ winds coldly blow;
But a tyrant _____ has bound me,
And I _____, cannot go.

The giant _____ are bending
Their bare boughs weighed with _____;
The storm is fast _____,
And yet I cannot _____.

_____ beyond _____ above me,
_____ beyond _____ below;
But nothing drear can _____ me;
I will not, cannot _____.

Note:

Emily Brontë was born in 1818 and spent most of her life in Haworth, Yorkshire. She is the author of *Wuthering Heights*, one of the most famous books in the world. 'The night is darkening round me' is just one of her many poems.

The Art of Revising and Editing your Work

You may like to cut these out, so that you can move them around the poem easily.

me	cannot	seas	wild	spell	know
trees	blow	gold	clouds	will not	stars
snow	earth	go	seek	know	move
sky	impending	hear	lakes	descending	scream

Task:

Choose a recent piece of writing. If you read it carefully, you will see that there are changes you could make to improve it. Annotate it with your new ideas, then write out your second draft.

You may also notice errors of punctuation or spelling which passed you by the first time you wrote it. You can take the opportunity to correct these while you are writing your second draft.

You may even decide to make your piece of writing shorter, by removing some words. This is sometimes a good idea. Think about whether all the words you have used are necessary to convey the ideas of effects you were aiming for. If some of your words or phrases are unnecessary, you may remove them.

Which piece of work have you chosen to revise? What are the main changes you have made?

An Amazing Invention

Winter is a wonderful season but it is cold and the nights are long and dark. Pavements are slippery and the trees are bare. It seems like everyone has caught a cold or the flu! If you want to go shopping, you will be waiting in long queues as the shops are packed with throngs of eager customers.

These are just some of the problems of winter. A good invention is one which solves a problem. Fill in the five-minute problem-solver below with ideas for inventions to solve each problem.

FIVE-MINUTE PROBLEM-SOLVER

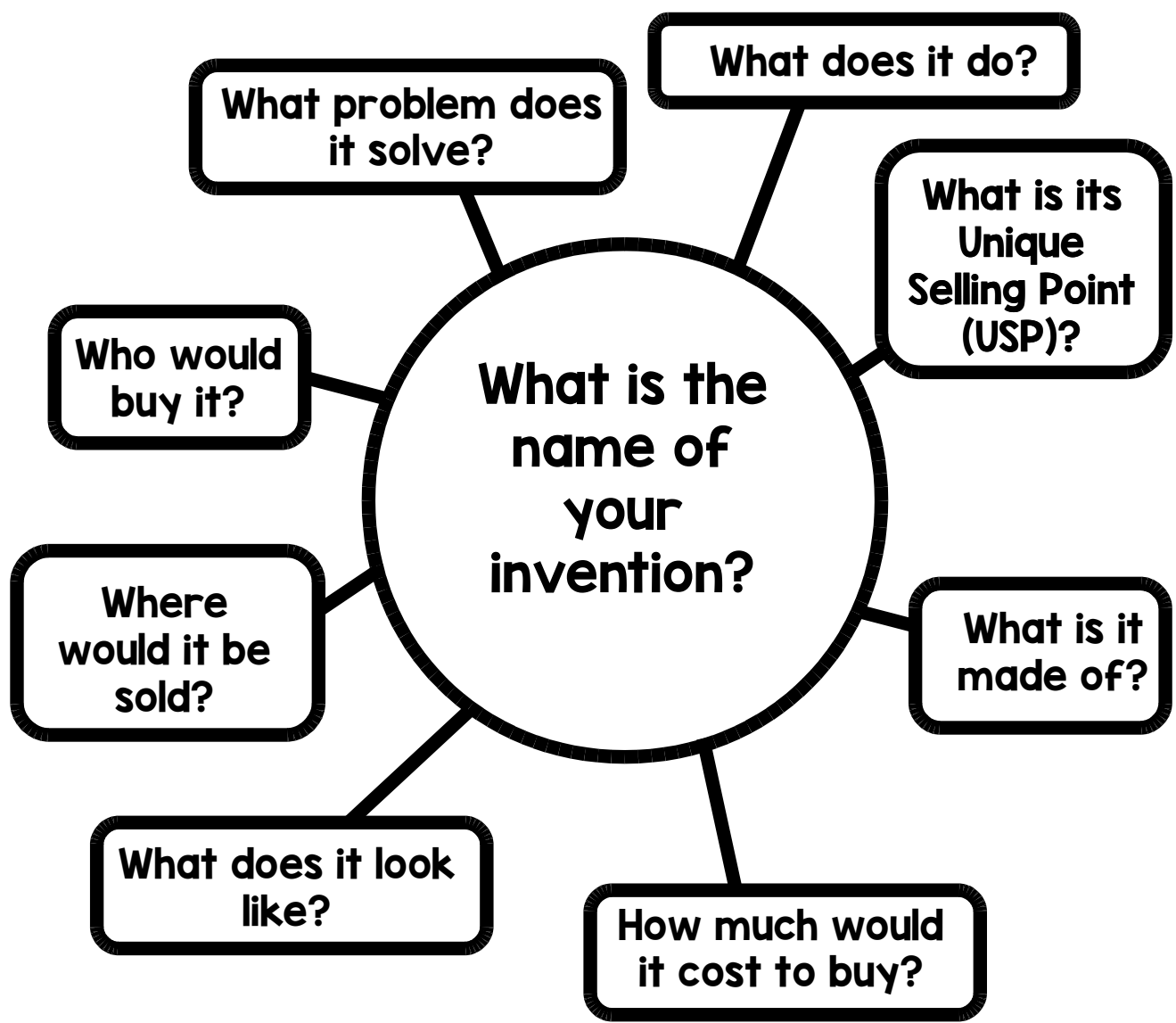
Winter Problem	An Invention to Solve the Problem
Cold hands caused by gloves with holes in.	
Can't play outside because of long, dark nights.	
Slippery pavements are dangerous for some people.	
Bare trees look sad.	
Everyone's sneezing and passing on germs.	
Shops are too crowded and queues are too long.	

A note about ideas

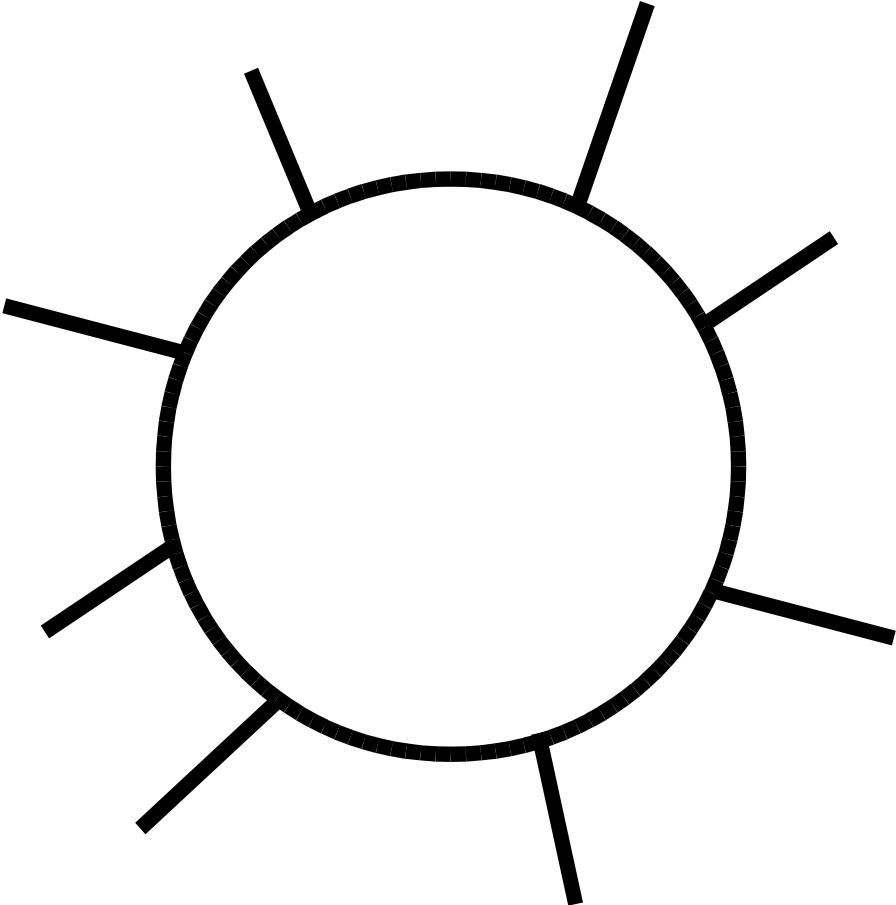
Don't worry if your ideas aren't all brilliant. Poor ideas are just stepping stones on a path which leads to good ideas!

Now choose an invention. It can be one from your five-minute problem-solver or you might think of another one. In any case, it has to solve one of winter's problems.

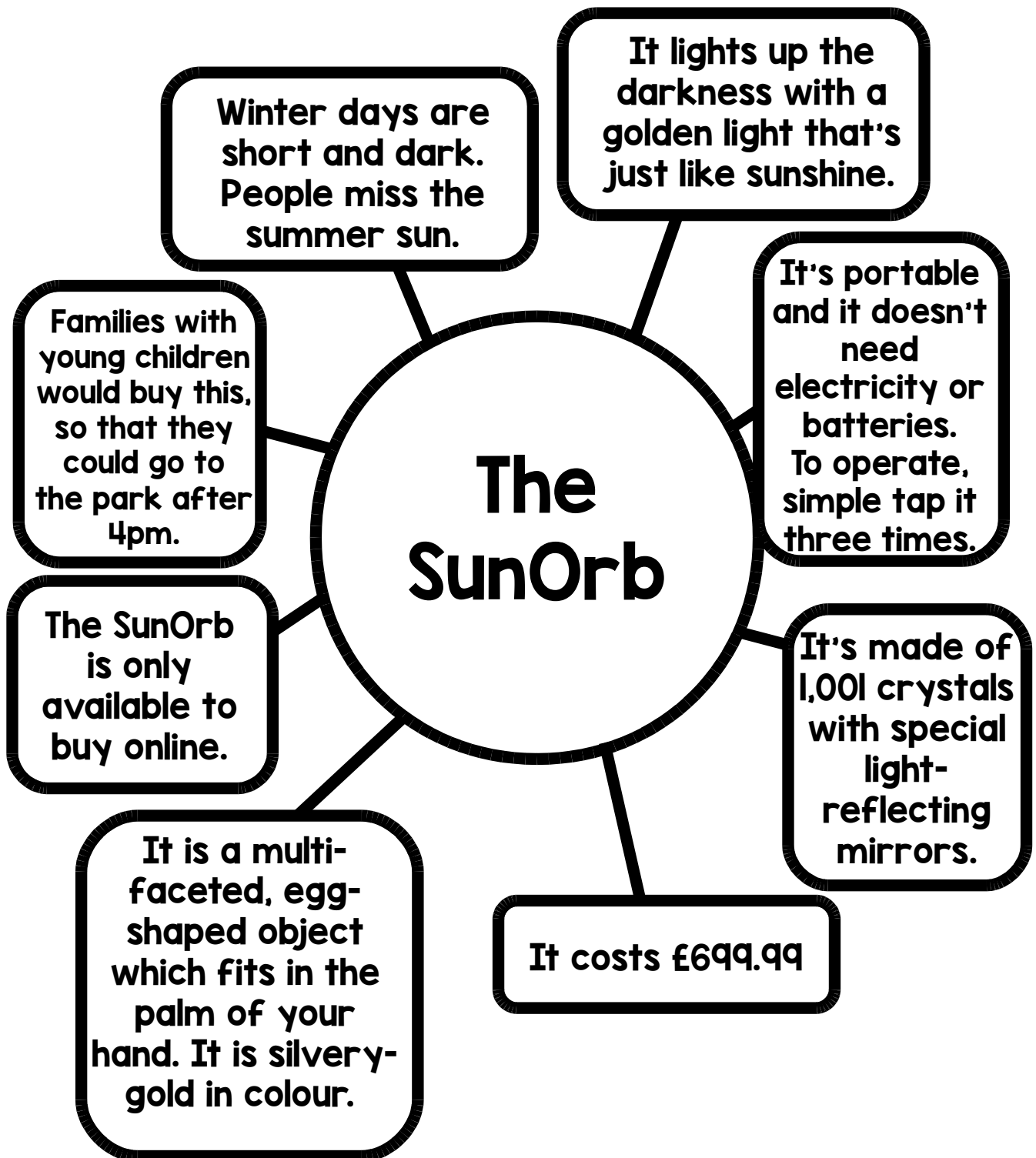
Use this page to help you fill in your own spider diagram.



Fill this spider diagram with your ideas.



Do you need inspiration? This example may help.



Designing a Storyboard

You are going to design a storyboard for an online or television advert for your amazing invention. You must include all the features on your spider diagram and take account of who will want to buy your invention, so that you can tailor your advert. Here is my example for the SunOrb. I have written a description of each shot, but you may choose to draw this instead.

<p>1</p> <p>Sad children, staring out of window, which is covered in raindrops.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>We see the garden the children are looking out at: it is dark. A rusted swing creaks in the gloom.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Dad appears behind the children. He takes the SunOrb out of his pocket and beckons the children to follow him.</p>
<p>Music: "Dark was the night, cold was the ground."</p>	<p>Music: "Dark was the night, cold was the ground."</p>	<p>Music fades out. Dad: "Come on, kids. We're going into the garden!"</p>
<p>4</p> <p>In the garden. The children are wrapped up in many scarves and coats. They look at their father, who taps the SunOrb three times.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>A beautiful golden light emanates from the SunOrb and floods the garden with light. The children look amazed.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>At the top right of the screen: "£699.99" The children are playing happily in the bright light. Across the bottom of the screen: "www.sunorb.co.uk"</p>
<p>Dad: Let's see what this new SunOrb can do!"</p>	<p>Music: Hazy Shades of Winter by the Bangles</p>	<p>Voiceover: "Get sunshine all year round with the SunOrb. Only available online!"</p>

INVENTION NAME:

1	2	3
4	5	6

Writing a Script: I

The Discovery

Exterior: We see a row of terraced houses. It is dark and snow is falling heavily.

Interior: Hayden and Jasmine are sitting at a table, doing homework.

Hayden: I'm hungry! When will dinner be ready?

Jasmine: Not for a while yet. Mum and Dad are still at work.

A doorbell rings. Hayden and Jasmine look at each other.

Jasmine: We're not supposed to answer the door when Mum and Dad are out.

The doorbell rings again. And again.

Hayden: I'm going to answer it. It might be a present for me!

Jasmine shakes her head and carries on with her homework as Hayden leaves the room.

Hayden (*from off screen*): Jasmine! Get out here! You won't believe what I've found on the doorstep!

Task: Continue the script.

Writing a Script: 2

Trapped by Snow

Exterior: A very snowy field, surrounded by snowy hills. Two children and their mother are building a huge snowman. Snow is falling heavily.

Ava: This is the best snowperson we've ever built!

Daniel: Why do you call it a snowperson? It's a snowman!

Ava laughs.

Mum (*placing a hat on the snowman's head*): There. It's finished. I'll go and get the camera from the car.

Ava: Fine. I'll use Daniel for target practice while you're gone.

Mum walks off. Ava begins throwing snowballs at Daniel, who runs round and round the snowman to escape her.

Mum (*returning*): Kids, I've got bad news. So much snow has fallen that the car is completely covered. The road is six feet deep in snow. We're going to have to dig the car out but there's no way we can drive anywhere before the snow melts.

Task: Continue the script.

Notes for Teachers and Other Educators

The activities in this workbook centre on creativity and imagination. With this in mind, it is important that the children are not guided too definitively. Punctuation, spelling and grammar are not the main focus here, important as they are.

Each activity is adaptable and you may wish to change the order of activities or to select only a few.

Story Prompts (pages 2-6)

These are comprised of a picture and the opening sentences of a story. Children are then invited to complete the story. You may wish to read the story opening with your students and discuss ideas for development of the plot. It is not essential that the children use the story opening in their own work. They may come up with their own ideas, inspired by the picture provided. A 'Winter Story' template has been provided.

Writing to Describe (pages 7-11)

These activities include a planning sheet, which encourages students to think about different parts of speech and language features such as onomatopoeia and metaphor. Stimulus pictures are included in the appendix at the end of this workbook, however it is recommended that children use their own imaginations to write their descriptions. A 'Winter Words' template is included.

Found Poetry (pages 13 – 18)

Found poetry encourages the unselfconscious use of poetic language. It does not require rhyme, metre or rhythm and is thus very easy to write. I have included three wintery texts in keeping with our theme. There is also a Found Poetry template.

The phrase bank may be enlarged to A3 and the children may cut out the phrases. They may then move them around or select some at random to form their found poem.

Acrostic Poems (pages 19 – 21)

Acrostic poems are as simple or as complex as the skills of the poet, which means they are a perfectly differentiated activity for writers of all abilities. You may wish to provide your lower ability students with the Winter Word Bank (page 40). Templates are included.

Haiku and Tanka (pages 22 – 25)

Ensure that your students can identify how many syllables are in a word before beginning these activities. The beauty of haiku and tanka is the discipline required in using only a few words. Examples are provided: please note that both types of poem focus on nature, with an added focus on emotion in tanka. You may find it useful to write a class haiku or tanka together, then split the children into groups to write a group haiku or tanka. Finally, children may write individual haiku or tanka. Templates are included.

Five-senses poems (pages 26 - 27)

These are extremely engaging poems, which children unfailingly love to write. Make sure you run through the five senses with your students before they attempt their own version. There is a Snowflake Planner provided, as well as a Five-Senses Template for their final draft.

The Art of Revising and Editing Your Work (pages 29-30)

Revision and editing skills are essential and often lacking in students of all ages. This activity asks students to fill in the gaps in *The Night is Darkening Round Me* by Emily Brontë. This is a nice activity for pairs and the children should be encouraged to come up with more than one version. There is a word bank provided on page 27, which includes the words from the original, together with some extras. You may choose to have the children cut the words out in order to move them around.

The original version of *The Night is Darkening Round Me* by Emily Brontë is included in the appendix. It should be emphasised that the children are not being asked to guess which are the original words: this is a creative activity in which they should select words they feel fit the gaps.

An Amazing Invention (pages 31-34)

This writing project is likely to take more than one session to complete, though different elements may be used independently of the whole. Students must identify a 'winter-themed' problem and come up with an invention to help address the issue. They describe their invention via a spider diagram (this could be developed into a piece of persuasive writing) and design a storyboard for a television/ online advert for their product. Models are provided for each activity.

These activities could easily be extended and adapted. For example, the children could research music appropriate to their advertisement, possibly even writing their own jingles.

Writing a Script (pages 37-38)

Students should read through the opening lines provided and continue the script. This activity works well in pairs and can easily be extended to embrace drama activities.

Final Notes

I hope you find this resource useful. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any feedback or queries. You may email me at info@bettertuition.co.uk or contact me via twitter or facebook (@bettertuition).

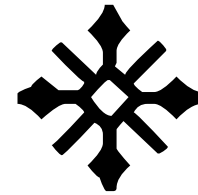
Christine McLaughlin, November 2018

Appendix I: Winter Word Bank Page I

A	E	
adventure	evergreens	
anorak	emerald	
arctic	F	I
B	February	ice
balaclava	fire	Ice skating
bells	fleece	icicle
blanket	fluffy	igloo
blizzard	flurry	J
blustery	fog	Jack Frost
boots	freezing	January
brisk	frost	jingle
C	frostbite	L
candle	frosty	lights
cap	frozen	love
chill	fruitcake	log
chimney	G	luge
cold	gale	M
cosy	gingerbread	merry
crackling	glittering	migrate
crisp	gloves	mince pie
crunchy	gusty	mistletoe
D	H	mittens
dark	hailstones	N
December	hibernate	New Year
dreary	holly	North Pole
duvet	hot chocolate	nutcracker

Appendix I: Winter Word Bank Page 2

O	snowflake
ornaments	snowman
overcoat	sparkle
P	star
pine cone	stocking
pine tree	sweater
plum pudding	sugarplum
polar bear	T
presents	thaw
pullover	tinsel
Q	toasty
quilt	toboggan
R	tree
radiator	U
rain	unwrap
red	W
reindeer	warm
ribbon	wassail
S	white
Santa	windy
scarf	winter
season	wintry
skate	wish
sledge	wrap
sleigh	wreath
sleet	Y
sniffle	yule log
snow	Z
snowball	zero degrees



Appendix 2: A Garden in Winter



Appendix 2: A Log Fire



Appendix 3: The Polar Bear



The night is darkening round me

By Emily Brontë

The night is darkening round me,
The wild winds coldly blow;
But a tyrant spell has bound me,
And I cannot, cannot go.

The giant trees are bending
Their bare boughs weighed with snow;
The storm is fast descending,
And yet I cannot go.

Clouds beyond clouds above me,
Wastes beyond wastes below;
But nothing drear can move me;
I will not, cannot go.