

Using Illustrations to Promote Creative Writing

Advice for Teachers

Whether writing a story or a poem, it sometimes helps to use illustrations. If a pupil has no idea what to write about you can show them some of these illustrations and see if there are any they like.

Once they have chosen one you can ask them a few different questions to help get them started:

- Are you going to describe this picture, or is this the place where something is going to happen?
- Sometimes the best poems or stories are descriptions of scenes
- If something is going to happen, is what you see in this picture the start of the story, the end, the middle...
- Are you in this story or poem? If so, what are you doing?

When writing a story or a poem, always ask the pupils to think about if they want to write in English, or in Shetland dialect.

Tell them that they can write in either, or in a mixture.

- They could write a story where the dialogue is in dialect, but the narration is in English
 - See "Shadowed Valley" by John Graham for an example
- They could write a poem where only some of the words are in Shetland dialect but most are in English
 - See "Winter" by Alex Cluness for an example

Once they think they are finished always get them to read through it and look for any corrections or possible changes.

Finally it's always good to type up and print work when finished!