

The Mystery of the Whispering Woods: A Narrative Scaffold

Learning objective: To use a range of descriptive devices and structural techniques to build tension and atmosphere in a creative narrative.

Follow this scaffold to build your story about an unexpected discovery. Use the word bank to help you link your ideas and improve your vocabulary. Ensure you show, rather than tell, your reader how your character is feeling.

Max adjusted his heavy rucksack and peered into the dense, emerald shadows of the forest, where the ancient trees seemed to lean in and share secrets of their own.

Word bank: Inexplicably · Furthermore · Beneath the canopy · A chilling silence · Consequently · Without a moment's hesitation · Shrouded in mystery · Meanwhile · The atmosphere shifted · Beyond expectation

1. The Arrival: Describe the setting using sensory language (sights, sounds, and smells). Start with: As Max stepped deeper into the woods, the air began to... (2 marks)

2. The Discovery: Introduce an unusual object or creature that Max finds. Start with: Suddenly, a faint, rhythmic humming sound drew his attention toward... (2 marks)

3. Building Tension: Describe Max's reaction to the object. How does his body language show he is curious or nervous? Start with: His heart hammered against his ribs as he reached out to touch... (2 marks)

4. The Turning Point: Something unexpected happens to change the situation. Start with: Without warning, the object began to glow, and the forest floor started to... (2 marks)

5. Resolution: How does the scene end? Does Max escape, or does he embark on a new journey? Start with: Taking a deep breath, Max realised that his adventure had only just... (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Challenge: Can you rewrite one of your paragraphs using a metaphor to describe the forest and a personification to describe the wind?