



TalkforWriting™

Reception

Talk for Writing Home-school booklet

# The Amazing Adventures of Max

by Sue Cove



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# The Amazing Adventures of Max

Reception workbook  
by Sue Cove



Hello, my name is Max and I'm a black Labrador. I love having adventures. An adventure is exciting and you never know what might happen. I'm just about to go on one now. Would you like to come with me? That's great!

There are lots of things to do and play, so, let's get ready and be on our way!



Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for taking the time to support your child with their learning. This booklet is designed to inspire and support your child to develop skills and confidence in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Along with Max the black Labrador, your child will be exploring a number of engaging, fun and purposeful activities. This booklet starts with a story followed by different activities:

- Let's listen – A Story Starter
- Developing Speaking and listening skills
- Vocabulary
- Rhymes and poems
- Mark making and handwriting
- Phonics
- Reading and Writing

Max will explain to your child what they will do and there are extra notes for guidance as well as additional ideas and resources.

At the end of the booklet, your child can talk about how they got on with their learning and you can add your comments too.



Enjoy the adventure!



In this adventure, I go on a long walk and find some sticks.

★ As you are listening to the story, think about where I go and what sort of sticks, I find.

You can listen to an audio version of the story here

<https://soundcloud.com/talkforwriting/max/s-FEjkqo3nza0>

## Max's Morning Walk

**Once upon a time**, there was a black Labrador called Max **who** lived on the edge of a small town with his family.

**Early one Spring morning**, Max woke up and thought to himself, "I'd like to go for a walk and collect some sticks." So, he barked and he barked and he barked until he had woken everyone in the house!

**As soon as** Max had his harness fastened, his family opened the door, stepped outside and set off on their walk. The sun shone down from a bright, blue sky and birds sang up above in the trees. Max's nose twitched with excitement as he sniffed the fresh air.

**First**, Max walked on a path near a canal. **As** he was walking, he saw a brown stick. Not too big, not too small but just right! "This looks a good stick," thought Max. **So**, he picked it up and continued on his way.

**Next**, Max walked along beside the canal **until** he came to a stone bridge. Max walked under the bridge where he found another stick. Not too heavy, not too light but just right! "This looks a grand stick," thought Max. **So**, he picked it up and continued on his way.

**After that**, Max walked on and on **until** he came to a deep, dark wood. There he found another stick that was not too tickly, not too prickly. **Unfortunately**, it

was an extremely long stick! **Luckily**, the path was very wide. 'This looks a fun stick', thought Max so he picked it up and continued on his way.

**Finally**, Max arrived at the beach where noisy seagulls swooped. He was feeling so hot that he jumped into the sea to cool down. Splash! Max swam round and round and round **until** he found another stick, floating in the sea. Not too straight, not too bendy but just right! "This looks an unusual stick," thought Max so he grabbed it and swam to the shore.

**At last**, Max and his family returned home. What a very long walk I've had, thought Max and look how many sticks I found! Max yawned. He curled up in his bed, closed his eyes and fell fast asleep dreaming of his next adventure.

Read the story with your child. Talk to them about the story. If you're unsure of where to start, Book Trust has many useful tips on sharing books with children:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/>

Choose a few questions to ask about the story like the ones below but don't ask too many! Model answering the questions, for example, 'I like the part when Max went to the beach because he goes swimming. Which part do you like?'

Encourage your child to respond in full sentences e.g. 'I like the part when.....because.....'



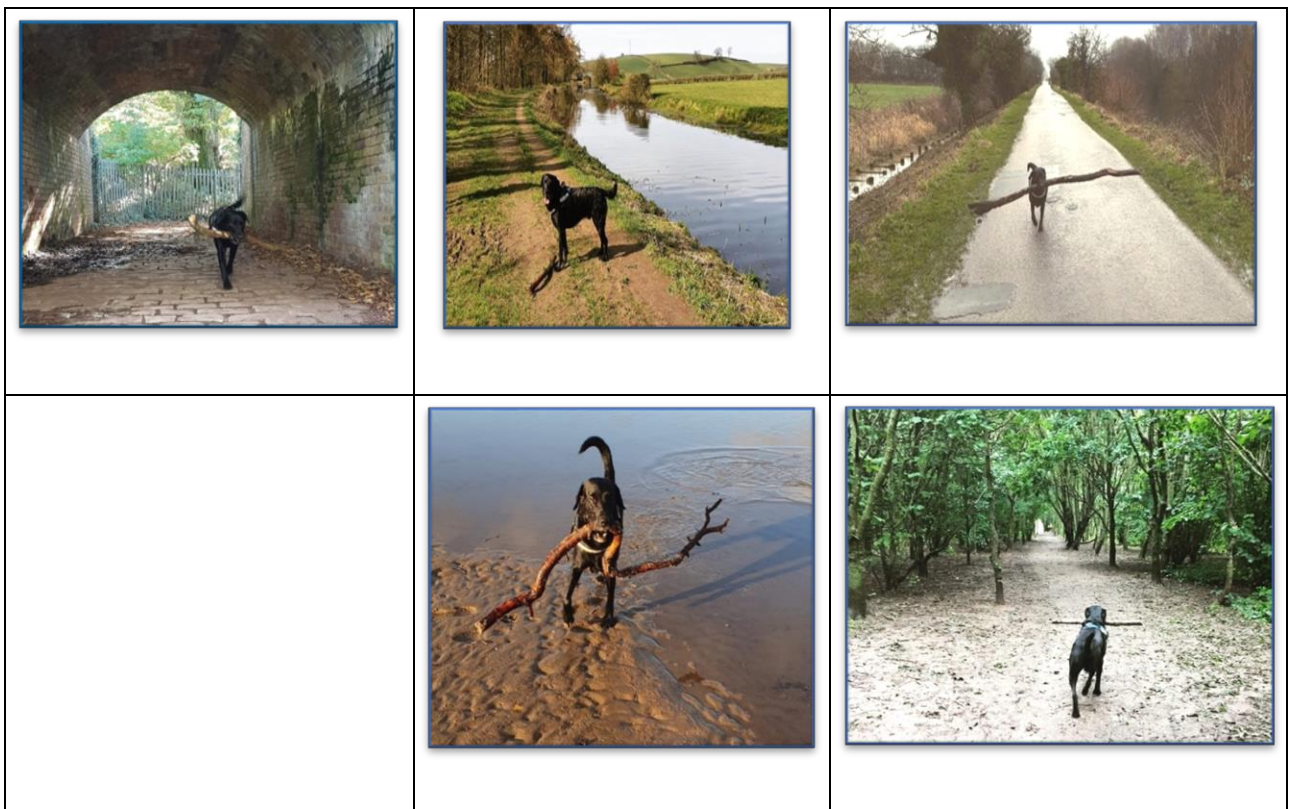
- ★ Where did Max go on his walk?
- ★ Have you ever been on a walk? Where did you go?
- ★ What sounds did Max hear at the beach? I wonder why he swam round and round?
- ★ How many sticks did Max find?
- ★ What were they like? Tell me, do you think Max had a favourite stick?
- ★ Tell me how Max felt when he got home?
- ★ How do you know?
- ★ Do you know any other stories where someone goes for a walk?



Oh dear! These photos from my walk have got muddled up. I need to stick them in my photo album. Can you help me to put them in the right order? Where did I go first?

Have a good look at the pictures of Max and then see if you can work out what order they should be in. Ask your helper to read the story again and work out the right order as you listen. Can you number each of the 5 pictures from the story? Think about :

- ★ Where did Max go **first**?
- ★ Where did he go **next**?
- ★ Where did he go **after that**? What was the problem?
- ★ Where did he go **then**?
- ★ Where did he **finally** go before he returned home?



## Getting events in the right order



Now the photos from the middle of my walk are in the right order, can you act out the story? What happened at the start of my story and at the end?

The pictures are all of events from the **middle** of the story. Look back at the story and talk about what happened at the **beginning** of the story. Help your child to see that:

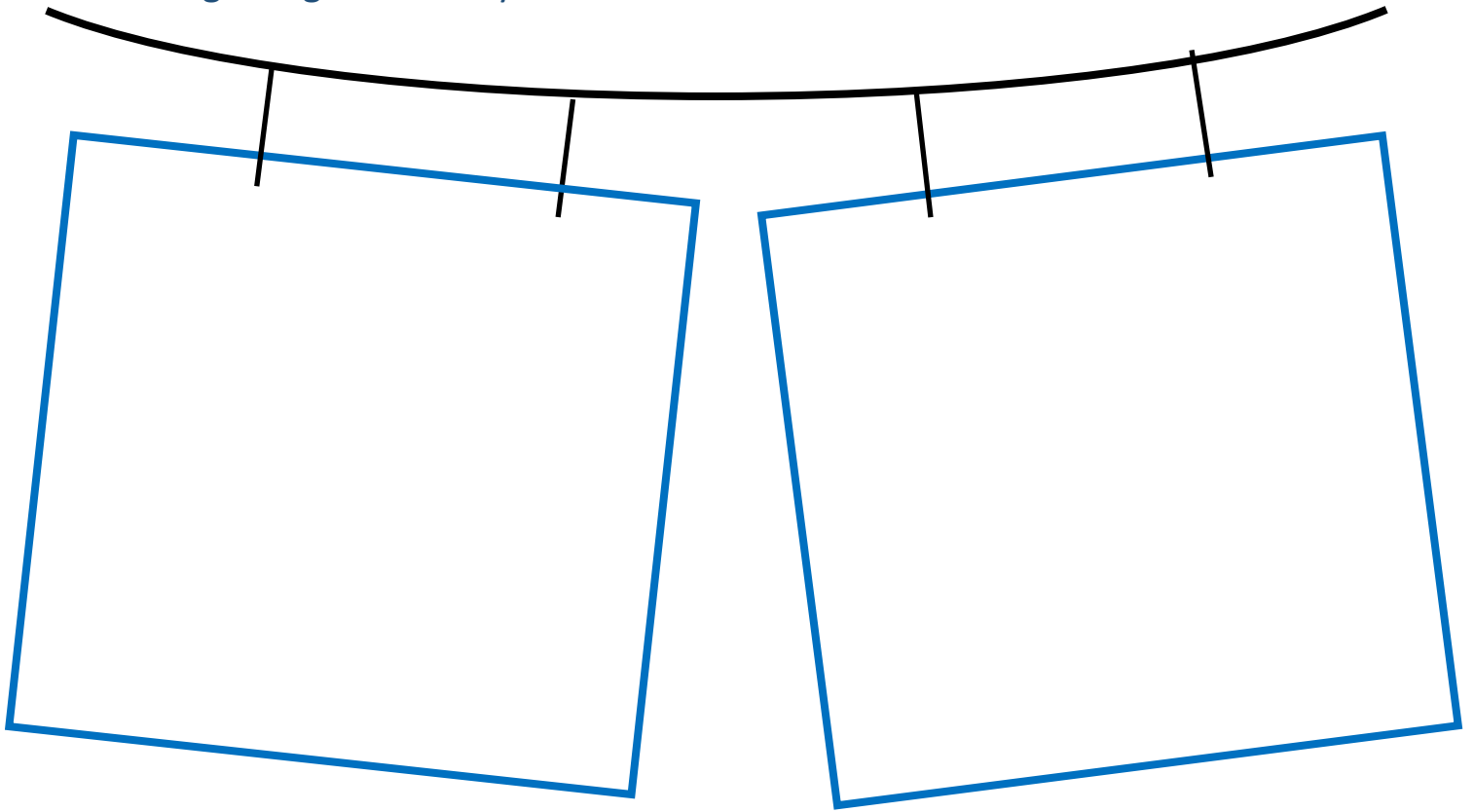
- *Max woke up.*
- *Then he decided he wanted to go outside*
- *So, he barked and barked.*

*Try acting out the story helping your child to imitate all the things that Max did in the order that he did them so at the end of the story they can act out how*

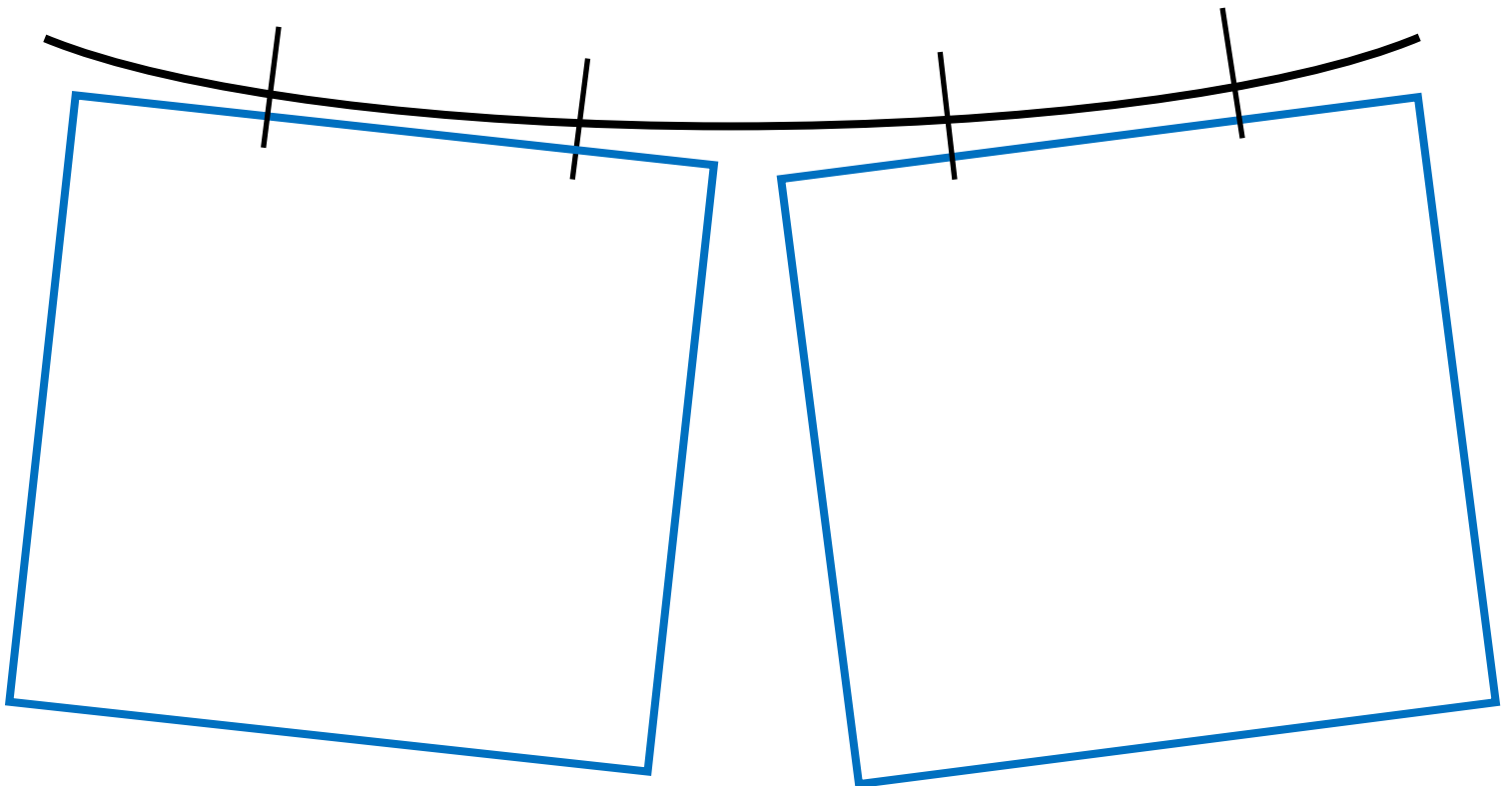
- *Max got into bed,*
- *fell asleep*
- *and dreamed.*

You might also want to try using pieces of paper or sticky notes for your child to draw on. Then arrange the pictures into the right order.

All the pictures were from the middle of the story. Can you draw two things Max did at **the beginning** of the story?



Can you draw two things Max did at **the end** of the story?





# Telling and inventing stories

- ★ Do you or any of your friends have a dog?
- ★ Have you ever taken a dog for a walk?
- ★ Tell your helper all about adventures you've had with a dog or make up an adventure with a dog. What was the funniest thing that happened? Was there anything scary?

Now make up a story about a walk with a dog and decide what happens.

Who will you go with?

Who might you meet? Family members, other dogs, neighbours, or your teacher.

Where might you go? Would you visit corner shops, a playground, a park?

What will happen? Is it funny or scary?

Start by drawing pictures below to help you plan your story and decide what words you want to go with your pictures. Your helper will read you the ideas here and add in more ideas.

<p>Where did you go next?</p> <p><i>After that, ...</i></p>		<p>What happened?</p> <p>Was it scary or funny?</p> <p><i>Suddenly, ...</i></p>	
			<p>What happened next?</p> <p><i>Luckily, ...</i></p>
<p>Where did you go first?</p> <p><i>First, we ...</i></p>			
<p>Where does your story begin? What is the dog called?</p> <p><i>Early one morning,</i></p>			<p>How did the story end?</p> <p><i>... happily ever after.</i></p>

Using your pictures to help you, now tell your story to your helper. If you are really lucky, they will write your story down and you can add in pictures and sign it.

## Warming up the words



Woof! Here are some words from my story for you to talk about and explore. They might be new words or ones that you already know.

Did you know that the thing that will help you most at school is knowing lots and lots of words? The more words you speak every day, the easier it will be for you to learn to read and write. If you're very good, your helper will explain all the words that perhaps you didn't know and help you use them. If you use them, you will remember them. Then you can explain the words to your friends and help them to learn.

Let's have a go now talking about some of the words from the story.

- First, we'll look at pictures to help us understand what the words mean.
- Then we'll look at some examples of how the word can be used.
- After that, let's see if you can talk about them.



### **harness**

Max is wearing a **harness**. A **harness** helps to control animals or people like little children.

You need to fasten the **harness** on your car seat.

What other animals might wear a harness?



### **extremely**

Max found an **extremely** long stick.

If something is extremely long then it is not just very long but really, really, really long!

An elephant is extremely heavy. A giraffe's neck is extremely long. Would a giant be extremely small?



### **unusual**

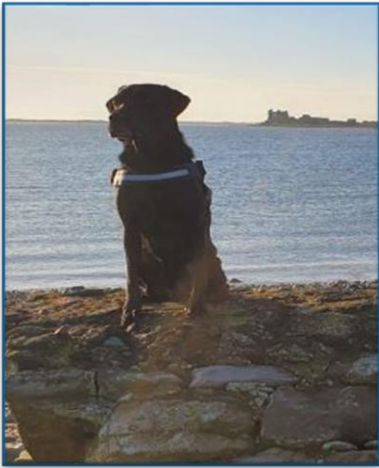
Max found an **unusual** stick.

If something is unusual, it isn't what you would expect. You wouldn't see it every day. It's strange or odd. What makes this stick unusual?

It would be unusual to wear a swimming costume to school.

Can you think of anything unusual? There are lots of unusual things now.

## Where's Max?



I am sitting on top of a wall at the beach.

But where is my friend Snowy?

Can you match up the words and pictures?

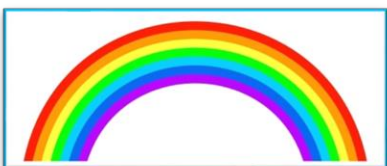
Words like **on**, **in**, **up**, **down**, **above**, **beside** and **through**, all tell us where something is. In a story, they tell us where the action is happening and help carry the story along. Look at the three pictures below and read the words together. Which word goes with which picture? Then put the words into sentences so we can hear how these words help us know where things are.



into



over



down

## Where's Snowy?

Now look at the pictures of Snowy and the chair. Ask your child to point to one picture and ask, 'Where's Snowy?' Help them to tell you, 'Snowy is on the chair,' etc so that they use all the words listed.

Now play the same game using one of your child's favourite toy animals and help them tell you exactly where the animal is in a sentence. If you want, also write the words on pieces of paper and ask the child to place the words next to the toy when it is in that position.

If you've got one of the *Where's Spot?* books, it's a great way of helping your child use these sorts of words. Your child's teacher probably calls these words *prepositions* because they tell you the position of things.



behind

under

upon

beneath

before

near

on

beside

in front of

in

## Rhyme time



Enjoy singing and clapping along to this rhyming song.

As you can see, both verses of *Bingo* are the same – you can repeat the verse as many times as you like. The whole point is to have fun singing, clapping and spelling out the dog's name. This will help your child with keeping a steady beat which will then help them with the patterns of language and the sounds of letters and words.

Then change the name *Bingo* for the name of any toy or real animal your child knows and on you go! If the name ends with *O*, that's grand. If it doesn't, just add on *O* to any name. This can lead to hours of fun!

### Bingo

There was a farmer who had a dog,  
And Bingo was his name-O.  
B-I-N-G-O!  
B-I-N-G-O!  
B-I-N-G-O!  
And Bingo was his name-O!

There was a farmer who had a dog,  
And Bingo was his name-O.  
(Clap)-I-N-G-O!  
(Clap)-I-N-G-O!  
(Clap)-I-N-G-O!  
And Bingo was his name-O

There are many rhyme resources available from the Booktrust so have a look at these sites to find more great rhymes.

[www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/rhymes/](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/rhymes/)  
[www.scottishbooktrust.com/songs-and-rhymes](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/songs-and-rhymes)

This rhyme about the seasons will help your child tune into the sounds of words and notice how they share many of the same sounds. It's also a great 'warm up' for our next activity!

*Spring is showery, flowery, browery,*

*Summer is boppy, croppy, poppy,*

*Autumn is breezy, freezy, sneezy,*

*Winter is slippy, drippy, nippy.*

Together, can you think up other words that sound the same?

Don't worry if it's a made-up word like *browery* – just help your child love the sound of words. That's what makes 'easy peasy, lemon squeezy' such fun to say.

Then your child can have fun saying real words and then coming up with lots of other 'words' that sound the same. The more they play with words, the better their vocabulary will become. And the more words they know, the better they will learn to read and write.

Watch Olive having fun squelching around in a little, boggy stream and making up words to describe what she's doing. See if you can hear all the words she is saying and say them with her. Her cousin Tala also joins in. [Click here.](#)



Now Max wants to join in the fun!

Here I am at the beach having a **lick** of my ice-cream. On my walk, I found a **stick**. What do you notice about these two words: **lick** and **stick**?

Yes, the end of the words sound the same, which makes them rhyme. In this game, if you think the words rhyme, then jump across the golden river.



### How to play the game:

You'll need a piece of fabric or a skipping rope to be a 'Golden River'. Place the 'golden river' across the floor (outdoors if possible).

- **Ask your child to say:** "Farmer, farmer may I cross your Golden River?"
- You select one word from the choices below (e.g. *stick*) and say: "Not unless your word rhymes with '**stick**'."
- Your child then says their word and, if it rhymes with **stick**, you let them jump the water.
- Then it's your turn to jump across so help your child choose a word you have to find a rhyme for. Don't forget, it's the sound of the word not the spelling that matters.

**stick**

tack

clock

luck

peck

Here's another set of words to play with:

blue

air

light

cool

sea

## The sounds right rhyme game

Decide which words sound the same and colour their boxes in with the same colour. Or you could put the same shapes next to them, like triangles.

sack

brick

rock

check

Jack

truck

sick

sock

trick

neck

duck

lick

chick



# Time for a little bit of reading and writing

ABC

Here are some words for you to read and use in sentences.

Help your child to read these words. If they need support, remember to **pause** to let them think, then **prompt**. Try pointing to the first letter and saying, "What sound do we say when we see that letter?" Remember to **praise** them for trying and tell your child the word if they are struggling – reading should be fun not frustrating for us all!

**dog tree stick wood**

**walk big mud path**

**run play beach fun**

Now let's put a few of these words into sentences and read them together:

The dog walked into the wood.

The dog found a stick next to the path.

The dog had fun playing in the mud.

The dog had fun playing on the beach.

He ran and ran and ran along the beach.

Now see if you can make up some sentences together about a dog or a toy that you know well and say them together several times. If your child has already started to write at school or at home, now try writing them down and read them together. Then see if your child can read them on their own and add some pictures

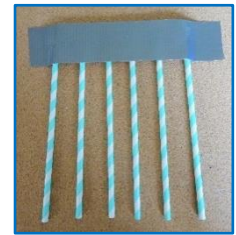
## Get weaving!

We're going to use sticks or straws to weave a pattern. Fun craft work also helps you hold a pen or pencil.

Read these instructions with your child and enjoy creating a piece of weaving using sticks, straws, ribbons and wool. Talk about what you are doing, for example, "Can you see how the ribbon is going **over** and **under**." This will help your child to understand these words.

### What you need:

Paper straws, small sticks, netting, Duct tape or other strong tape. Bits of ribbon, wool and string. A chopping board, and a place mat or tray.



### What you do:

1. First, place six straws or sticks on a board. Leave the same space between them. Stick tape **over** the top of the straws so they don't roll around.
2. Next, weave a ribbon **over** and **under** the straws. Then, weave another ribbon **under** and **over** the straws. Remember: weave one ribbon **over** and **under**, then the next ribbon **under** and **over** so it makes a pattern.



3. After that, keep weaving the ribbons until you are nearly at the end of the straws - see the last picture above...



4. Finally, put tape around the edges to make a frame.

Why not stick the weaving onto cardboard to create a picture and display them in your own art gallery. Ask your child to write their name on their woven work of art and think of a name for it, e.g. 'Rainbow dazzle'.

**The link below shows you how to weave a rainbow bracelet**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfTDxFN\\_Hpl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfTDxFN_Hpl)

# Your journey stick adventure



Find a stick and take it with you on a short walk. See if you can find some interesting things to fasten to your stick. Then use your stick and the things that you have found to talk about where you went on your walk, what you saw and how you felt.

Long ago, people in many countries used story sticks to help them tell other people the story of their journey when they returned. Objects were attached to the stick in the order in which they are found and colours represented how they were feeling.

Find a stick (a broom handle or a garden cane etc) and some coloured wool, string or ribbon. If you are unable to access a garden or go for a walk, then use your home or a room.

As you walk around, encourage your child to collect things that represent that room or space, or that interest them. Attach them to the stick in the order in which you find them. So, you might find a picture or a sock! If you're outdoors it could be a leaf or a feather.

After your walk, talk about where you went and what you found.

You can find more idea from The Woodland Trust using the link below:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/kids-nature-activities-self-isolation/>



## My ideas for a new story!



Can you think of places for me to visit and things for me to find in a new story? Or choose a different dog or toy who can be the hero of your story.

Now we've explored Max's story, we're going to invent a new one! It could be about Max, or you could use a dog you own or know - real or imaginary to be the hero of your story!

**First, talk about where your hero might go.** You can use your locality -places you know well like school, shops, playground, park, Grandpa's house etc., as well as ideas from other stories that you may know.

**Next, talk about the different things your hero could find.** In the story we began with, Max found sticks but in your story what could your hero find? (Fruit, toys, coins, pebbles, gold!) How could we describe them? (A red apple, a shiny coin, a round pebble, glistening gold.)

Start by drawing your ideas and talk your ideas through with your helper.

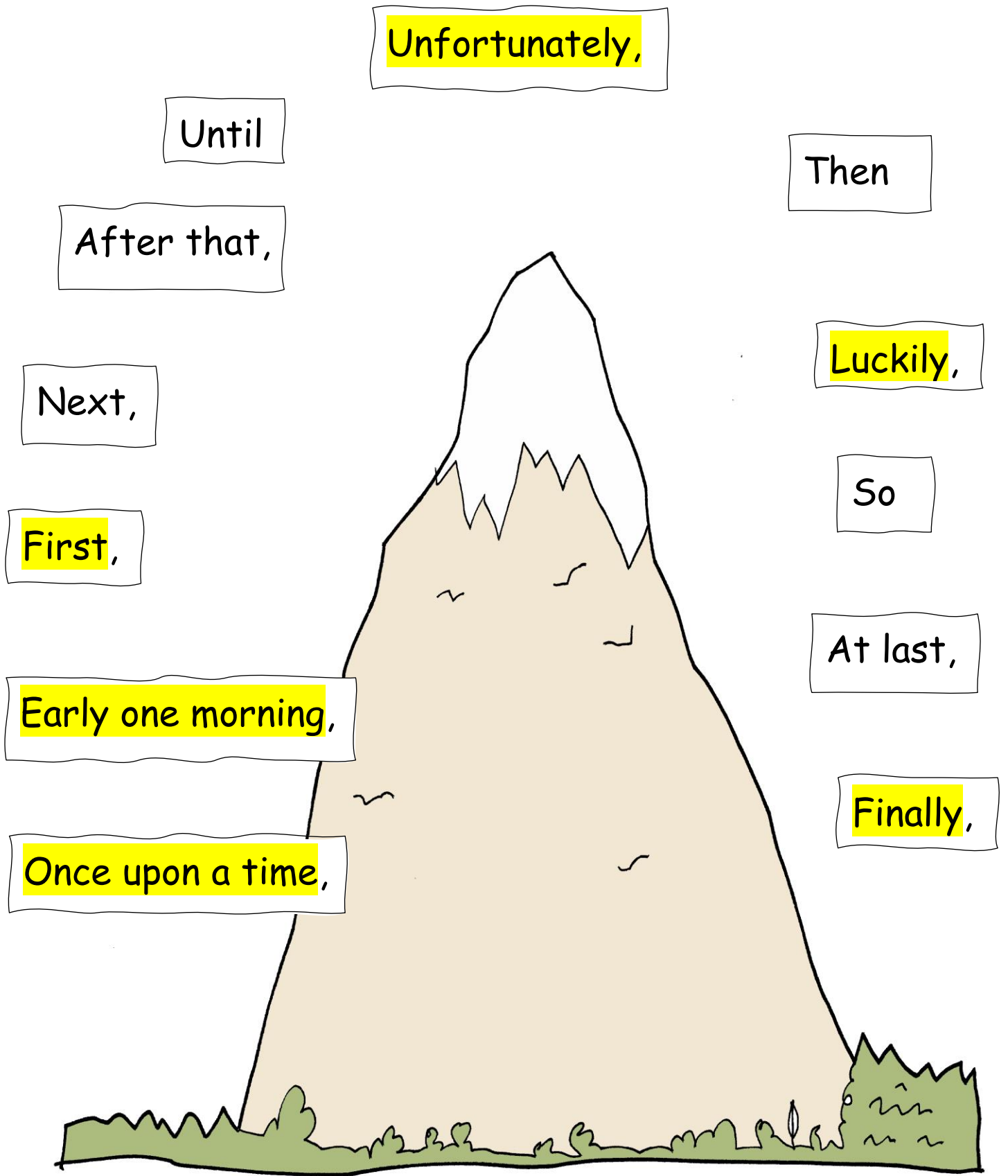
Where might your hero go?

What might your hero find?

Now decide where your story starts and end.

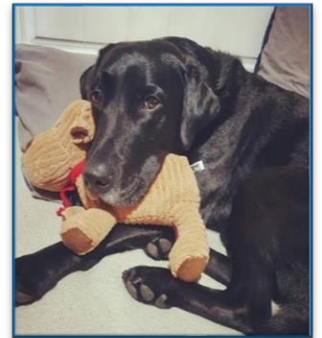
Now draw pictures from your new story to form a 'story map' using the story mountain on the next page to help you.

These words will help your story have a clear structure so we know where it starts and what happened next, what happened in the middle and how it ends, so try to use these in your story. They have been arranged into a story mountain to help you. You may want to change the little words around a bit or leave some out when you tell your story. Draw in pictures for each stage.



Now tell your story to your helper. They can help you make your story have a beginning, a middle and an end, just like the story mountain. Perhaps they can write it out for you and you can read it together at bedtime. And you can read it to your toys or your pet dog or cat if you have one. Max would love to hear your story, too!

I love listening to a story before I go to sleep. Here I am all ready for bed with one of my soft toys. I'm really looking forward to hearing your story!



You could also send your story and drawings to your friends and family to keep them entertained.

They will love to read your story too!

Your child could also turn into a zig zag book or make a small book to send to family and friends. You can find lots of ideas for making books at

<http://www.lovemybooks.co.uk/how-to>

Enjoy telling, writing and sharing your stories together!



Woof! Well done! Thank you for joining me on my adventure. I really enjoyed playing and working with you!

I hope you enjoyed the story of my walk and all the activities. Haven't we been busy!

What was your favourite activity?

*My favourite activity was .....*

*because .....*

*Draw one, two or three sticks to show how much you enjoyed our adventure. Your helper can draw sticks to show what they think too!*

Here are some more great stories about dogs:

- ★ ***Some Dogs Do* by Jez Alborough:** <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/some-dogs-do/>
- ★ ***Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy* by Lynley Dodd**  
<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/hairy-maclary/>
- ★ ***Oh No George!* by Chris Haughton** <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/oh-no-george/>
- ★ ***No!* by Marta Altés**

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**Sue Cove, former teacher and National Strategy Literacy Consultant, now works with Talk for Writing to help schools develop the approach.**

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