

A Portal Story

By the end of **next** week, you will have written a portal story: your main character will go through a magical door to a new world.

The following activities **this week** will prepare you for your writing next week.

Activity 1: The world we live in

Activity 2: I opened the magical door and saw...

Activity 3: Artistic challenge

Activity 4: Idioms

Activity 5: 'The Door'

Doors - the
world of
possibility



Introduction

Have you ever looked at a door and wondered what might be on the other side? Where may it lead? What may be hiding within? At first glance, a door is just a piece of wood, glass or metal that is opened and closed so that people can get in and out of a room, a vehicle or a space. But in the hands of a writer, a door represents a world of possibility, a world where things are not only hidden but often closed off and restricted. Together, through poetry, text games and narrative, we shall explore the potential that a door offers to you, the writer.



Activity One: The world we live in.

★ Can you make a list of all the things that you enjoy doing.

You may like to think about some of the following categories:

seeing family

seeing friends

day to day things

playing sports

exploring your interests

places you love to
visit

★ Can you draw and explain why you enjoy doing these things.

Activity Two: I opened the magical door and saw ...

This is an idea inspired by Kit Wright's poem 'The Magic Box' (you could search for this on the internet to read his poem). In the poem, Kit imagines what may be contained inside a magical box. We can use this idea to connect to what could be behind the magical door.

★ Before you begin, brainstorm a list of ideas for what might be behind the door. Let your imagination run wild as there is no wrong answer. Once you have your list, have a go at writing a poem, using the repeating opener: I opened the magical door and saw ...



Here's an example to help you get going:

I opened the magical door and saw shadows dancing.
I opened the magical door and saw a rainbow leading to another world.

I opened the magical door and saw people crying.
I opened the magical door and saw a magical fairground flooded in lights.

★ Once you have got your ideas, go back and see if you can add to them. You could add more description or bring the thing to life through action, e.g.

I opened the magical door and saw a shoal of hungry shadows, tangoing through busy streets.
Have fun adding to your ideas and let your imagination run wild.

The Magical Door

I opened the magical door and saw ...
a world turned upside down:
the sea, now a floating ceiling,
the clouds, an inviting carpet.

I opened the magical door and saw ...
the reflection of myself:
standing, searching, staring,
questioning how this was possible.

I opened the magical door and saw ...
a sweet-treat paradise:
clouds of candy floss,
drifting across a bubble gum sky.

Activity Three: Artistic Challenge

Doors are not only exciting for what may lie behind them, they can be designed to invite you into their world. A few years ago, a derelict area of Funchal in Madeira was transformed by local artists who decided to bring the dead doors to life. The beauty of the art opened new doors, and soon homes, shops and restaurants flourished there. Here are a few of those doors.

★ Have a go at drawing, painting or creating your own door. What design would you choose? What would it represent?




Activity Four: Idioms

An idiom is a common word or phrase which means something different from its literal meaning but can be understood because of its popular use, e.g.

★ Below is a list of idioms about doors.

Can you work out what they mean?

1. as one door closes, another opens
2. at death's door
3. behind closed doors
4. through the back door
5. dead as a doornail
6. foot in the door
7. keep the wolf from the door
8. knocking on heaven's door
9. leave the door open
10. show somebody the door
11. slam the door in somebody's face

Idiom	Meaning
Beat around the bush	Avoid saying what you mean, usually because it is uncomfortable
Bite the bullet 	To get something over with because it is inevitable

Activity Five: 'The Door'

We are going to consider the importance of fluency and expression when we read. Begin by reading Miroslav Holub's poem The Door.

★ **Make some notes on the poem:**

- What did you like about the poem? What was your favourite line and why?
- How did the poem make you feel?
- Which line in the poem did you find the most interesting and why?
- Are there any parts of the poem that leave you with unanswered questions?
- What questions would you like to ask the poet, Miroslav Holub?

★ **Decide how you would perform this out loud and have a go at performing at home.**

The Door by Miroslav Holub

Go and open the door.
Maybe outside there's a tree,
or a wood,
a garden,
or a magic city.
Go and open the door.
Maybe a dog's rummaging.
Maybe you'll see a face,
or an eye,
or the picture
of a picture.

Go and open the door.
If there's a fog
it will clear.

Go and open the door.
Even if there's only
the darkness ticking,
even if there's only
the hollow wind,
even if
nothing
is there, go and open the door.

At least
there'll be
a draught