

KICKING OFF YOUR CREATIVITY WITH MATT OLDFIELD

Here are my 5 top tips to help you make the most of our fun football story starters.

1) DON'T FORGET TO SET THE SCENE!

When we're writing about football, it's always really tempting to skip ahead to the exciting stuff, isn't it? I love the idea of starting a story with action straight away, but don't forget to set the scene at some point later on.

As you're writing your story, hopefully you've got a picture of what's going to happen in your head. That's what imagination is all about. Try to describe as much of that picture as possible for the reader because we want to be able to picture it too! If it helps, think about the senses:

- What would you **SEE**? (*colours, scarves, pitch, fans, players...*)
- What would you **HEAR**? (*chants, noise, the thud of the ball being kicked?*)
- What would you **SMELL**? (*grass, mud, hot dogs and burgers?!*)
- What would you **TOUCH**? (*ball against your foot/in your hands, boots sinking into the mud*)

Taste is maybe not so important for a football story, but hey - include it if you want to!

2) DESCRIBE THE ACTION, AS WELL AS THE SCENE!

How can we make a simple idea like 'then I scored a goal' sound as entertaining as possible? Remember, we're looking to tell really fantastic football stories here! Well, we've talked about describing the scene above; now, it's time to describe the action too.

- Where did the goal come from? (*a pass, a cross, a mistake by the keeper?*)
- How did you strike the ball? (*right foot, left foot, header, powerfully, accurately, calmly?*)
- Where did it end up? (*top bins, bottom corner, straight down the middle?*)
- And what about the keeper? (*went the wrong way, couldn't quite reach it, dropped it?*)

That's a lot of questions to answer! For this part, you'll want to think about two things in particular:

- A. **Verbs** – could you use a better word than 'kick' or 'shoot' to describe the action in more detail? For example, did you 'fire' or 'curl' the ball towards the goal?
- B. **Adverbs** – if you do still want to use 'kick' or 'shoot', could we add an adverb to help describe the action? For example, did you 'kick the ball **powerfully**' or 'shoot **accurately**'.

3) THINK DRAMA, THINK EMOTION!

For our 'Kicking off your Creativity' story starters, we've picked some of the biggest moments in football history. They're already packed with drama and emotion, but don't forget to add some of your own.

THINK DRAMA! Build up the tension as much as you can, especially if it's a penalty or a now-or-never moment. Try to keep the reader guessing and waiting impatiently to find out what happens next.

THINK EMOTION! How would that player be feeling in your story? By the way, the word 'happy' is banned – you know waaaay better adjectives than that!

4) GET SOME SPEECH IN THERE SOMEWHERE!

All stories need characters, and a great way to show off your characters is to get them speaking to each other. So, maybe your main character is going to talk to a teammate, or a manager, or an opponent, or even to themselves! Whoever it is, try to **make the speech as interesting as possible**, and useful for your story too. Ask yourself, 'what am I trying to show about my character?' *Bravery, determination, worry?*

5) NEARLY DONE NOW, BUT CAN WE MAKE IT ANY BETTER?

Once you've finished the first draft of your fantastic football story, don't forget to read it through! That might sound a bit boring, but trust me, it's really important. We read through our Ultimate Football Heroes books again and again before we decide that we're happy with them (oops, I banned that word, didn't it? Sorry!).

Remember, this is your own brilliant work, so you want it to be as good as it can possibly be. As you read through, think about any ways that you could make your story even **better**. Think:

- ADJECTIVES
- ADVERBS
- DRAMA
- EMOTION
- SPEECH

Be sure to share your stories with us @nfm_learn @footballmuseum and @footieheroesbks