

*Mister Moon* (dir. Mitchell and Kenyon, 1901)  
*A Trip to the Moon* (dir. Georges Méliès, 1902)  
*The ? Motorist* (dir. W.R. Booth, 1906)

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English,  
Key Stage 3

The third and final of the Sci-Fi Creative Writing Unit, this takes various Sci-Fi shorts and uses them as prompts for student exploration of writing within the genre.

Looking at how the visual can be transferred to writing; cinematic structures; 'show, don't tell' writing technique. Students get a chance to discuss ideas about characterisation within film. Students should have already watched the films for this unit, but may need a reminder-watch of *A Trip to the Moon* and *The ? Motorist*. They should begin by thinking about why these films show the Moon with a face, and what the Moon may be thinking during these films. This leads to the development of a short piece of *first person* writing whereby students write a short story as the moon. Students enhance their understanding of genre and have the opportunity to study this in some depth; they also will develop and improve their own creative writing, focusing specifically on developing interesting ideas and using appropriate structures.

### Lesson Objectives

- To understand the key ideas found within Sci-Fi and to use these ideas in our own creative writing.
- To develop our first-person creative writing skills.

### Curriculum Links

- Key Stage 3 Creative Writing in different genres.
- Linked clearly to future creative writing tasks at Key Stage 4.

### You will need...

*A Trip to the Moon* (1902) DVD and *The ? Motorist* via the Sci-Fi in the Classroom page.

Plenty of scrap paper for students to write ideas on.

## Activities

**TRAILER:** How does Science Fiction change over time?

Watch *A Trip to the Moon* and *The ? Motorist*.

Ask if any of the students can tell you why this film is an example of the 'Sci-Fi' genre. If not explain what sci-fi is (futuristic and deals with elements of the imagination/things that aren't currently possible – like eating cheese on the moon!).

Explain that they are going to continue looking at some sci-fi films to inspire their own creative writing, and today they will be working on 'The Face of the Moon'.

Ask the students if they noticed anything interesting about the Moon in these two short films? Hopefully they will arrive at 'it had a face' on their own, but if not use questioning to prompt this.

The students are then tasked with creating a mind map considering what the moon may be *feeling* in these films, and why. Give them between 5 and 10 minutes to do this – you may want to re-show the silent films with this as a specific focus. Take feedback from the group.

**MAIN ATTRACTION:** Discussion and Planning

Students' main task is to write their own 'The Face of the Moon' story.

Explain that, unlike their other two stories, this is a *first person narrative*. Check that they know what this is. Explain that you are going to write a piece from the moon's point of view – and that something specific could happen (like they receive visitors from earth), or their work could simply be a diary-entry style 'Day in the Life Of...'

Before they begin planning, though, they should have time to discuss and write down ideas for their story. In order to encourage students to feel free to 'get it wrong' and develop their confidence in the writing and drafting process, they should do this on scrap paper, and feel free to cross things out/throw things away. Ideally, they should spend between 15 and 20 minutes on this process. They can work on their own, in pairs, or use the following structure to maximise the possibility for discussion.

The students should plan under the headings 'Is my Moon male or female and why?'; 'What happens'; 'What do I feel like?' and 'How does my story end?':

- Number the students 1-4.
- For planning for 'Characters', students should plan with the student with the same number on the table to their left.
- For 'How they get to the Moon', students should plan with the student with the same number on the table to their right.
- For 'Beginning', Number 1s should plan with the number 4s on their table; number 2s with the number 3s.
- For 'Ending', Number 1s should plan with the number 3s on their table; number 2s with the number 4s.

### **END CREDITS: Writing Time**

Students now have time to work on their own creative writing piece. They should use all of the discussion and ideas used so far in the lesson. They could do this either in their exercise books, or you might want to book a computer room/get separate paper and get them to type up or write up their stories for display.



# SCI-FI

## DAYS OF FEAR AND WONDER

### Sci-Fi Creative Writing Narrative Frame: Moon Stories

My title: \_\_\_\_\_

Outline of my plot (what happens):

#### **Section One: Introduction**

In this section you should introduce your main characters and describe your setting.

#### **Section Two: The Main Event**

Here you should describe the main event of your story: what is the key thing that happens?

#### **Section Three: The Ending**

Here you should write the ending of your story – describe how the events are resolved.

## Extras

### Other Ideas

#### *For Key Stage 4 or 5 English Language Student*

- One or more of these films could be used as an ‘inspiration’ resource in students’ creative writing units (e.g. in preparation for a creative writing coursework, show the film, then get students to write their own piece based on it with little to no scaffolding work).
- The silent films in particular are useful as a prompt in a lesson about structuring interesting narrative, and particularly in teaching students about the importance of a simple narrative. (as opposed to the ‘this happened then this happened etc’ formula)

#### *For Key Stage 3 Students*

- For lower ability students, or simply as a scaffold, see the ‘creative writing frame’ document attached, which can be used to help students structure their narrative when they get to the individual writing section of the lesson (End Credits).

### Read

Sci-Fi stories about the Moon...

*The Magical Land of Noom* by Johnny Gruelle (1922)

*Prelude to Space* by Arthur C Clarke (1951)

Sci-Fi stories about Journeys...

*The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams (1979)

*Dune* by Frank Herbert (1965)

### Watch

*A Grand Day Out* (dir. Nick Park, 1989)

*The Automatic Motorist* (dir. W.R. Booth, 1911)