

# Walking with unicorns



Focus your class on the skills of producing non-chronological reports with **Pie Corbett's** fantastical, mythological beasts...

## THE STORM UNICORN

The Storm Unicorn is a type of unicorn that has become very rare.

A Storm Unicorn has the body of a horse and a long horn. The horn is usually a spiral shape and sticks out from the middle of its head. Most are a beautiful ebony colour with flashes of gold and silver that look like lightning. As a Storm Unicorn moves, it sends out showers of tiny, electric splinters.

Like the Common Unicorn, the Storm Unicorn lives in forests. They are very shy and therefore are not often seen. During the daytime, they sleep under bushes or curled up amongst ferns. At night, the Storm Unicorn emerges and, if you are lucky, can be seen by moonlit pools. They are easy to detect because they make a low rumbling sound as they breathe.

Storm Unicorns have a fairly limited diet. In the main, they live on leaves, grass and other forms of vegetation. However, they can also be tempted with apples.

Additionally, some

like to eat nuts. Be careful when you are near a Storm Unicorn because their bodies can give off an electric shock!

Unfortunately, because Storm Unicorns have magic in their horns, this has meant that they have been hunted almost to extinction. Their horns are ground down to a paste that can then be used to enchant even the cruellest of tyrants. Over the years, so many Storm Unicorns have been killed that they have learned to stay away from mankind.

The last known sighting of a Storm Unicorn was in 1673 by a man called Dr Dapper who claimed that he saw one whilst walking in the woods. The most amazing thing about Storm Unicorns is that if you meet one, it can bring you great luck. For this reason, many people still hope to catch a glimpse of this most beautiful and fiery creature.

## THE FROST UNICORN

There are many different breeds of unicorn and one of the most intriguing is the Frost Unicorn. Very little is known about this variety because it camouflages itself so well that it is rarely ever seen.

Would you be able to recognise a Frost Unicorn if you saw one? In fact, they are very similar to the large majority of unicorns. Like most unicorns, they have a long horn, the body of a horse and excellent eyesight. Typically, they are an amazing white colour which glitters as their hair catches the sunlight. However, a few have been spotted which are a light green colour. This allows them to blend in amongst forest vegetation. Furthermore, they have amazing teeth made of diamonds and their tails consist of icy, silver hair. The main feature of the Frost Unicorn is that it freezes anything that it touches. Amazingly, they scatter flakes of snow as they move along.

No one actually knows where Frost unicorns live during the summer months. It is thought that they hibernate in the North Pole, possibly buried beneath ice caps. However, in the winter they can be seen hiding in forests. If you wish to see a Frost Unicorn, then you should wait by a moonlit pool when the snow is falling. You will need to keep quite still and be patient. Remember to take some icicles with you as Frost Unicorns

love to lick ice as it keeps their body temperature stable.

Are Frost Unicorns dangerous? Many people believe that they are because they have the ability to enchant anyone who sees them. Children and adults have disappeared after seeing a Frost Unicorn and it is believed that they have been tempted into

riding a unicorn. Unfortunately, if you touch a Frost Unicorn, you run the risk of being turned to ice! So, anyone curious enough to track a Frost Unicorn should be very careful.

## Free resource

**GET A WHITEBOARD-FRIENDLY VERSION OF PIE'S INSTRUCTIONS...**

If you would like to share this example with your class on the whiteboard, you can download a copy from the following website [teachprimary.com/walkingwithunicorns.php](http://teachprimary.com/walkingwithunicorns.php)



**Read the explanations on pages 16–17 and then try the following activities**

**Introducing the topic**

Every child loves unicorns. They fascinate children. It can be helpful to work on imaginative animals before moving to writing about real ones. You could begin your unit of work on non-chronological reports by writing about unicorns or dragons. Once the children have become familiar with the rhythm and flow of language then you could move on to writing about different animals.

**Working with the texts**

You could begin by finding out as much as possible about unicorns. The internet is a great source, though be careful to check any websites that you are using. You could start by drawing a text map and learning the 'Storm Unicorn' orally. Carry out various activities to help the children internalise the language patterns and information:

- Pretend you are an interviewer on 'Unicorn Watch'. Interview an expert about the Storm Unicorn.
- Role play a presentation about the Storm Unicorn.
- Present the information pictorially – draw the unicorn and label it.

Work with the children to develop 'the ingredients for writing a report'. Use the list as a guide for the class shared writing, the children's own writing and evaluation. They will notice such key points as:

- Use a clear title so the reader knows what the report is all about.
- Organise the information into sections.
- Start paragraphs with either a sub heading or a 'topic sentence'. A topic sentence tells the reader what the paragraph is about, e.g. "Unicorns have a varied diet".
- Use connectives to add in extra information, e.g. also, furthermore, moreover, additionally.
- Use 'generalisers' to enable you to talk about the subject in general, e.g. some, most, many a few, the majority, these tend to, etc.
- Use adverb 'starters' to highlight how the reader might feel when reading the information, e.g. amazingly, curiously, weirdly, fantastically, etc.
- Try using questions to hook the reader's interest, e.g. "Would you recognise an ogre if one came calling?"

Look at both texts and work out how the writing might be organised by 'boxing the text up', e.g:

- Opening – introduce the reader to the subject of the report: what is it/definition.
- Description – what it looks like.
- Habitat – where it lives.
- Diet – what it eats.
- Intrigue the reader – most amazing thing.
- End – save up a final point or fact.

**Writing your own unicorn report**

Tell the class that you are all going to work on writing reports to go into 'A Guide to Unicorn's of the British Isles'.

Everyone can have their own unicorn (Sun Unicorn, Spotted Unicorn, Rainbow Unicorn, etc.) with different habits. Once they have written about their own unicorns then you could move on to children writing reports about other mythical creatures or real animals. They will need the same language features – just different information.

**You could begin your unit of work on non-chronological reports by writing about unicorns or dragons**

