

Alien Landing



Pie Corbett's extraterrestrial adventure will have children itching to invent their own close encounters...

The sun slipped behind the distant hills, painting the mountains red and black. Shadows lengthened, deepening the darkness. Wind whispered through the grass as if praying. Warily, Tom and Jez picked up their fishing gear. It was late and they knew that they would be in trouble. But holidays only came once a year and they were just a mile from the cottage where they were staying. "Come on," mumbled Jez, picking up his rod and turning to go.

At that moment, the boys froze. From somewhere overhead they heard a low whirring sound. Half a mile away a glowing light appeared. It streaked towards the forest and then hovered, casting beams of brilliant light down into the dark trees. The boys turned to stare at each other. They were both thinking the same thing...aliens! Tugging them deeper and deeper into the forest, the strange lights shone down like silvery ropes. Without warning, there was a rush of roaring wind that tore at the trees. Then the lights began to flicker in a mesmerising pattern.

Half stumbling, Tom and Jez staggered

through the thicket, drawn towards the light. As they drew closer, they could see that it was an enormous spaceship. Crouching behind a bush, hearts thumping, they waited and watched. The ship was larger than a bus and circular. It hovered just above the ground. Lights shimmered and a door opened. Out of the dark interior, a shadow began to move...

It was twenty-four hours later that Tom woke with a start, though at that point he didn't realise how much time had passed. He was cold and at first couldn't remember where he was or what had happened. Beside him, Jez lay curled up. Fast asleep with his thumb stuck in his mouth. Tom stared around him. They were still in the forest and the bushes and grass had been flattened down. Trees were scorched. Of course, the spaceship!

No one believed them and what was worse they couldn't remember what had happened after the ship's door had opened. The doctor said that it was amnesia brought on by shock. They both knew that the space ship had landed and an alien had begun to appear but after that,

the next 24 hours were a complete blank. In the end, the police went away muttering about time wasters - and left them to get on with the rest of their holiday.

It was only when he went to bed that night that Tom found it. In his pocket there was a jet black pebble. It was shiny and comforting to hold. He rubbed the smooth surface and as he did so, it began to warm and then it glowed. Weirdly, Jez had also found a stone in his pocket. A present perhaps - a present from another world. But what were the stones for? Tom wasn't too sure if he wanted to know.

Free resource

GET A WHITEBOARD-FRIENDLY VERSION OF PIE'S STORY...

If you would like to share this story with your class on the whiteboard, please email inbox@teachprimary.com with 'Alien landing' in the subject bar. We will email a whiteboard-friendly version of the text back to you!



Read the story on pages 18-19 and then try the following activities

Flash forward

This story is built around a simple idea. The main characters are out one evening when they hear a noise and see

strange lights. They go to explore and get closer only to discover that they are watching an alien spaceship landing. The spaceship's door opens and an alien begins to appear. The story then shifts forward 24 hours. The boys wake up and cannot remember what has happened. However, they both have a memento from the ship.

Working with the story

Loiter with the story for at least two or three days, if not longer. This will help the less confident internalise the patterns. Make sure that they have heard the story being read and read it themselves as often as possible. Display it on the interactive whiteboard so that it can be seen by everyone. Deepen understanding with the following activities:

- Role-play the boy's conversation at the start of the story.
- Help the children enter the world of the story by getting them to quietly make notes – when the children are hiding in the forest, what can they see, what can they hear, what are they thinking?

- Mime in pairs creeping through the forest, crouching and watching.
- Draw the spaceship.
- Role-play Tom and Jez's parents waiting for them.
- When they wake up, Tom makes a mobile phone call to his Mum – in pairs, role-play the phone call.
- In role as journalists, interview the children and write a 150 word news story about their 'alien' sighting.
- Write a list of ideas about what the black pebble can do.

To help the children write a version of the story, try the following ideas:

- Make a list of possible 'settings' that could be used. It helps if children either use a place that they know well or use an image to look at.
- Begin by creating storyboards so everyone draws a cartoon version of their plot, with a box for each paragraph.
- Use the storyboards for an initial telling of the stories with children working in pairs.
- Plan a class version using a storyboard. Turn this into a simple planning grid that can be used to capture helpful words and phrases.
- Stage the writing each day so that you can use shared writing to model a paragraph before the children attempt their own version.
- Work from the reading into the shared writing before the children have a go themselves.
- Think about how the characters might feel and then decide how they would behave.
- Avoid too much dialogue.
- Pitch the shared writing just above the level that the children are working at.



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Writing your own version

I would begin by 'boxing up' the story to show what is happening in each paragraph. This can then be used as a basis for a new version, e.g.

ALIEN LANDING	THE UNDERLYING PATTERN	IDEA FOR NEW STORY
Two boys pack up their fishing gear and set off for home as it is getting dark.	The main characters are out at night.	Shane and Kaz are going home after their football club has finished. It's getting dark.
They hear a sound and see lights. They go to explore, thinking it might be a flying saucer.	They hear and see something unusual and go to see what it is.	They hear/see something strange behind the old factory and go to explore.
They hide nearby and see the space ship. The door opens and an alien begins to appear.	They get closer to find it is an alien landing.	They hide and watch as an alien ship lands.
24 hours later they wake up to find themselves still in the forest.	24 hours later they wake up.	24 hours later they wake up and cannot remember what happened.
They cannot remember what happened once the space ship door had opened. The doctor says they have amnesia.	They cannot recall what has happened.	No one believes their story about the space ship.
But - they both have a memento – a black pebble that glows.	But – they have a memento that can only have come from another world.	But – they have been left with a transporter that turns them invisible and can transport them anywhere!