# The Storybuilding Tool Kit - Mystery

**ABC ME screening details: Friday** 29 May, 2020 at 1:25pm

This episode can also be viewed on [ABC iView](https://iview.abc.net.au/show/storybuilding-tool-kit) after the scheduled screening time.

**Key learning areas: English**

**Level:** secondary

**About: Keep your readers in suspense and make every character a suspect!**

## Before the episode

**Genre** as defined by the [English Textual concepts](http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/content/genre) simply ‘means ‘type’ or ‘kind’ and refers to groups of texts that have similarities in form and function.’ Most texts follow recognisable patterns. However, this does not mean that they fit neatly into one genre. Rather, many contemporary texts contain elements of several genres. For example, the Harry Potter series contains elements of both fantasy and ‘schoolyard drama’.

A genre is defined by the patterns (codes and conventions) evident in a range of texts we consider to be part of that type or kind. Codes and conventions of the mystery genre include: a crime to be solved, clues to follow, a detective type character to solve the crime and often a setting based in a city.

1. Create a mind map identifying the features (codes and conventions) of the mystery genre. You may wish to illustrate your mind map.
2. Identify three characteristics of the archetypal protagonist and antagonist found in mystery stories (hint: consider characters like Scooby Do, Sherlock Holmes or the characters in ‘Stranger Things’).

## During the episode

1. The program begins by posing the question “How do we write mysterious stories?” and then asks you to write a story of the ‘lost toy’. Identify and explain the four elements the episode identifies as key qualities for writing a mystery.
2. Building a world: identify four things the author Rebecca Lim includes in her stories.
3. Orientation, complication, climax and resolution are aspects of plot structure. With a mystery story this type of structure can include various twists and turns. Name two twists identified in this episode.

## After the episode

1. What was the last object you lost? Where do you think it went, who might have taken it and why? Create your own plot overview of a mystery story based on this everyday item and event in your household.
2. When constructing your plot overview outline each character and their roles. You may wish to research mystery archetypal characters to help add detail to your character profiles. Write and illustrate character profiles representing the characteristics of the protagonist and antagonist in your story.
3. Construct a story board that unpacks the orientation (setting), complication, climax and resolution.

**Follow-up activity:** Chose one of the two options below.

1. Persuasive response: write a short persuasive speech, where you defend the antagonist in your story. You should use language that is persuasive and attempts to convince your audience of their good qualities and why they might be innocent of the crimes they have been accused.
2. Write a dialogue between you and a character of authority (a teacher, Principal, police officer, parent) where you try to convince them that your character is innocent of the crime of which they have been accused.

# NSW teacher notes

This is an optional standalone resource that could supplement student learning. The activities align with syllabus outcomes across stages and can be modified to meet the needs of your students. Students can complete the activities while learning at home and in the classroom. All activities can be completed without access to the internet or a device. Teachers could collect student work to offer feedback and as evidence of learning.

## Learning intentions

* To understand the mystery genre
* To experiment with writing that reflect the mystery genre

## Resources

* Pen
* Paper

## NSW English K-10 Syllabus outcomes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Stage 4 | Stage 5 |
| **EN4-7D** A student demonstrates understanding of how texts can express aspects of their broadening world and their relationships within it. | **EN5-6D** A student investigates the relationships between and among texts |

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