

5 Reasons Your Child Freezes During Composition

...and what to do instead

Hi! I'm Ms Umi! ✨

Thank you for downloading this guide!

As a teacher and a parent myself, I know how discouraging it can feel when you really want to help your child, but are not sure how to. My hope is that this guide helps you and your child feel a little calmer, a little more confident, and a little less stuck. Even small steps can make a big difference over time!

I've spent over 15 years teaching English in MOE schools, special needs schools and tuition centres. I started Happy Quills to support children who feel stuck, overwhelmed, or unsure of how to begin. My teaching focuses on clear, step-by-step guidance, strong foundations, and helping children build confidence in a safe space. I also believe learning should feel enjoyable, because when children feel relaxed and engaged, they learn better.



Ms Umi

START HERE

If your child stares at the page, writes three lines and stops, or says "**I don't know what to write**" every single time, **you're not alone**. This is one of the **most common struggles** I see in Primary school children. The good news?

It's almost never about ability. Here's what's really going on, and what actually helps.

This guide will help you do one thing well:
help your child start.

Not finish perfectly. Not write a top-scoring composition in one sitting.
Just start with more clarity and less stress.

That matters, because once a child can start, writing gets easier.

Use this guide when:

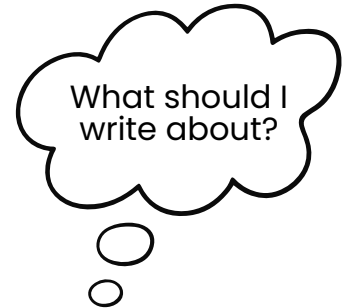
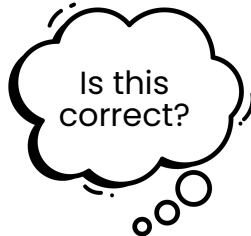
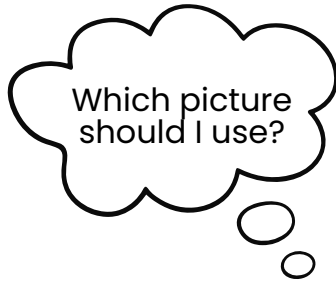
- your child has no ideas
- your child feels overwhelmed by picture prompts
- your child keeps waiting for you to give the answer
- your child writes very little even when they can talk about the topic

You can read this in one sitting and try the method today.

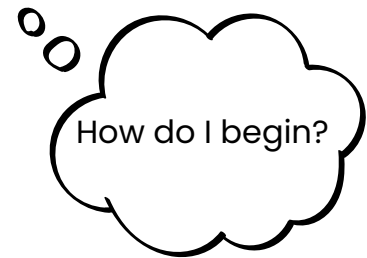
Many children can talk about a story. However, when it comes to writing it down in a story-like manner, they get stuck because they are trying to think of **EVERYTHING** at once.

The real problem is that your child does not know how to:

- choose where to start their story
- break events or actions into a simple sequence
- turn it into sentences



They may be asking themselves



REASON 1: They don't know where to start

Most children freeze at the beginning because no one has taught them a reliable way to kick off a story. They're waiting for inspiration, and it doesn't come.

What to do instead?

Teach them to start with a speech every time in the beginning. Something that **one of the characters in the story** would say.

Example:

"Hurry up!" Mum called anxiously.

There you go. They now have the **FIRST** sentence of their composition **done..** The best part is that this first line will instantly hook your reader if done right!

REASON 2: They have ideas but can't organise them

Again, your child isn't out of ideas. They're **overwhelmed** by them.

Too many thoughts, no system for sorting them, and the clock is ticking.

What to do instead?

Use a **simple planning structure** such as the **Story Mountain** in Reason 5 before writing.

Ask them guiding questions using **5WIH**.

Who is in the story? **What** are they doing? **Where** are they? **When** did this happen?
What goes wrong? **How** does it get resolved? **How** do the characters feel?

A few questions. **Ten minutes**. The blank page becomes a plan.

REASON 3: They're afraid of getting it wrong

Children who have been corrected heavily, marked down, or told their writing "**isn't good enough**" learn to write as little as possible.

Less writing means fewer mistakes.

It feels safer.

What to do instead?

Separate the planning stage from the writing stage from the editing stage.

When your child is generating ideas, there are no wrong answers.

Confidence builds when the process feels safe.

REASON 4: Their vocabulary feels too small for the story in their head

They know what they want to say but they just don't have the words.

So they settle for simple sentences and short answers because **those feel manageable.**

What to do instead?

Build a **small bank** of useful phrases around common topics:
school, family, outdoors, friendship.

Even **ten strong phrases per topic** gives a child something to reach for when their own words run out. This can simply be in a small exercise book!

REASON 5: They've never been taught how to write, only told to write

This is the biggest one.

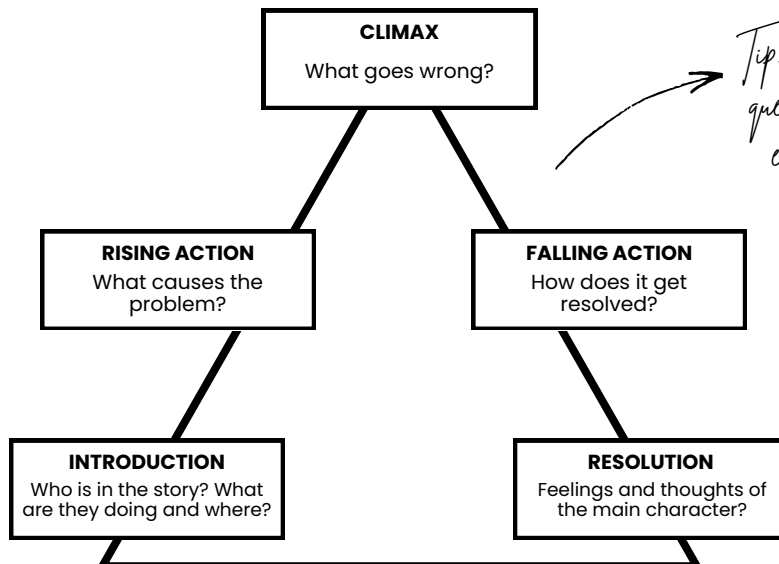
Many children sit in classes where they're given a topic and told to write. Yes, teachers in school may teach them some structure but unfortunately, most of them are too burnt out at work to be able to really scaffold it for the children and provide them with enough practice.

What to do instead?

Break every composition into parts.

Introduction. Rising action. Climax. Falling action. Resolution.

When each part has a job, the whole thing stops feeling impossible.



Tip: Use the guiding questions to answer each paragraph

If this resonated, your child isn't struggling because they can't write. They're struggling because **no one has broken it down for them yet.**

That's exactly what we do at Happy Quills: **step by step**, in a **small group** where every child is noticed.

**Want to see if
this lesson
style suits
your child?**

Contact us with your **child's level** and **biggest English struggle**, and we'll recommend the most suitable class or trial option.