

Rob Lloyd Jones's Six Story Challenges

Rob Lloyd Jones is the award winning children's author of over 80 books, including the *Wild Boy* and *Jake Atlas* adventure novels for Walker Books and the best-selling *See inside* and *Look inside* books for Usborne Publishing.

Here he shares six story-telling tips, and sets six simple challenges to help you write your own amazing story.



CHALLENGE 4 - STARTING A STORY

Hello all

Now that you have written a little bit about a character you'd like to tell a story about, let's get busy telling their story!

Stories can seem like scary things, but remember what we learned in the first challenge – if you first create a map or guide to show you the way, writing a story is much easier. But where do we begin?

Well, most stories begin with a character living their normal life. One important thing to remember is that your character's 'normal' life doesn't have to be normal life to you and me – but for them, in their world, it is simply what they do all the time.

In my novel *Wild Boy*, we meet the main character living his normal life as a performer on a fairground freak show, spying on people, fighting and stealing to survive. To the reader it is unusual, exciting and intriguing – but to *Wild Boy* it is simple everyday life, same old same old.

But you can't keep writing about normal life forever. Stories are about things happening. You need to make SOMETHING HAPPEN to thrust the character from their normal life and into an adventure. In *Wild Boy* that SOMETHING is when he defends a friend against a villain, and so he has to run away. He then has to steal money to survive, which ends up with him discovering a mysterious letter – and after that the story takes off.

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So, for this challenge, I would like you to think of your character's normal life that you have all described, and then think what THING could happen to them that would thrust them into an adventure.

Remember, most stories go like this:

Once upon a time there was a (CHARACTER)
Every day he/she (NORMAL LIFE)
Until one day (BIG STORY START MOMENT)
Because of that (THE REST OF THE STORY!)

Perhaps begin by saying your character is living that 'normal life' and then use words like these: 'But then...', 'But one day...' or 'Then suddenly...'

Good luck!

Rob

Here are some books Rob wrote using these tips. His 'Wild Boy' novels are perfect for anyone studying the Victorian times, while the 'Jake Atlas' adventures are ideal for topics on the ancient world. They're also great stories! Find out more at www.robllloydjones.com

