



11+ English: Creative Writing Prompts

Original JDScience material. Not an official GL, CEM, CSSE or independent-school paper. Do not copy third-party exam questions.

Choose ONE main task. Plan for 5 minutes, write for about 30–35 minutes, and check for 5 minutes. Aim for a complete piece with a beginning, middle and end. Answers in this paper are planning notes and a sample opening — not a single “right” story.

Suggested time: 45 minutes for one full task · **Questions:** 6

TASK A — STORY

1. Write a story with the title *The Last Bus*. You should write about a character who must catch a bus that almost never comes. Include a problem and a clear ending. (Do not copy the sample opening in the answers.)

[20]

TASK B — DESCRIPTION

2. Describe a greenhouse at midnight. Do not tell a full adventure story. Focus on atmosphere: what is seen, heard, smelled and felt. Include at least two original similes or metaphors.

[20]

TASK C — CONTINUATION

3. Continue this opening in your own words (do not copy more than these two sentences):

“The envelope had no stamp. On the front, in sharp pencil, was only her name and the words OPEN ON YOUR BIRTHDAY.”

Write what happens next. Include the character’s thoughts and a decision.

[20]

PLANNING FRAME (USE FOR ANY TASK)

4. Before you write, jot: 1) character, 2) setting, 3) problem, 4) turning point, 5) ending, 6) three precise words you will try to use.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

5. Tick these as you check your work: capital letters and full stops; paragraphs; a variety of sentence lengths; at least one piece of speech punctuated correctly (if you used speech); no missed words; a title if required.

MINI PROMPT BANK

6. If you finish early, plan (do not write in full) one of these extra titles: The Wrong Key; Harbour Fog; A Sound in the Wall; The Science Fair Judge.

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Answers and short explanations

Check your work only after you have finished. Equivalent wording is accepted where the meaning is the same.

- 1. Answer:** No single correct story. Credit: clear title link; character and setting; a problem; sequenced events; an ending; accurate sentences.
Why: Plan: who is waiting, why the bus matters, what goes wrong, how it ends. Sample opening: "The shelter clock had already given up when Yasmin counted the coins in her glove. The last bus to Hartloe was listed as 21:12. It was 21:19, and the road was a black ribbon with no headlights on it."
- 2. Answer:** No single correct description. Credit: midnight greenhouse atmosphere; senses; imagery; controlled vocabulary; paragraphing.
Why: Plan by sense, not plot. Sample opening: "Moonlight lay on the glass like cold milk. Inside, tomato vines hung in green ropes, and the heater ticked as if a small animal were trapped in the pipes."
- 3. Answer:** No single correct continuation. Credit: logical follow-on; thoughts and a decision; rising interest; complete ending.
Why: Possible path: she waits / opens early; the letter is from a future self or a relative; a choice about whether to tell anyone. Keep the tone consistent with mystery, not slapstick.
- 4. Answer:** Planning notes will vary. A strong plan names a person, a place, a problem, a change, and an ending, plus three ambitious words (for example: reluctant, sodium-yellow, unlatched).
Why: Eleven-plus writing is marked for structure as well as spark. A five-box plan prevents a story that fizzles out.
- 5. Answer:** Use as a checklist. Typical slips: missing paragraph breaks, it's/its, comma splices, and stories that stop instead of ending.
Why: Five minutes of checking often recovers more marks than an extra adjective. Read once for sense and once for punctuation.
- 6. Answer:** Plans will vary. Each title needs a who, where, problem and ending. Example for The Wrong Key: a spare key opens a neighbour's shed, not the back door; the character must decide whether to confess.
Why: Short plans keep ideas ready for timed tests. Do not try to write two full stories in one sitting.