



Changing life stories

Frankie's Magic Football: teacher resources

A National Literacy Trust resource

A match like no other

Football remains popular with young people and we know from our Premier League Reading Stars programme that we can use the motivational power of the sport to hook pupils into reading for pleasure. The Frankie's Magic Football books are written by footballer, father and author Frank Lampard, former England player and all-time leading goal scorer for Chelsea FC. He remains hugely influential amongst young people and his books will draw in pupils and start them on their reading journey.

The first book in the series introduces Frankie and his friends and teammates at Frankie's FC. There's Charlie, Louise and of course Frankie's dog, Max. During a trip to the local fair Frankie wins a battered old football which turns out to hold magical powers. On their way home the friends have a kick about in the park and when Frankie scores with his new football it opens up a mysterious portal. They pass through and down a chute which leads them to the pirate ship, The Jolly Striker. Here the stall owner from whom Frankie won the football reappears as the referee in the fantasy football league and Frankie's team is drawn against Captain Cropper's Pirate Pillagers. Despite the Pillager's dirty tactics Frankie and his friends triumph through team work and fair play. They are returned to the park victorious with the magic football and the promise of more games in the fantasy league to come.

Join Frankie and his team and immerse your pupils in the world of football magic. We begin with book one, which sets the scene, introduces our characters and gives us the template for a plot pattern that is revisited in subsequent books across the series. With a range of reading and writing activities across the curriculum you can use the following ideas as a whole unit or just dip in and out to encourage and enthuse your pupils as they embark on our Spring Reading Adventure.

Enter Frankie's Fantasy League

Beginning with the end in mind ...

We know that all good planning starts with knowing where we are going and what we want to achieve. The perfect narrative outcome for a whole unit, and one pupils naturally move towards, is writing their own version of a Frankie's Magic Football story. Each book follows a familiar plot pattern which gives an easily replicated structure and allows pupils to use this structure while putting their imaginative efforts into exploring and creating their own interesting and exciting characters and settings. Frankie's Magic Football is a great portal story where the friends are transported to strange and wonderful places to play unusual teams in new exciting matches. Knowing from the outset that they will have the opportunity to write their own portal story means that all the literacy activities immersing them into the world of Frankie can be used to feed their imagination and give a richness and purpose to their reading and writing.

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Use the grid below to help and guide pupils in planning their new portal story.

Story Steps	The Pirate Pillagers	New story ideas	My new story
1. Choose your characters	Frankie and his best friends Charlie and Louise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose Frankie and two new friends • Choose Frankie, yourself and a friend. • Choose three best friends 	
2. Choose a setting	The park near the funfair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school playground • The beach • At the shops • At the swimming pool 	
3. Choose a trusty pet	Max the dog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take Max with you! • Choose another favourite animal 	
4. Where does the portal take you?	A Pirate land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A jungle • Into space • A tropical island • An ice mountain • A mysterious forest 	
5. Who is the fantasy team you will face?	The Pirate Pillagers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A jungle tribe • A robot team • Sea creatures • A yeti team • The tree dwellers 	

Don't forget to think about:

Choosing a new name for your rival team.

What kind of kit might they wear?

Will the magical ref be there?

What will the pitch look like?

Will there be new rules?

Who scores the winning goal?

When your team returns home, what will they bring with them to know it was not a dream? – another gold coin?

Grow the fantasy league ...

In creating your new characters, why not encourage your pupils to create new game cards for each one, just like the books. Use the template as a guide and design and draw each new player.

Name:	
Draw your character here ...	
Strength:	
Skills:	
Stamina:	
Speed:	
Spirit:	

Writing opportunities galore!

The series provides a range of opportunities for a whole host of writing activities to enhance their new Frankie story.

Introduction

“Welcome to a fantastic fantasy league – the greatest football competition ever held in this world or any other! You’ll need four on a team, so choose carefully. This is a lot more serious than a game in the park. You’ll never know who your next opponents will be, or where you’ll face them.”

Each book in the series starts with this introduction from the ref. Ask pupils to write their own introduction, which gives an overview of the story and encourages their friends to read the books. Ask for volunteers to read theirs aloud to the class.

Author Facts

With such popularity and profile, pupils may want to find out more about the books author Frank Lampard, his football career and what inspired him to write the Frankie’s Magic Football series. Get them to use the website <http://www.frankiesmagicfootball.co.uk/frank> and further research to create an author fact file. Ask them to list questions they would like to ask him about his career and the books.

Match report

There's lots of detail in the book about Frankie FC's match with the Pirate Pillagers. Have a look at some match reports in newspapers and the internet and get pupils to write their own. Pupils with less interest in football may prefer to write a newspaper article on a mysterious event that occurred in the local park involving three children, their dog and a magical football...

Writing in role

In the story Frankie's dog Max is able to talk when they enter the fantasy football world and is an important part of the team. Ask pupils to write as if they were Max. How did they feel on entering the magical world? What was it like to be able to talk? How did they feel when they returned to the real world and became an ordinary dog again?

Prequel

Frankie is given the magic football by a stallholder at the fair who turns out to be the ref in the fantasy football league. He tells Frankie "I've been looking for a new team." Ask pupils to write a prequel to the story explaining the origins of the football and the league. What is the history of the ref and the fantasy league? Who might have owned the magic football before Frankie and what happened to them?

Build Your Own Player

Character descriptions of pupils' own players provide opportunities to develop vocabulary and think about key elements of character, both of appearance and personality. Create a description of one of the players in Frankie's team together from what pupils discover from the first book, capturing all those small details of their appearance and not forgetting what kind of personality they have. Pupils can then have a go at creating a new character – maybe a new player for Frankie's team or a new opponent.

Themes across the curriculum

With football, magic and adventure at our finger tips, opportunities to explore PE, geography and history abound.

PE

With the football connection PE is the obvious choice to link with. Organise your own "fantasy football league" and get students to give themselves team names and an image. They could even get into character and dress up for the occasion! Remember, Frankie hates cheaters so focus on fair play and teamwork.

Citizenship

“The cheating stallholder had left a sour taste in Frankie’s mouth. He hated when people didn’t play fair.”

The theme of fairness runs throughout the series and Frankie has a strong sense of right and wrong and playing by the rules. Winning is only important to him if his team wins fair and square. Explore the idea of fair play with pupils and the importance of rules in sport.

Geography and history

The first team Frankie FC play is the Pirate Pillagers so use the opportunity to research pirate myths and legends. Younger pupils will enjoy the stories and activities produced as part of the National Literacy Trust’s Pirate Reading Adventure competition.

Throughout the series Frankie’s team face opposition from teams from across the globe and from different periods in time. Research the geography and history of some of these other countries such as Brazil (No. 6 Frankie and the World Cup Carnival) and Australia (No. 10 Frankie’s Kangaroo Caper).

Art

When they’re transported to the Pirate Pillager Frankie and his friends find themselves in traditional pirate clothing. Ask pupils to design their own football kit for Frankie’s FC. For younger pupils you could photocopy some of the illustrations from the book to use as templates.

With their first magic football match complete, pupils should be bursting with ideas, racing through the books and developing as readers and writers with every step. Their own magical adventures will hopefully be something they remember with pride and excitement, and there are many other teams and matches awaiting them in the world of Frankie’s Magic Football.