

**STOKE
READS**



Story Quest

Adventures close to home



Starting Secondary School

Dear Teachers/Parents,

Due to recent school closures, we are aware that many of the traditional transition programmes will not have taken place. We therefore wanted to support you in working towards the best possible transition to Secondary School for your child/pupils. This resource is intended to help prepare the new intake for secondary school in the same thorough, caring and inclusive way as in previous years.

We understand that the prospect of finding their way around a new environment and worries over getting lost are one of children's main transition concerns. 'Starting Secondary School', our new mini quest, is a resource designed to support you in creating a fantastic transition experience. As children follow the story, they will learn to navigate their way around their new school site. This quest is designed so that it can be completed both at home or on the school site using a copy of the school site map.

You will need:

- School site map
- Pen/pencil

How to complete your quest:

1. Read the introduction of the story. Can you find where it is based on your map?
2. Complete the first challenge - this will tell you where to go next. If you are on site, you can use your map to make your way to this location. If you are completing the activity from home, draw your route to the location on your map.
3. Continue reading the story and completing the activities while you navigate your way around the school site/map.



The first day

The first day at secondary school had arrived, a day that Josh had been looking forward to and dreading in equal measures. He stood at the school gates with feelings of excitement and nervousness bubbling in his tummy. Before he had time to let his worries get away with him, his friend came beaming towards him.

“Morning Josh, ready for your first day?” asked Yasmin eagerly.

“As ready as I’ll ever be. I’m just hoping to make it to lunchtime without getting lost!” replied Josh uncertainly.

“Yeh I think everybody worries about that at first. Just think of it as going on one of Grandpa Matt’s adventures,” reassured Yasmin.

“I suppose it is quite exciting, getting to explore a new school and see lots of new things.”

“Exactly, adventuring around school can be full of surprise too! Have you got a copy of the school map? We’re nice and early so I thought we could get you ready for the day with a few challenges!”

(Have you got your maps ready too Story Questers?)

Josh took his map from his pocket and waved it in the air enthusiastically. “That might be a good idea to help take my mind off my nerves,” he agreed.

“Take a look on the back, I think Matt has left a clue to get you started!” Yasmin replied with a wink.

With that, Yasmin went running off through the school gates. Josh turned his map over to find a handwritten clue.

***Upon entering the school gate,
report here if you arrive late,
The place to go if you’ve lost your way,
with staff to help throughout the day.
Good luck on your first day (and challenge)!
Grandpa Matt x***



Solve the riddle to work out which school location Matt is referring to.



Use your map to help you to find your way there.

When Josh arrived, he was greeted with a friendly smile from the lady behind the desk.

“Can I help you?” she asked reassuringly.

“Uhhm... it’s my first day and I’m trying to find my friend,” answered Josh nervously.

“You must be Josh! I’m Miss Winters, the school receptionist. Yasmin told me you’d be joining us today. In fact, she asked me to pass on this message,” she said as she handed Josh a post it note.

Josh studied the note and it wasn’t long before he had figured out where to go next.

Unscramble these letters to work out which school location to head to next.

Y L R I A B R



Use your map to help you to find your way there.

“Thanks Miss Winters. I’ve got to go now but it was nice to meet you,” said Josh.

“Nice to meet you too Josh. Would you mind dropping this book off for me while you’re there?” replied Miss Winters with a knowing wink.

With that, Josh knew he’d solved the riddle correctly! After taking the book from Miss Winters, he consulted his school map and sped off towards the next location.

Top Transition Tip!

Don't be afraid to ask for help. The student reception is a great place to go if you need any advice and support.



Arriving at the library, Josh walked towards a desk where another pupil, somewhat older and considerably taller than Josh was stood. He wore a badge which read 'Library Monitor.'

"Hi... Miss Winters asked me to return this book," said Josh.

"Cheers buddy," replied the library monitor taking the book from him. Somewhat unsure of where he should be heading, Josh walked towards the exit.

"Hey... Josh, you've left this inside," called the library monitor as he walked towards Josh holding an envelope.

"Thanks, how did you know my name?" asked Josh with a confused expression.

"Lucky guess?" shrugged the boy. "Nah, I'm just kidding, its written on the envelope," he replied.

"Oh yeh, of course," replied Josh feeling a little embarrassed. "I'd better get going, thanks for that."

"No worries buddy, catch you soon," responded the boy giving Josh a friendly pat on the back.



Top Transition Tip!

Reading is a great way to relax and escape, helping us feel less stress and worry. Take some time to explore your school library and all it has to offer.

Josh opened the envelope to find a word search inside. There were no instructions but he figured the words inside might give him a clue about where he was headed next. He took a pen from his bag and made a start.

I	B	A	L	A	O	M	Y	C	G
H	A	T	L	L	I	X	M	S	N
N	S	F	C	L	A	C	F	C	Z
S	K	O	R	W	L	B	S	I	S
K	E	O	I	O	S	S	T	T	D
E	T	T	C	C	Y	L	F	E	Y
Q	B	B	K	H	D	W	Y	L	N
A	A	A	E	F	I	O	O	H	L
K	L	L	T	W	N	N	E	T	R
B	L	L	I	T	O	J	K	A	A

Josh noticed that there was definitely a sporting theme to the word search. He consulted his school map to work out where the next location could be. Must be the Sports Hall he thought to himself racing off in its direction in true sporting style.

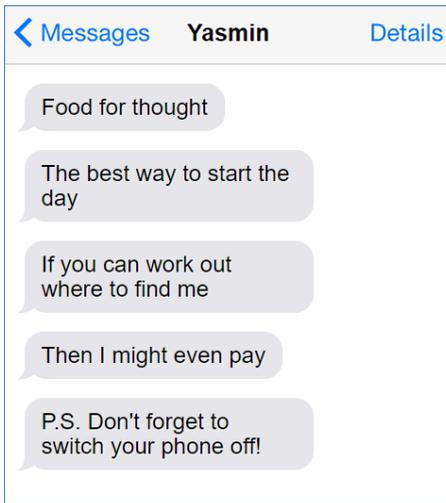
Top Transition Tip

Joining a school sports team will help you to meet new people with common interests and help you to feel part of the school community. Ask your PE teacher for more information.



He arrived at the sports hall to find it was empty aside from the occasional piece of sporting equipment strewn here and there. Suddenly Josh's thoughts were interrupted by the sound of his text message alert echoing around the empty hall.

He took out his phone half expecting it to be his mum fussing over whether he'd remembered his pencil case only to find it was a text from Yasmin.



Top Transition Tip

Check your school guidelines about the use of mobile phones on site.



Solve the riddle to work out which school location Yasmin is referring to.

Use your map to help you to find your way there.

Josh arrived at the canteen and saw Yasmin and a group of friends beckoning him over.

“Cheese and bacon oatcakes Josh, your favourite,” said Yasmin.

An adventure *and* a delicious breakfast and all before 9 o'clock. This was turning out to be the best first day ever!

“Thanks Yasmin,” he said as he started tucking in to his breakfast, excited for the rest of the day ahead.

Other places to find help

BBC Bitesize

[Watch videos](#) of students discussing a range of topics covering what to expect at secondary school.

YoungMinds

Visit the [YoungMinds website](#) for more ideas on how to support children's mental wellbeing on the transition to secondary school.

This ten minute exercise is particularly useful at the beginning of the day or after any sort of transition.

It should be done as calmly and slowly as possible, allowing children time to breathe, relax, wobble and possibly laugh!

- Stand with your feet hip width apart.
- When you feel comfortable with your posture, gently close your eyes.
- Begin by feeling where your weight is generally falling - to the front/back/side of your feet?
- Gently rock your weight to each side and front and back, feeling how your body responds and noticing where you are comfortable.
- Carefully move your weight onto one foot and slowly peel the other foot off the floor. If you can, balance there for a few moments. When you are ready to put your foot back down, do so with full awareness and as slowly as you can.
- Repeat onto the other foot.
- Finally, become aware again of where your weight is falling.
- Slowly open your eyes. How do you feel?

Visit the Young Minds website for more ideas on how to support children's mental wellbeing on the transition to secondary school.

Recommended reading

Just Jack by Kate Scott

It's not easy fitting in at a new school. It's even harder to be yourself. A warm and funny story about making new friends and being yourself, this is a highly enjoyable tale of new beginnings.

