



Changing life stories

# World Book Day: top hats and potato characters!

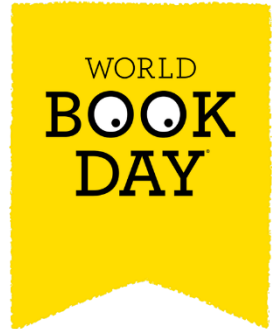
A National Literacy Trust membership resource

This year, World Book Day is taking place on **Thursday 2 March**. To help you celebrate in school, we have put together some classroom-based craft activities to ensure that every child can take part.

## What's included in this resource?

- Resource aims
- How to use the resources
- Activity ideas

Celebrating with



## Resource aims

The National Literacy Trust wants to make sure no child is left out of World Book Day. We understand that families may be under significant financial and time pressures, so the activities provided in this resource offer accessible, classroom-based fun to ensure that even if families are unable to provide a costume, every child can take part in and enjoy World Book Day.

As a class, you can choose to make **World Book Day Top Hats or Potato Characters**, both providing an alternative to asking pupils and their families to create their own costumes at home. The activities will provide your pupils with the opportunity to get creative and represent their favourite books or characters, all whilst fostering a love of reading through exploring stories and engaging in book discussion.

## How to use the resources

You may decide to deliver the activities in the week building up to World Book Day or on the actual day itself. The suggested activities follow the steps below:

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1. **Introduce** World Book Day and host a book discussion to inspire ideas for pupils' creations
2. **Design and create** top hats or potato characters
3. **Follow-up fun** with their creations
4. **Include families** with a World Book Day event

## Step one: introduce

Ahead of beginning your chosen craft activity, support your pupils with idea creation by discussing favourite books and characters as a class. Collate pupils' ideas as a mind map so that they can refer to it when planning their top hats or potato characters. These questions can be used to prompt discussion:

- *What is your favourite book and why? / Can you think of a book you've really enjoyed recently?*
- *Who is your favourite book character and why?*
- *Who is the funniest/most evil/most unique book character you've come across?*
- *Do you dislike any book characters? Why?*
- *If you could be any book character, who would you be and why?*

## Step two: create and design

Decide whether to create top hats or potato characters inspired by favourite books and characters. You may wish to let pupils wear their own clothes on World Book Day, but kindly remind families that their pupils will be getting creative in school so not to dress in their best. If families do wish to contribute towards the project, you could ask that they bring in any craft materials, old clothes, magazines, buttons or anything they may have lying around that would be of use during the top hat designing or potato decorating process.

## World Book Day Top Hats

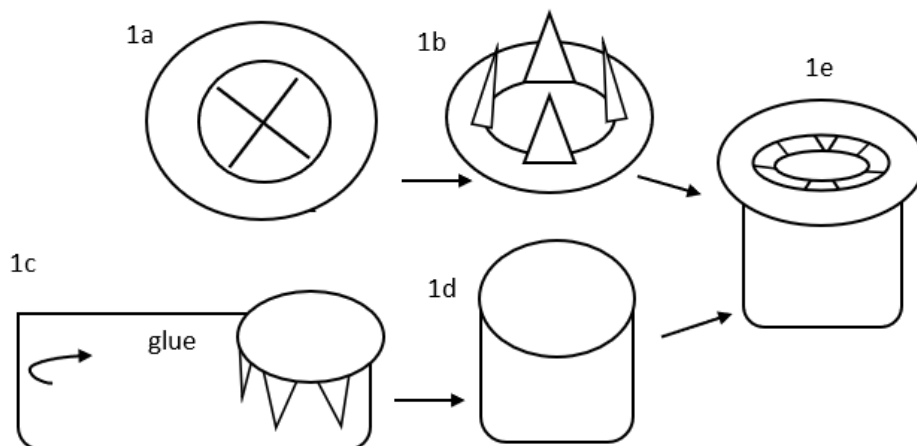
### You will need:

- Card
- PVA Glue
- Scissors
- Tape measure
- Pens and/or paints
- Craft materials such as googly eyes, pipe cleaners, card, tissue paper, wooden sticks, string, felt, feather, sequins...



Follow the instructions below or watch a video found [here](#):

- 1a.** *Cut a large circle out of card for the base of the top hat. In the centre, draw another circle the same circumference of the pupil's head. The space between these two circles will form the rim of the hat.*
- 1b.** *Draw a large cross within the inner circle (to make four triangles) and cut along those lines. You will be left with four triangles that can push up out of the circle.*
- 1c.** *Now make the top of the hat. On a second piece of card, draw another circle the same circumference as the pupil's head. Around the edge of this circle, draw four triangles spaced evenly (it will look like a four point star). Cut out this shape.*
- 1d.** *Next, measure a piece of card to form the sides of the top hat. To do so, measure a length of card equal to the circumference of the pupil's head (so that it fits around the inner circle on the base of the hat and the top circle).*
- 1e.** *Add glue to all the triangles you have cut out and glue them to the inside of the piece of card you are bending around the circles. You will then have a complete top hat.*



### Time to personalise:

Invite your pupils to design their top hat inspired by a book or character, using the class mind-map for inspiration. Pupils can plan their idea using the design sheet provided in Appendix 1. You can find lots of character top hat inspiration online too.

Invite pupils to wear their top hats throughout World Book Day. If you are hosting an event, make sure pupils wear their top hat to this too – or invite pupils to show off their creations in a top hat assembly.

### World Book Day Potato characters

Invite pupils to create a potato character inspired by their favourite book character to spend World Book Day with. Pupils can use the design sheet in Appendix 2 to plan their creation before they set about creating it.

#### You will need:



- One large baked potato per pupil
- Paint
- Felt tips/permanent markers
- Craft materials such as googly eyes, pipe cleaners, card, tissue paper, wooden sticks, string, felt, feather, sequins...
- PVA glue
- Scissors

Pupils might like to paint their potato to create a base colour for their character. If so, factor in time for their potato to dry before decorating with other materials. Once dry they can decorate their potato using pens and a range of craft materials. You can find lots of examples of character potatoes online for inspiration.

### Step three: fun follow-up ideas

After pupils have created their top hats or potato characters, try out some of these activities to extend the fun!

**Hat/Potato parade:** Invite pupils to take part in a parade to show off their creations. This will work especially well if the whole school has taken part in the activity. Find time for the school to come together and show-off their creations. Consider inviting families along too.

You may like to invite a few volunteer pupils from across the year groups to talk about their creations in more detail.

**Guess the character/book:** Invite pupils to show off their creation to the class and have the class guess the book or character created. Pupils could ask ‘yes/no’ questions to the artist for extra help. When pupils reveal their answer, invite them to explain why they chose to represent that book/character.

**Potato meet and greet:** Invite pupils to work in pairs to interview each other’s potato characters. Pupils will need to embody their character to provide the answer and voice to the questions posed to their potato. You might like to provide younger pupils with model questions to ask e.g. *What do you like doing? Where do you live? Tell me about your family/friends...*

**Potato-to-potato:** Invite pupils to pair up and imagine the first meeting of their potato characters – this can be particularly funny if pupils’ have characters from different stories. What would happen if their fictional worlds were to collide? Pupils could script and/or dramatise the conversation, imagining how the characters would react to each other, what they would ask and what they would do. *Would they get along? How would they introduce themselves? Would they understand each other? What might they do together?*

## Step four: host a World Book Day event

You may decide to host a World Book Day event with your class/school and invite parents, grandparents or close relatives to celebrate reading with you. Below are some ideas you could explore as part of your World Book Day event.



### Listen to a professional storyteller

There are a variety of great storytellers online. Invite pupils and adults to get comfy and listen to some recommended reads. Explore these [recordings of some great storytellers](#).

### **Listen to a mystery storyteller**

Surprise your pupils with mystery storytellers. Invite pupils' family members or members of staff to drop in and read a favourite story. Could the mystery storyteller dress-up so they are unrecognisable? Could they use a different voice to tell the story? Maybe they could pop out from behind a curtain to reveal themselves at the end of the story?

### **Tea, coffee and cake afternoon**

Invite pupils and parents to the school hall or library to enjoy refreshments and reading! You may decide to give each year group a time slot whereby they come to the school hall and bunker down with a parent/adult to enjoy reading and refreshments. You might decide to make the room extra comfy by providing reading areas – you could do this through reading tents, pillows, bean bags or whatever your school has available!

The best event will be one that works for you and your pupils, and which instils and inspires a love of books and reading.

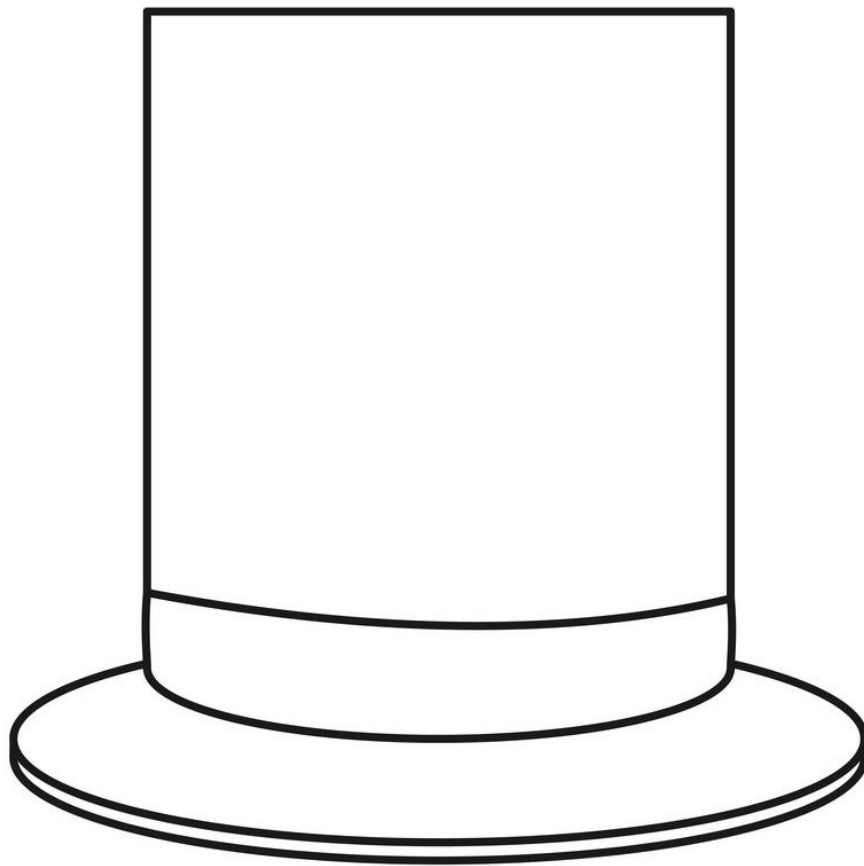
**We'd love to see your top hat and potato character creations! Share your celebrations on social media and tag us @Literacy\_Trust**

## Appendix 1

### My top hat design sheet

Which character am I using as my inspiration? \_\_\_\_\_

What colour scheme am I going for? \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 2

### My Potato Character design sheet

Which character am I using as my inspiration? \_\_\_\_\_

What colour scheme am I going for? \_\_\_\_\_

