

## Analyse the structure

Now box the story up with the children (see Fig.1). This should help them begin to see the underlying pattern that eventually they will be able to use when writing their own 'portal' story. Complete the planner with the class giving ideas for a new story. The children then complete their own planner for their own story.

## Create a writing toolkit

Focus on learning to write effective descriptions.

Draw attention to the use of descriptive lists, well-chosen adjectives and similes to show the reader what things look like. Also, highlight the way in which the prepositions help the reader see where things are placed when describing. Illustrate the toolkit by referring to the story as well as creating new ideas. (see Fig. 2 for examples).

## Write your own portal stories

Use shared writing to create the class story with the children then planning and writing their own versions. Stretch this over a number of days so that their stories gradually emerge, e.g.

*Josie had always been nosy. Early one morning before she set off for school, she noticed a strange looking door at the back of the cupboard under the stairs. It had peculiar carvings and the handle was shaped like a pair of strange wings. Carefully, she*

*tugged it open, crouched down and crawled into the darkness.*

*The inside opened out into what looked like a vast park. In the distance there stretched a bright green forest. Far away, she could see a thin blue line that must have been the sea. Everywhere she looked, she could see strange creatures. Ahead there were yellow monkeys with scarlet wings, tiny*

*tigers with ragged ears like elephants and giant, striped giraffes. Thousands of tiny people seemed to be guarding these strange animals. They were dressed in flat, blue caps, mauve, silk shirts and had emerald green ribbons in their hair. Josie asked one of the tiny people where she was but he just said, "You can wander wherever but don't touch a feather!"*



Fig. 2

| Tools                                  | Example from the story  | New idea  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Tool 1 - lists using commas</b>     | Steaming pies, fresh strawberries like gleaming embers and glasses full of creamy drinks. | Lemon biscuits, rich cake and malted scones.                      |
| <b>Tool 2 - well-chosen adjectives</b> | Billy dreamed of dark halls, fantastic feasts and golden cupboards.                       | She dreamed of glittering rivers, jagged rocks and slender reeds. |
| <b>Tool 3 - similes</b>                | The metal handle was shaped like a dragon's mouth.  | The door was carved like an ancient face.                         |
| <b>Tool 4 - prepositions</b>           | Inside, in the middle, in, at the end, from, down.  | Beside, under, on top, outside, across, behind.                   |
| <b>Tool 5 - comparisons</b>            | Sweeter than starlight  | Larger than an elephant   |