

# IN ReSiDENCE

## Storied Away



Hello! My name is **Frances Stickley** and I'm a published picture book writer and the 2020 Author in Residence for Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries. I spend almost all of my free time writing stories, and, like lots of writers, I like to start by coming up with a character.

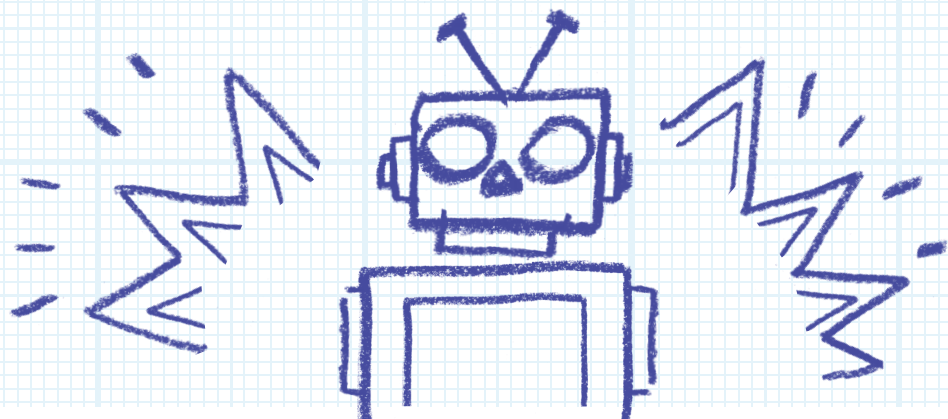
Beginning a story with your main character is a great way to get to know them and the kind of tale they want to tell. Often, once you have your characters, you'll find that your story seems almost to write itself! So, it's a great place to start for a storyteller.

## What is a Character?

Characters are the people in your story, but that doesn't mean they're always human. They might be talking dogs, aliens or robots.

## The Monster Mash Up

Sometimes, when I'm stuck for a character idea, I like to play this game. It's great for drawing characters, as I discovered when I used to teach reception children. We used to call it The Monster Mash Up, and some of the characters we created were amazing.



# The Monster Mash Up

## You will need:

Paper, crayons and at least one other person.



## How to play:

Sit in a circle, each of you with crayons and a sheet of paper.

- Start at the top of your paper and draw a head. Any head. The weirder and more wonderful the better. Now fold it over and make sure the next person can't see.
- Pass it to the person on your left.
- Now draw a body. Again, as strange as you like. Fold it over, pass it on.
- Do the same with the legs.
- And then the feet.

When you've finished that, you can unfold your new character creation. I wonder what their name is...



Why not draw a speech bubble or a thought bubble about what your character is feeling?

You don't have to write it – I really like to draw pictures inside bubbles to share what my characters are thinking.



Maybe you'll have a whole family of different weird and wonderful characters. I wonder what stories they would tell...

If you enjoyed learning about creating characters, you can find out more at [www.inspireculture.org.uk/inresidence](http://www.inspireculture.org.uk/inresidence)