



MINISTRY OF STORIES

THE STORY ENGINE 2020

A GUIDE FOR STORY MENTORS

Welcome to The Story Engine 2020, and thank you for supporting our young writers. We hope you enjoy online mentoring, and can't wait to see what ideas our writers bring to life with your support.

We've put together this guide to help you with:

1. Logging in
2. Signing up for sessions, and different session types
3. Claiming and managing tickets
4. Mentoring tips, and where to go for support
5. Safeguarding
6. Getting in touch



1. LOGGING IN

thestoryengine.org

Sign in with your username and password - issued by Ministry of Stories.

If you have any problems logging in, email us on thestoryengine@ministryofstories.org.

2. SIGNING UP FOR SESSIONS AND DIFFERENT SESSION TYPES

You can sign up for sessions via the Ministry of Stories Volunteer Calendar, in the same way you would for any Ministry of Stories clubs or workshops.

You will be tagged on our central volunteer record as being an 'Online Mentor'. This means you will be able to sign up for The Story Engine sessions. On the calendar you will see two different types of sessions.

Live Online Story Mentor - these are fixed time slots throughout the week when Writing Mentors will be online on The Story Engine to support writers with their work. These sessions are designed for our young writers who may want a more live dialogue with a Story Mentor. Live sessions are currently planned to take place on:

Mondays: 4:00 - 5:00pm
Wednesdays: 4:00 - 5:00pm
Saturdays: 2:00 - 3:00pm

Weekly Online Story Mentor - these are sessions that you can undertake at times to suit you throughout the week. By selecting a weekly shift, we would expect you to make three moments across the week to log on to The Story Engine and pick up any pending mentoring requests. Young writers will then be able to see your comments when they are next back in the site.

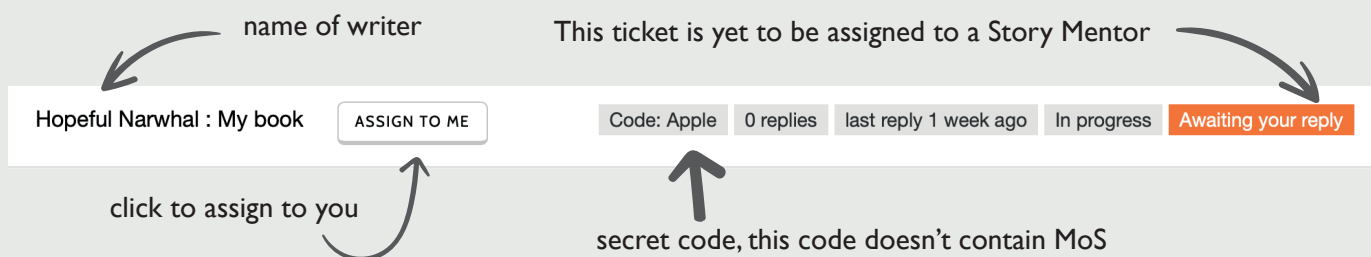
4. CLAIMING AND MANAGING TICKETS

'Tickets' are requests that are posted by young writers asking for help or advice from a Story Mentor. Each ticket is attached to a piece of work - so you can claim a ticket and support that young writer until their piece of work is ready to be published.

All young writers on the site will have a 'secret code'. This is the group that they belong to, and it is also how Ministry of Stories will manage which tickets can be picked up by which Story Mentors.

Any ticket that **doesn't** have 'MoS' in the secret code can be claimed by any mentor.

Any ticket that **does** have 'MoS' in the secret code, belongs to designated Story Mentors only. For example, if you see that a young writer's secret code is 'MoS Saturday', then these tickets should only be claimed by Story Mentors who are working with our Saturday Club children.



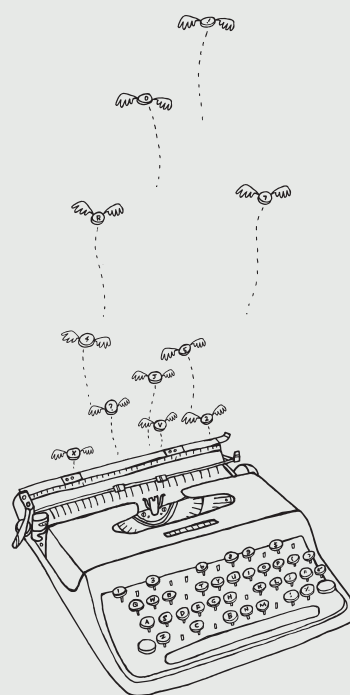
Claiming a new ticket

To claim a new ticket, go to the 'Mentors' tab in the top menu bar, and select 'My Tickets'. Click on the tab named 'Unassigned' and you will see a full list of tickets available. Tickets marked as 'Awaiting a Reply' have requests from young writers pending. Identify any tickets you are designated to pick up, and click 'ASSIGN TO ME'. This will remove the ticket from the unassigned list, and means that you are taking responsibility for mentoring that young writer with their piece of work.

Ideally, once you have picked up a ticket you will mentor that young writer with their work for as long as they need support. However, if you know you will have a long gap between your mentoring sessions (e.g. 10 days), you might choose 'Unassign from Me' to release that ticket at the end of your session. This will mean it can be picked up by another mentor and won't leave a child waiting.

Checking your tickets

Each time you log in you should check to see if you have any requests for help on existing tickets that you have already claimed. To do this, select the 'Mine' tab in the My Tickets section. Tickets will be marked 'Awaiting a Reply' if there is an unanswered request that you need to respond to.



Replying to a request for help or support

To write a response to a writer, click on the ticket, and then click 'WRITE A REPLY'. This will open a dialogue box where you can write your response. See the mentoring tips below for more advice.

Awarding badges

Story Mentors can award badges to young writers by selecting 'Award Badge' in the tickets page. Badges are awarded at your discretion to motivate a writer or to recognise a particular achievement. A description of what each badge refers to can be found on the 'Badges' page.

Publishing

When a piece of work is ready to be published, the young writer can 'send it to the Chief'. Senior Story Mentors have publishing rights, and can publish the work on to the platform.

5. MENTORING TIPS

Be specific - identify things you really like and explain why. e.g. 'I really like the way that you built suspense using short sentences', rather than 'I really liked your story'.

Use questions - they're much more encouraging than criticism. e.g. 'Can you tell me more about this character?', rather than 'This character needs developing'. How? or Why? are always good ways to start.

Put yourself into your feedback - it's less authoritative and keeps you as an individual. e.g. 'I really love this character that you've created because ...' rather than, 'This is a strong character because...'

Before you click 'submit' - think about how it might feel for our young writers to read your feedback. Showing warmth, enthusiasm, and a balance of good stuff and areas to work on will help to ensure our young writers continue to learn, use and thrive using The Story Engine. The aim is to encourage them to keep coming back.

If you need any further help or advice with mentoring, email us at thestoryengine@ministryofstories.org and we will either direct you to a Senior Story Mentor for some peer-to-peer support, or offer some advice from the Ministry of Stories programme team.

If you notice any technical issues with The Story Engine, please contact thestoryengine@ministryofstories.org.



6. SAFEGUARDING

The principles of safeguarding young people online are the same as in other Ministry of Stories clubs. Please ensure you are fully up to date with our current Safeguarding Policy and Volunteer Handbook. If you don't have a copy, please request one to be sent via hello@ministryofstories.org

It's possible that a young writer may wish to contact you outside of The Story Engine if they find your advice and support very helpful. Therefore we feel it's very important to remind all Story Mentors and volunteers that you must never share your personal contact details with a young writer (email, telephone, address, social media) and you must never ask for theirs. All correspondence with children must be managed through the Ministry of Stories staff team.

If you have any concerns about the welfare or safety of a young person - however big or small - you must advise us immediately, either using thestoryengine@ministryofstories.org or by phoning the office on 020 7729 4159 (07967 714238 if out of hours). We will usually ask you to complete a record of your concern using an incident reporting form.

To protect you and our young writers, all correspondence between young writers and Story Mentors is permanently recorded on the back-end of the platform and is regularly monitored by Ministry of Stories.

7. GETTING IN TOUCH

We hope you enjoy your new online mentoring experience, knowing you are supporting our writers to unleash their imaginations and share their stories with the world.

We will be learning together along the way. If you have any questions, suggestions, ideas for development or concerns about anything to do with The Story Engine, please do get in touch.

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