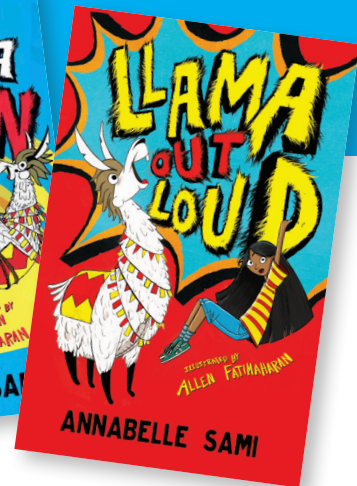


LLAMA ON A MISSION

LKS2 Lesson Pack

Annabelle Sami's memorable characters and plots will inspire children to write their own adventures, and think about how they can become confident communicators



What they'll learn

Through reading *Llama Out Loud* and *Llama on a Mission* and working on the activities in the sessions, children will:

- Develop an understanding of a text, following ideas and concepts across a story
- Consider how authentic, three-dimensional characters can be brought to life in writing through different authorial techniques
- Use role play to explore character traits ahead of writing
- Write their own extended narrative, drawing on themes and ideas from their reading
- Create their own graphic novel-style story, combining images and words for effect
- Reflect on their strengths and areas for development as effective communicators, considering how they can share their own thoughts and wishes with confidence
- Enjoy reading two funny and heart-warming stories





Getting started

Over the course of this teaching sequence, the children will listen to both *Llama Out Loud* and *Llama on a Mission* being read aloud. The sequence is divided into six sessions spread across the books. Reading and talking about the books could form part of daily lessons or the stories might be read away from English lessons (in daily story time, perhaps) with the teaching sessions and activities following on afterwards.

Before reading *Llama Out Loud*, share the front cover and blurb. Ask the children:

- What do you think this book might be about?
- Where might it be set?
- Are you looking forward to meeting either of the characters in particular?
- What themes or ideas might the book address?
- Will the book be funny or serious? How do you know?
- Have you read any other books by Annabelle Sami? (The Agent Zaiba Investigates books, perhaps?)

Finally, ask them if they are looking forward to reading these books. If so, why?

Session 1 - Thinking about Yasmin

Read chapters 1-4 aloud, stopping occasionally to collect comments or observations. When you've finished, ask the children to discuss the following questions with a partner or small group:

- What is Yasmin like as a character?
- Can you describe Yasmin's relationships with her different family members?
- Can you understand why Yasmin has chosen not to talk?

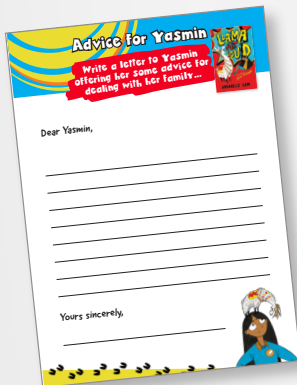


Share children's ideas as a class and then ask them to work as a group to discuss:

- What would make Yasmin's life happier and easier?
- If you were to offer her some advice, what would it be?



Activity 1 - Advice for Yasmin



Ask the children to use **Downloadable Activity Sheet 1** to write a letter to Yasmin with some advice for how she could make her life and relationship with her frustrating family better. Once they have done this, read some of the children's letters aloud and compare. Are there ideas that lots of the class have suggested? Are there any unique suggestions?

Ask the children what might stop Yasmin from taking their advice? If they were Yasmin, what would they do to get around this? Have they ever been in a similar situation where they have wanted to say something to someone, but haven't been sure that person will listen? Would any of the advice be useful to them? Share ideas again as a whole class.

Session 2 - Creating memorable characters

Read *Llama Out Loud* up until the end of Chapter 13. Ask the children to list the characters they have met in the book so far. They might suggest:

- Yasmin
- Levi
- Ezra
- Ammi
- Papa
- Auntie Bibi and Auntie Gigi
- Short Brother and Tall Brother
- Miss Zainab

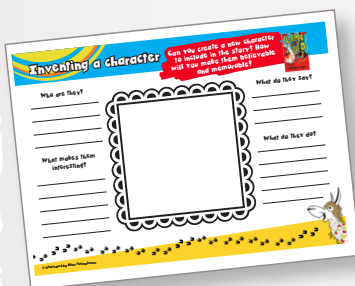


Ask the children who their favourite character is so far and why they like them. Do the children agree that one of the things that makes *Llama Out Loud* so enjoyable is that all of the characters (even the supporting ones) are funny, interesting and seem real? Get the class to think about how Annabelle Sami brings the characters to life and helps the reader to imagine them. They might suggest:

- The things they say
- The way they speak
- The things they do
- The way Yasmin relates to them

Reread pages 26 and 27 aloud and ask the children to think about what the characters' speech tells the reader about them. Can they think of any other characters who are easy to imagine because of their distinctive speech (Levi, perhaps?) Working with a partner, ask the children to choose two characters and role play a conversation between them. Can they capture the characters' voices and mannerisms and the sort of things they might say?

Activity 2 - Inventing a character



Ask the children to invent a new character to introduce to the story. It might be:

- Another family member who has come to stay
- Another child in Yasmin's class
- Another llama who works with Levi

Can they think of a way to make this character distinctive: in the way they talk, the way they act and how they interact with Yasmin? The children could then role play a conversation between their new characters. Then, ask them to use **Downloadable Activity Sheet 2** to draw a portrait of their new character and fill in the boxes. Tell the children they will be able to use this character in some stories they are going to write later. The children could then role play a conversation between their new characters.



Session 3 - Starting with story endings

Over several sessions, read the rest of *Llama Out Loud*.

Divide the children into three groups and ask each group to recap what happens to their characters at the end of the book:

- Group 1 - **Yasmin**
- Group 2 - **Levi**
- Group 3 - **Papa and Ammi**

Ask how have the characters changed and what have they learnt by the end of the story. Draw out that there are some changes we can see (Yasmin begins speaking aloud again and Levi has changed into a real llama) while some have changed their behaviour and relationship with others (Yasmin really has found her voice in every sense and her parents have learnt to listen to her). Ask the children if they can think of any other stories from books, films or television where the characters change and learn something because of what happens to them in the story.

Why do the children think Papa and Ammi behaved towards Yasmin in the way they did? How does Yasmin feel when she realises that it was because they loved her and wanted the best for her? What is the significance of Ammi keeping all of Yasmin's notes? What does this tell you about what it was like for her while Yasmin chose not to speak?

Next, tell the children they are going to invent and write a new adventure for Yasmin and Levi. They are going to begin by planning their story, but they can go back and make changes to their plan over the following sessions if their ideas change.

Activity 3 - Planning a story (backwards)

Using **Downloadable Activity Sheet 3**, ask the children to plan a new story featuring Yasmin and Levi. Remind them that it could also feature the character they created in the last session. Ask the children to think about the beginning and the end of their story first, considering how their character might change. Then they can map the events of the story that will help their character to have the ending they deserve.



Session 4 - Telling stories with drawings

Read chapters 1-8 of *Llama on a Mission*, stopping to discuss the parts that children particularly enjoy.

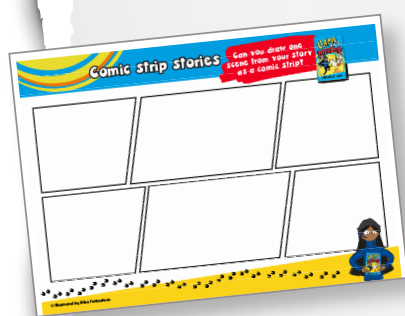
Ask the children why Yasmin's comic *Loudmouth* might be so important to her. Would her opinion of it match that of her parents? Why might they think that the science team is more important?

Reread the two sections of the book so far where comic strips are used to tell the story (**pages 59-60 and 122-123**). Ask the children what the effect of including these might be on the reader.

- How do they help to share the story?
- What do they tell us about Yasmin?
- How do they help to engage the reader?

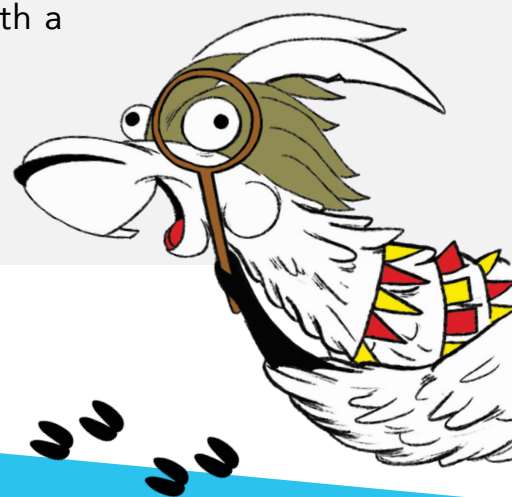
Tell the children they are going to create a comic strip section for part of the story they have planned in the last session. Looking at the examples in the book (and looking back to *Llama Out Loud*), point out to the children that the story is told through a combination of drawings, speech and captions.

Activity 4 - Comic strip stories



Ask the children to choose one scene from their story that could be retold as a comic strip. Remind them that in the books it is usually Yasmin's plans or missions that are told in this way. Once they have decided, ask them to use **Downloadable Activity Sheet 4**

to draw their scene. They can then share these with a partner, evaluating each other's work and making suggestions for how it might be improved. Then, give the children time to make any changes.





Session 5 - Exploring communication

Over several sessions, finish reading *Llama on a Mission*. Ask the children:

- How is this second story similar to *Llama Out Loud*?
- How is it different?

Share the following statement with the children: talking and communicating are the same thing.

Ask the children if they agree with this statement or not. Give the children time to talk in pairs and then ask them to feed back to the class. Through discussion, draw out that although Yasmin found her voice in the first book, that isn't always enough to allow her to communicate with other people and explain things in a way that means they'll listen and understand.

Remind the children of the following moments in the book:

- **When Yasmin tries to talk to her parents about Art Club in Chapter 13**
- **When Yasmin shouts at Ezra in Chapter 16**
- **When Yasmin tells Mama Llama about Levi in Chapter 18**

Ask how these moments show that talking and communicating are different things. How has Yasmin learnt the difference between them over the course of the book? Draw out that Yasmin understands that communicating is more than just talking at someone, it involves thinking about the person you're talking to, and listening to them as well.

Ask the children to think back to Session 1. Is there any other advice that they would have given Yasmin that would have helped her?

Working in small groups, the children should make a list of the attributes a good communicator might have (listens to others, confident, happy to share ideas, matches their language to the person they're speaking to, etc.). Then share these as a class to create a whole-class list. Ask the children to consider the list: which of the attributes of a good communicator do they have already? Are there any that they might need to practice? How could they do this?

Session 6 - Writing a new adventure

Tell the children they are going to write another adventure for Yasmin, Levi and Ezra, using the ideas they've explored over the previous sessions. Ask them to look at the plan they produced in Session 3 and give them time to make any changes in light of new ideas they might have had.

Next, ask the children to use their plans to write their own narratives, reminding them to use their comic strips to tell one scene and, if they wish, including the character they invented. Remind them to:

- Make sure their story has a clear beginning to introduce the characters and their situation; a middle where the action unfolds; and an ending where their characters learn something or get the ending they deserve.
- Use dialogue and characters' actions to show what they are thinking and feeling and how they relate to one another, trying to make their characters memorable and believable.
- If they wish, they can use humour to explore serious ideas, just like Annabelle Sami does in these two books.

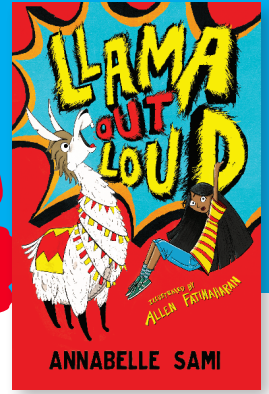
Once the children have finished their writing, ask them to share their work with a partner or look at some examples together as a class, focusing on the parts of their writing that they are especially pleased with. After they have had some feedback from their classmates and from you, they can look at their work again, making any necessary changes to improve it. The stories could then be displayed in the classroom or published into books so children can enjoy reading each other's writing.

Useful questions

- Can funny books teach us about serious topics? Why might humour be a good way of exploring issues and complicated ideas?
- Have you ever felt like one of the characters in the stories? Like Yasmin, is there something you've wanted to say, but you don't think you'll be heard? Or, like Levi, have you tried to help someone but it hasn't worked out how you'd like? How did it make you feel?
- What do you think will happen to Yasmin, Levi and Ezra next? What might their next adventure be about?

Advice for Yasmin

Write a letter to Yasmin offering her some advice for dealing with her family...



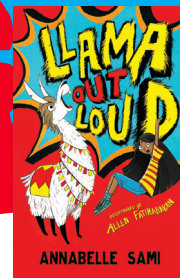
Dear Yasmin,

Yours sincerely,



Inventing a character

Can you create a new character to include in the story? How will you make them believable and memorable?

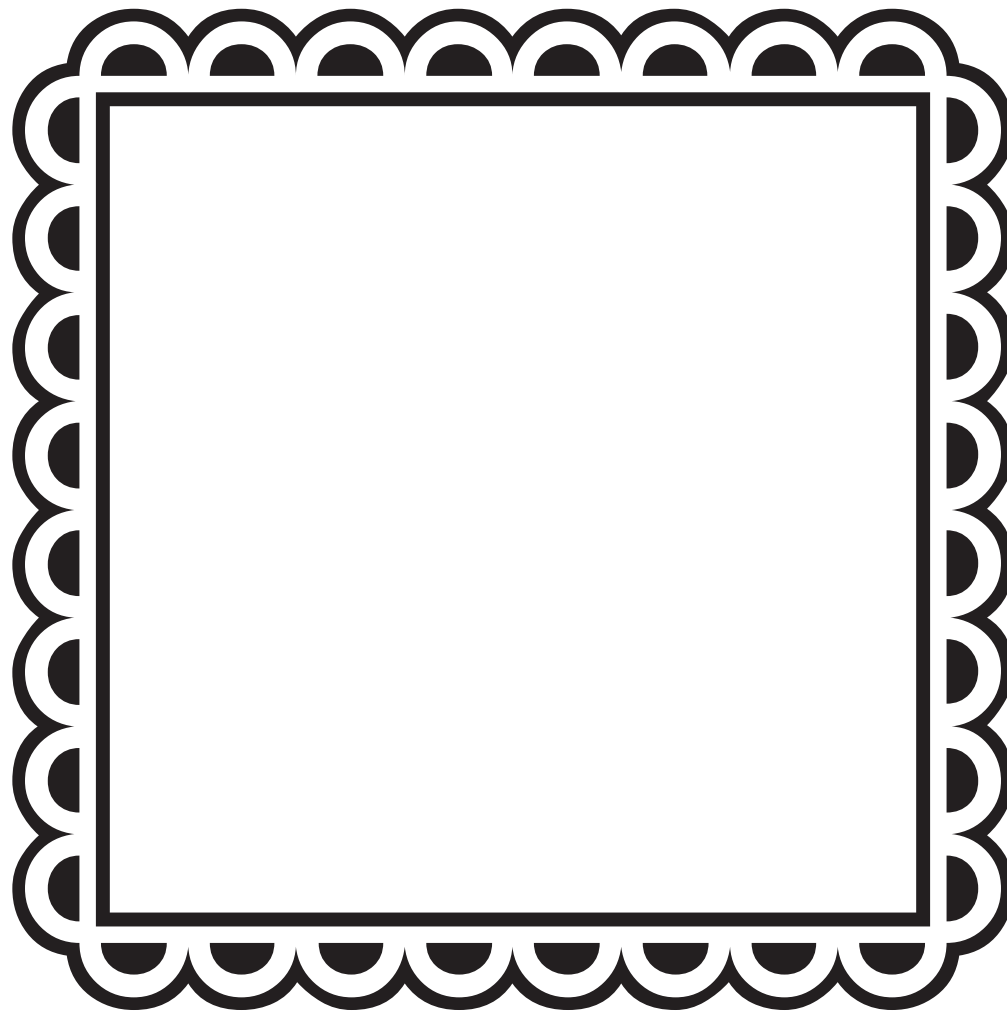


Who are they?

What makes them interesting?

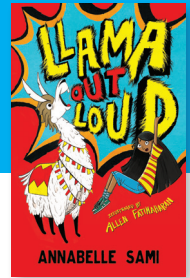
What do they say?

What do they do?



Planning a story (backwards)

Can you plan a story, starting with the ending?



Ending

What happens to your character? How do they change? What do they learn?

Middle

What happens in the story to help them to change?

Beginning

What is your character like at the beginning? What might they want to change?



Comic strip stories

Can you draw one scene from your story as a comic strip?

A blank comic strip template consisting of six rectangular panels arranged in two rows of three. The panels are separated by black lines, and the entire template is set against a white background.