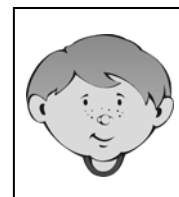


## THE MAGIC HAT

Read the composition below. It is an imaginative story about a magic hat. The author is a ten year old boy who we shall refer to as Carl.



Composition title: *The Magic Hat*

Prompt: Someone left a box outside your front door with a note that read: "Lost property – handle with the greatest care." Inside the box you found a black hat. **Write about what happened when you put it on.**

Yesterday as I was going out for a walk I found a box outside the front but there was a note and it said like this: "Lost property – handle with the greatest care."

I didn't tell mum about it. I went in ~~the~~ my room and I looked at it. It was black but it was nice to put it on. As I put it on I went to look in the mirror. I didn't see it. It was invisible. The black hat was a magic hat. When you put it on it was invisible and when you take it off you could see it. ~~At~~ I heard a knock ~~it~~ on the door it was mum. She came into the room and she said told me to tidy my room. As she went I wished that my room would be spick and span. I was delighted. I went out for a walk still wearing the hat. ~~As~~ As I was going to ~~turn~~ I heard the ice-cream man coming but I had no money. I wished for money and in my pocket I found one pound. I bought two ice-creams. I thought that I was lucky that I had a hat that <sup>it</sup> was magic. When I returned home my mum told me to finish the homework. I didn't want to do it because I wanted to play computer games ~~so~~ <sup>so</sup> I wished that the homework could be ready and when I went to look at it it was all neat and ~~see~~ correct.

I am proud of this magic hat and I am polishing it and keep it in a safe place so that no one will take it.

Did you enjoy reading the story?

The way Carl showed the reader how he discovered that the black hat was more than a clothing item is interesting.

*As I put it on I went to look in the mirror. I didn't see it. It was invisible. The black hat was a magic hat.*

Gripping the reader's attention is important when writing a story.

What did you find interesting?

Now let us find out more about what makes Carl's writing good and what needs to be improved. The following criteria will help us assess Carl's writing and suggest ways of making it better.

- **a story that makes sense all the way through**

Carl chose to write about 'The Magic Hat'. The examples he used show that he knows that magic can make impossible things happen. His ideas hold the reader's attention. Are his ideas linked to the prompt?



In lines five and six, Carl communicated with the reader using the pronoun 'you'. He explained the magic hat's power. Good communication is important because writings are meant to be read and understood by an audience.

In the middle paragraph, he refers to the 'Lost property' with the word 'it'. He writes: *I didn't tell mum about it.* He does not share his purpose. It is only at the very end of the composition that he discloses his intention to keep the magic hat.

How effective do you find this?

In the introduction, Carl did not write exactly where he had found the box: *I found a box outside the front* (he left out 'door').

Did Carl leave out other important details that would have helped the reader understand better?

- **writing that makes use of different sentences**

Carl's sentences vary in length. Some are short and some are long. This helps to make reading pleasant. However, he also writes sentences that are too long.

The introduction is one long sentence. Read Carl's first sentence and compare it to the revised and edited version below.

*Yesterday, as I was going out for a walk, I found a box outside the front door. On it there was a note that read as follows: "Lost property – handle with the greatest care." There and then, I decided to take the mysterious box to my room.*

Now read the last sentence of the second paragraph. Revise and edit it by using shorter sentences.



Do Carl's sentences begin in different ways? Most of Carl's sentences begin with 'I'. What other words or phrases could be used to vary sentence beginnings?

- **writing that makes use of suitable, interesting and different words**

Carl used 'delighted' (line 12) to show that he was extremely pleased and excited. He used 'proud' (line 22) to show that he felt pleased about his new possession.

Did Carl use suitable and interesting words to describe the hat?

Which word or words could he have used instead of 'nice' in line 5 and 'polishing' in line 22?



Can you think of an adjective to complete the following sentence?

*I heard a \_\_\_\_\_ knock on the door.*

Carl used 'went' a number of times. He could have used different vocabulary to say the same things in different ways.

For example, in line 4, *I entered my room ...* instead of *I went in my room ...*; in line 8, 'went' may be replaced by 'left' - *As she left I wished that ...*

Find another word that Carl uses more than once and think of a different word to replace it.

- **writing that is clear enough to read**

Carl's handwriting is quite neat and this helps the reader to read through the composition easily.

Carl made good use of space. He indented the first line of each paragraph and skipped a line between paragraphs. He separated words and sentences.

He also crossed out illegible letters and words. Then he wrote them clearly so that they would be read easily.

- **use of correct English**

Carl's writing has many grammatically correct sentences. However, some of the sentence structures can be improved, as in the following case:

In line 17, he writes: *I thought that I was lucky that I had a hat that it was magic.* He could have written: *I thought that I was lucky to have the magic hat.*

Now revise this sentence: *It was black but it was nice to put it on.* (lines 5 and 6).

Read the following sentence from lines 8 and 9.

*When you **put** it on it **was** invisible and when you **take** it off you **could** see it.*

Are the forms of the verbs correct?

Carl's spelling is very precise. He spelled words like *invisible*, *knock*, *delighted*, *heard*, *ice-cream*, *bought* and *thought* accurately.

His sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. However, he hardly uses any other punctuation marks. Where would you have used an exclamation mark?

- **writing paragraphs that are suitably linked**

Carl divided his composition into three paragraphs – the introduction, the middle paragraph and the conclusion. The conclusion links well to the middle paragraph. After Carl discovered the power of the magic hat, he was so excited that he did not want to part with it.

Can you follow Carl's thinking as you read from the first paragraph to the second?

- **writing paragraphs that are made up of groups of sentences where each sentence builds on the one before**

The middle paragraph is rather long and includes changes of focus and / or scene. Divide the middle part of Carl's writing into four shorter paragraphs by grouping sentences that are linked to:

1. Carl in his room exploring the 'lost property'
2. His mother's visit and how the hat's power helped the wearer tidy up his room
3. Walking outside with the hat on and how the magic hat fulfilled his desire to buy ice-creams
4. Back home and how the magic hat helped Carl spend more time playing computer games

Can you think of other examples to show the power of a magic hat?  
Use one of your ideas to write a paragraph.

Or

Write a different conclusion to the story beginning:  
*I wanted to keep the magic hat but ...*

