

*Hi everyone in Scoil Mhuire,*

*My name is Helen. I used to work in your school but now I am a writer and I know that there are lots of you out there who are writers too!*

*Each week I am going to give you a prompt (this is an idea for a story).*

### **This is not Homework**

You don't have to do it...this is a fun exercise for anyone out there who wants to let their imaginations fly! You could pretend, if you like, that you are writing a story for somebody younger than you, like your brother or your sister or your cousin. That's what real writers do!

Here's how we do it in my Writers Group.

1. We look at the **prompt** (idea for a story).
2. We write for **15 or 20 minutes** without talking or stopping...our hands get really sore, so we often give them a little shake.
3. We write without thinking too much and we don't worry about our spellings or our handwriting. We call this **free writing**.
4. We don't correct our work until much later and do you know what... this is how we get our best ideas. You might even get an idea for a book or for a collection of stories from this free writing exercise!

We try to keep all our stories in a special notebook but if that's too hard at the moment just keep all your pages together. **Don't throw them away!**

I'm doing this exercise each week too. When your school reopens, my writing friends and I would love to come and visit you and we can all talk about our work.

So ...let's go!

**This week's story is: The Magic Crystal**

**Begin with *Once upon a time in a land far away.....***