

Stories

## Lucy's inventions

You could use this story in a **Flyers** class.



Lucy loved her maths and science lessons at school, but she also loved thinking about maths and science in the evenings and at weekends when she wasn't at school.

'I want to be an inventor,' she told her parents. 'Can you build a place for me at the end of the garden where I can make amazing things?'

'Yes!' said her mother.

'Of course!' said her father. 'We can build you a shed there. Which amazing thing will you make first? Do you know?'

'Sure!' said Lucy. 'I've always wanted to fly so I'm going to make some wings.'

In September, Lucy collected lots of old pieces of metal from the bike shop and from Bill, the mechanic, in the village where she lived. Then she watched lots of videos about wings on the Internet. Lucy thought a lot about the videos and then drew a lot of pictures in her Inventions Diary. Then she carefully worked with the metal until her two beautiful wings were ready. On the last day of September, Lucy carried the wings to the top of North Hill. She tied them to her back and shoulders and ran to the edge of the high cliff. But before she got there, she stopped.

'They look great. They are the right shape and they are very strong, too, but these wings are too heavy,' Lucy thought.

An eagle in its nest at the top of the tallest tree on the hill quietly agreed with her.

In October, Lucy collected some pieces of wood from the forest near her home and found some wonderful drawings of wings in a huge book that her grandfather gave her many years ago. Lucy thought a lot about the drawings and then drew a lot of pictures in her Inventions Diary. Then she carefully worked with the wood until her second pair of wings was ready. On the last day of October, Lucy carried the wings to the top of North Hill. She tied them to her back and shoulders and ran to the edge of the high cliff. But before she got there three, and then four more pieces of the wings broke and fell to the ground.

'They look so nice. They are the right size and they are light, too, but these wings aren't strong enough,' she thought.

Two sheep that were eating the long grass on the hill quietly agreed with her.

## Karen Saxby

Creative teaching material for young learners

In November, Lucy collected hundreds of pieces of card and paper that the people in her village didn't want. Then she lay on the grass in her garden and quietly watched the different birds that flew in the air above her home. Lucy thought a lot about the birds and then drew a lot of pictures in her Inventions Diary. Then she carefully worked with the card and paper until her third pair of beautiful wings was ready. On the last day of November, Lucy carried the wings to the top of North Hill and tied them to her back and shoulders and ran to the edge of the high cliff. But before she got there an enormous grey cloud appeared in the sky and it started to rain.

'They looked brilliant and they are the right size, but now they are getting wet and their shape is all wrong. Oh dear! I can't use these wings to fly,' she thought.

A rabbit, warm and dry in its hole under the ground on the hill, quietly agreed with her.

On the first day of December, Lucy put away all the metal, wood and card and paper and tidied her shed. Then she sat down and began to write in her diary:

*Plastic things are bad for our planet so I don't want to design wings that are made of that. Wool wings will be too soft and flying with glass wings will be much too dangerous. Perhaps people will never fly with a pair of wings on their backs and shoulders, but .....*

Suddenly, Lucy had a fantastic idea and ran to talk to her parents about it.

'OK,' she said. 'My wing inventions didn't work. I understand why now.'

'What are you going to make next, then?' asked her mother.

'A different kind of skateboard and snowboard, I think,' Lucy answered. 'I might call it a skate-or-snow board.'

'What do you mean?' asked her father.

'It will be really cool and, all over the world, kids will love using it.'

'Tell us more!' her parents said.

'Well, I'll make mine first, of course. My skate-or-snow board will have wheels when I want to skate around the village streets and paths. It will have hundreds of little white lights on it, too. But when it snows high up on North Hill, the lights will change to blue and little skis will appear over the wheels. Then the board will slide beautifully under my feet across all the snow. It'll go really fast!'

The eagle, the sheep and the rabbit on North Hill had excellent ears and heard the conversation. 'Hmmm.... Perhaps you can think of a way for your skate-or-snow board to fly, too,' they thought. 'Good luck, Lucy.'

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## Teaching notes

*Not on the YLE Flyers wordlist: 'shed' 'edge' 'cliff' 'size' 'slide' (v) 'put away' (v), 'tie' (v), 'inventor' and 'invention' However, 'invent' (n) IS on the wordlist.*

## You might like to:

- *review / teach where clauses, and future tenses (will and going to).*
- *review / teach the YLE materials vocabulary: card, glass, metal, paper, plastic, wood, wool and also silver and gold. In pairs, learners use dictionaries, if necessary, to list five things that are made of each material. You could make that a race. Congratulate everyone for their work and ideas though.*
- *review / teach the months of the year. When are learners' birthdays? Learners do a survey to find out how many classmates were born in each month.*
- *ask groups to create calendars (also a new Flyers word). They could illustrate each month in their calendar with a famous invention, eg the light bulb, the bicycle, the television, paper, the mobile phone, the wheel, electricity, the combustion engine. They could print online images or draw pictures to add to each month's page.*
- *ask learners to imagine that Lucy did invent her a skate-or-snow board. Learners speculate about what happened next.*
- *encourage learners to write a Q/A interview between Lucy the Inventor and a TV presenter. They could then role play the interview. Others in the group or class could be members of the TV studio audience who are also able to ask about Lucy's inventions. Two classmates could be Lucy's mother and father who help Lucy answer the questions.*
- *ask learners about things they would like to invent. Discuss why their inventions might be useful/important.*
- *ask pairs to choose one material from the list and write a fact file about it. Display their fact files on a classroom wall if possible.*
- *talk about the problem of plastic waste. How does this effect our environment and the health of wild life and human beings?*
- *ask how artificial intelligence will change the world. Speculate about what might be perfectly 'normal' in ten years / fifty years time?*