**Story-telling, story-writing**

Read aloud the extract below from the story of how Arthur gets Excalibur, his enchanted sword, from the mythical Lady of the Lake.

Imagine your listeners sitting by a fireside waiting to know what happens. How can you make your reading of this episode in the story one which captures Arthur’s amazement at what he is seeing and hearing?

Take it in turns to read it to each other and think about trying some of the story telling techniques below:

* Which parts might be read slowly, with pauses, to build up the excitement?
* Which parts might be read a little more fast to create pace?
* What should Merlin’s voice sound like? Gentle? Strong? Mysterious?
* How might the punctuation give you clues about how it should be read?
* What do you think is the most important sentence in the story? How will you read it?

Bring this episode to life with your voice!

**When Arthur first sees Excalibur…**

‘Where is this Excalibur?’ I asked yet again. ‘And what is it anyway? Can’t you tell me?’

‘Oh, be still with your questions, Arthur,’ said Merlin. Suddenly he leaned forward and pointed. ‘Look.’

I looked, but I could see nothing at first. But then as I looked I saw the surface of the lake shiver and break. And, to my amazement, up out of the lake came a shining sword, a hand holding it, and an arm in a white silk sleeve.

‘There,’ Merlin whispered. ‘You have your answer. That is Excalibur. It comes from the half-world of Avalon, the blade forged by elf-kind, the scabbard woven by the Lady Nemue herself, the Lady of the Lake, and my lady too.’ And as he spoke her name, his voice faltered. ‘See, here she comes.’

And out of the mists came a figure in flowing green, walking across the water. Yet the water seemed undisturbed beneath her feet as if she was walking on air. She came towards us, holding a scabbard in both her hands, and a swordbelt hanging from it.

From *Arthur, High King of Britain* by Michael Morpurgo