

What is a premise?

A premise is an idea that gives rise to a story. It tells us about the main characters, the situation and the conflict they face.

Here are three examples:

- ✈️ A plane crashes on a desert island. All the survivors are schoolboys, and there are no adults to supervise them. (Novel: *Lord of the flies*)
- ❄️ A self-centred weatherman finds himself reliving the same day over and over. (Film: *Groundhog Day*)
- 👤 A man is born old and ages backwards, experiencing life in reverse. (Short story/film: *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*)

In some cases, a writer might start with a premise and then build the story from there. This is likely what happened in *Man from the South*, the original story featuring the cigarette lighter bet.

Your task

Put yourself in the writer's shoes. Imagine a story that could come from this premise.

A challenges B to light a cigarette lighter ten times in a row. If B succeeds, they win A's car. If they fail, A gets to chop off their little finger.

Consider the following questions as you develop your story:

- **Characters:** Who are A and B? What are their backstories and relationship? Are there other characters involved?
- **Motives:** Why would A make this bet? Why might B consider accepting it?
- **Setting:** Where does the story take place?
- **Plot:** What happens in the story and what are the outcomes? Does anyone lose anything? Are there any twists or surprises?

Work together to develop a storyline – a description of the main events in the story, showing what happens from beginning to end. Someone in your group should make notes. Later, you will share your story with the rest of the class.

**Good luck and
no Googling!**

