

Reading Rocks Reviews

KS3/4 Lesson 1

Welcome to the first lesson, where children will be writing and filming a book analysis and review, based on a chosen texts and author interviews. Additionally, they will learn about the features of good writing and write their own creative pieces.

Before this lesson, select one or more books that contains a number of descriptive passages. Your class should be looking to imitate this style of writing, plus analyse the language and form an opinion based on either the description of the character or setting. You could review different books in groups, but think carefully about managing modelling, filming and editing multiple videos across the class.

n.b. Always [log in](#) to your account before starting teaching to ensure you have access to the videos. You will need some examples of descriptive writing at an age appropriate level.

Introduction (5 mins)

Watch the [L1 Video](#), which explains what they'll be doing this week.

Take ideas from the class about what makes interesting writing (e.g. mysterious settings, characters who challenge stereotypes, literary devices and ambitious vocabulary, narrative structure such as flashbacks or movement between the internal and external) and then, in talk partners, children recommend a book they have read and enjoyed to their partner. Take feedback on which recommendations were successful, and why. Discuss why people create and share book reviews. You may want to suggest that use of literary devices and excellent storytelling skills are a huge part of that.

Main (50 mins)

(Part 1 - 15 mins)

Share some examples of descriptive writing from the book that you have decided to study and the extracts provided. Discuss the texts. Which was the best and why? Discuss how effective the writing of your chosen book was. Film students talking to one another about how effective the description was to the camera as this could go into your final video analysis.

(Part 2 - 15 mins)

Use the L1 IWB to show and discuss the model introduction text, taking note of the use of a colon and a semi colon.

Using the whiteboard, show how a colon can be used to join two sentences, where the second sentence expands upon the first.

Split the class into two groups - A and B. On mini whiteboards, children in A write a sentence telling the reader about the weather (e.g. Horrifically, the tree was howling.) They find a partner in group B who then writes a second sentence, expanding on the first. Both sentences are joined using a colon.

(e.g. Horrifically, the tree was howling: each decaying leaf was flung viciously into the midnight air.) Read aloud some examples, using any errors to make the teaching points that the two sentences (clauses) need to be independent and make sense by themselves and that the second one must tell us more about the first.

(Part 3 - 25 mins)

Students to use the title of the text to use as the stimulus for their own piece of descriptive writing. As a class, agree on the techniques to include (We'd recommend creating a cyclical structure, not starting sentences with 'The', zooming in on one part of the setting, and making inventive use of the title).

After writing, students to peer assess each other's writing based on the techniques previously agreed upon. Students to discuss which they found most effective and engaging.

Plenary (5 mins)

How do we make sure that people don't switch off our class video? Invite ideas.



Refer to the videos seen earlier and comment on performance - pace, pitch, tone and intonation. Model reading, then invite children to read out their descriptions, focusing on performance.

Throughout the topic, it is really helpful if all of the large sheets/shared vocabulary, etc can form a working wall for the children to work from and absorb. This really impacts on their final work.