

FArTHER – Y5 Stories by significant authors

Prior Knowledge - Check that children can already:

Plan, tell and write complete stories with a clear sequence of events; use detailed description and powerful verbs to evoke setting and portray characters.

Participate in group discussion by offering reasons for their opinions supported by evidence.

Talk about books by a favourite author, explaining why they enjoy them and how and why the books were written.

Read FArTHER to the class ensuring time is given to look at each illustration in turn. What are the children's first impressions? How does the story make them feel? What do they like/dislike? Does it remind them of anything? Complete puzzles, patterns, likes, dislikes grid.

Create role on the wall sheets for the boy and his father by drawing an outline of each on a large sheet of paper. Read the book again, this time looking out for information and clues about their characters. Around the outlines of each figure, record what we know about him/e.g. he likes flying. On the inside, record what we think we know/e.g. characteristics we can infer e.g. he daydreams a lot.

Look in detail at one page and discuss how the illustrations and text work together. The questions provided in the Visual Literacy activity may give a useful starting point. Create a freeze frame depicting the father leaving for war. What sounds would the family hear? What would they smell? Ask children to discuss in pairs what they think each character may be saying, thinking or feeling and record on cards. In turn, each moves into the freeze frame and reads aloud their cards.

Discuss the final page. The author has chosen not to put any text on this page. Why do you think this was? What might the text have said? Is it better with or without text?

Create a list of features of the author's style e.g. simple sentences, use of repetition, clear adjectives, patterned illustrations.

Discuss the effect each feature creates and find several examples in the text. Display on a working wall.

Explain that this book won the Greenaway award this year. Read aloud the judges comments on

http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/2011awards/media_greenaway_judges.php?file=5. To what extent do the children agree/disagree with the judges comments? Read the reviews submitted by other children on

http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/shadowingsite/read_reviews.php?action=getreviews&titleid=11 Which do they agree/disagree with? Give time to write and submit their own reviews.

Phase outcome: Children can recognise dramatic effects used by authors. Children can infer information about character from what is written.

Create a role on the wall for mum. We know nothing about her and she appears in only 3 pictures. Why is this? What might she be like? How might she react to her husband's dream of flying? How would she feel when her son began flying? Allow children to develop their own ideas about Mum's character.

In groups, role play an imagined discussion between the family at breakfast. Use what we know about the characters as well as what we think we know. Referring to role on the wall posters.

Use zone of relevance. Give groups word cards containing statements linked with mum e.g. adjectives to describe mum, things mum might say or do. On a target board, groups should decide which are most relevant to the character and which are least and arrange accordingly. They should explain their thinking and come to agreement about where they are positioned.

Choose a double page spread from the book and imagine where Mum is, what she is doing and what she is thinking. In pairs, give children different double page spreads to record notes around the edge about mum's actions, thought and feelings. Share these with other groups and swap so that ideas can be added to and increased.

Phase outcome: Children can make decisions in groups and manage tasks over time. Children can use dramatic techniques to explore character.

The task is to re-write part of the story from mum's point of view. Use Shared writing to model the story from Mum's point of view. Refer back to the features of the author's style and use these to write in the style of FArTHER. Use the notes made on the double page spreads and model turning these into effective sentences in first person. Overlay the new written text onto the illustration.

Check. Is it in the style of the author? Does it create the impression of mum you wanted it to? What effect is it creating on the reader? Experiment with the layout of the text on to the illustration. How does moving it alter the effect?

Give time for children to work individually on their new versions of the story. Either the whole story or a particular key part of the story e.g. when Dad leaves for the war, her son learns to fly, her grandchild is born. Use Guided writing to focus on key aspects identified for particular groups of children, for example paragraphs, sentence structure or use of language. Encourage children to rehearse sentences orally and reread and check as they are writing, returning to the original text as necessary.

When children have completed their stories, support the process of discussing, proofreading and editing their own writing.

Demonstrate how to check and improve sentence construction and punctuation by modelling alternative sentence construction. Talk about the effect of using longer or shorter sentences for dramatic effect at particular points in the story. Which sentences sound most like the original text? What effect does each have on the reader?

Give time to publish the final stories using ICT. Where possible, make links in Art to allow children to create their own illustrations in the style of Grahame Baker-Smith, using a combination of drawing, collage and ICT packages.

Phase outcome: Children can write a new version or scene for a story in the style of the author. Children can organise their writing into a sequence of paragraphs using effective sentence structures.

Unit extension

This unit lends itself to additional reading. Using the techniques learnt in phases 1, 2 and 3 of this unit, children could explore the other shortlisted picture books in a similar way. This could either be during Guided reading/writing sessions during the unit or as a whole class project after the unit. For a full list of shortlisted texts, go to <http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/shadowingsite/index.php> . You will also find activities and ideas to create your own shadowing group.