

Alien Spotters guide – Y2 Non-chronological reports

Prior Knowledge: Check that children can already:
Explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction
Recognise the layout in non-fiction texts, using terms such as heading, diagram

Experience:
Create a classroom crime scene. Prepare the classroom with evidence of an alien invasion (see photographs). Ask children to decide what has happened by investigating using magnifying glasses etc. Provide evidence collection forms. Allow plenty of time for the children to talk and share ideas (and excitement!). Children take photos of the evidence to use later in their writing

Familiarisation and immersion in text

Use evidence collection forms children have completed to collate all the evidence. Ask children to make some guesses about who has invaded their classroom. Ask them to create a 'photo-fit' drawing and description of who they think is the culprit, including as many of the details from the evidence as possible. Display these on the working wall.

Show the class the book - What sort of book is this? Although it is set out like a non-fiction book is it 'real', or invented by Bob? (Children will need to be familiar with other 'Bob' books). Looking through each page carefully, identify which features are similar to a non-fiction text, and which are elements of fiction. In pairs, study a double page spread, identifying the fiction and non-fiction elements.

Read the descriptions of aliens on 'How to Spot an Alien' and 'How to Spot More Aliens' pages. What have we learnt about them? How close were the class in their photo-fit descriptions?

Ask children to work in pairs to read the Alien descriptions and match the description to the picture of the alien.

Set up 'expert groups' to study one alien each. In their groups, they create character profiles for alien including likes, dislikes, behaviour and actions. 'Jigsaw' the experts so that they can share the information about each alien with the other groups. Ask children to complete the Alien quiz from 'Strange Alien Facts' page

Phase outcome: Children can explain ideas using imaginative and adventurous vocabulary. Children can explain organisational features of a text and use them to find information efficiently.

Capturing ideas Oral Rehearsal

Read the Letters Page. Ask the children to write a letter to Bob telling them what happened in the classroom and who they think is responsible. Explain that these will be posted to Bob, giving them a real audience to write for and post the letters to the publisher – one school received a Simon Bartram FAQ sheet, and 2 rockets to build as a reply!

Role play an Alien conversation using the 'Useful Alien Phrases' using phonics to decode! What additional phrases do they need for their conversation? Ask them to invent their own phrases. Record the phrases on audio recording software to create an interactive translator. Look back through evidence collected at the start of the unit. Can they create a timeline of events – where did the aliens enter, what did they do first etc? What might they be saying to one another? What are they doing? Why did they come here?

Role play an interview with one of the alien visitors – using a translator if you have any alien language experts! In two teams, one team plan the questions they would like to ask the alien about the visit. Pass these to the alien team to decide on their answers in preparation for a formal interview. Record this on video or audio recording equipment.

Do a similar interview with Bob, asking him to share his expertise about aliens.

Phase outcome: Children can work effectively in groups, using talk to negotiate roles and responses. Children can explore meaning in texts and create their own interpretations

WRITING: Model, scribe, support

Look at some examples of newspapers. Copies of 'First News' might be useful as a model <http://www.firstnews.co.uk/>. Model planning the paragraphs of an article. Demonstrate the thought process whilst deciding what to include in the article and in what order. In groups, ask children to plan the content and sequence of their article. They should also decide who will write each paragraph.

Use Shared writing to model how to write a report about the classroom events. Model combining description of what happened with interviews and more factual information about the aliens. Refer back to the timelines created, the evidence collected and the interviews. Model how to structure each sentence using appropriate tense, language and style encouraging oral rehearsal before writing to ensure each sentence makes sense says what you wanted it to say and fits in with the paragraph. Use teacher demonstration, teacher scribing and supported composition before moving on to independent writing.

Children work together to write a newspaper report about the events of the day, each writing their own paragraphs and combining to make one complete article. Each group can then add photographs and images, and create additional elements e.g. adverts and links to other articles to make it look like a genuine article. (See example picture file of children's newspaper).

Phase outcome: Children can work effectively in groups. Children can plan the content and order before they write. Children can write a newspaper report.