

Get writing

SECTION

6

News headlines

Objective: To choose and combine words, images and other features for particular effects.

What you need: Copies of *The Hundred-Mile-An-Hour Dog*, Extracts 1 and 2 (pages 8 and 9), and writing materials.

Cross-curricular links: ICT, art and design.

What to do

- Display Extracts 1 and 2 and read them together. Suggest that a real-life event like either of these could end up as a headline in the local paper. Invite the children to suggest attention-grabbing headlines for the stories, such as 'Dog and Boy Crime Partners', 'Children Arrested as Fur Flies'. They could use also alliteration, for example 'Market Mayhem'. Make a list of the headlines.
- Discuss how crimes are reported in papers. Talk about use of language ('It is alleged...', 'First on the scene, Sergeant Smugg...') and exaggeration

or inaccuracy ('In a frenzied and unprovoked attack thieves smashed the window...').

- Ask the children to choose one of these events and read it again in *The Hundred-Mile-An-Hour Dog*, including the lead-up and consequence.
- Ask them to create a newspaper column, including direct quotations from those concerned, a 'photograph', and possibly a pull quote halfway through the report, picking out a gossipy or shocking piece of journalese.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Let the children expand their news story and transfer it to a word-processing program, including drawings or digital photographs.

For younger/less confident learners: Act as scribe as the children suggest components for the report. Help them to sequence their ideas and use emotive language, cutting and pasting.

Dear diary

Objective: To write non-narrative text using structures of different text-types.

What you need: Copies of *The Hundred-Mile-An-Hour Dog*, photocopiable page 29, writing materials and scissors, if required.

What to do

- Talk about the genre and style of writing of the book (fiction; first person, past-tense narrative; in chapters) and the intended readership (children and young people with a sense of humour; animal lovers, perhaps).
- Ask the children if any of them keeps a diary. Discuss its function – to remember things, to create a journal of events and feelings, to mark appointments and reminders.
- Talk about who the intended readers of a diary are. (Usually just the writers themselves, unless they are famous.)
- Discuss the style of writing in a diary.

(Incomplete sentences; pronouns, especially 'I', may be missing; articles 'a', 'the' and even verbs may be missing.) The diarist might write simply: *To town on bus* meaning *I went into town on the bus*, or perhaps single words, such as *Cold* or *Bored*.

- Hand out photocopiable page 29. Explain that it is an imaginary diary entry, as might be written by one of the story characters. Ask the children to copy out the entries in the right order, adding a title to show whose diary it is. Can they work out which chapters these events occur in?

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to write a diary entry for their favourite event in the book, written in the persona of another character.

For younger/less confident learners: Highlight the chapters the children need to re-read, then provide scissors for them to cut out the entries and physically arrange them in order.