

Get writing

SECTION

6

Tom's diary

Objective: To use a range of narrative devices to involve the reader.

What you need: Copies of *The Midnight Fox*, flipchart, photocopiable page 28.

What to do

- Read Chapters 14–17 together. Point out that these chapters record a single, eventful day on the farm. Tell the children they are going to plan a diary entry that Tom might write, recording the events of the day. Explain that they will need to decide what to include and what to leave out, as the diary entry will need to be a concise summary of what happens.
- As a shared activity, work through the text, making notes on the flipchart that record key

facts or events – the hot weather, the tense mood, pumping water from the pond, the fox hunt, the cub as bait, Uncle Fred's watch, the rescue of the cub, Tom's admission.

- Arrange the class into pairs and hand out photocopiable page 28. Ask the children to fill in the diary planner, scanning the text for information and using the flipchart notes to help them.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Challenge the children to choose another day to record on the diary planner.

For younger/less confident learners: Provide support for the children in extracting key facts or events by highlighting relevant text.

Fox poems

Objective: To select words and language drawing on their knowledge of literary features and formal and informal writing.

What you need: Copies of *The Midnight Fox*, flipchart, examples of concrete/shape poems (optional), writing materials and paper.

Cross-curricular link: Art and design.

What to do

- Read Chapter 10 together. Tell the children they are going to focus on the words and phrases that the author uses to describe the fox. Pick out one or two relevant phrases and write them on the board as examples.
- Arrange the class into pairs and ask them to scan through the chapter writing down all the relevant words and phrases. They should include descriptions of her appearance and also how she moves and reacts. Allow them time to scan the rest of the novel for more words and phrases describing the fox.

- When they have finished, bring the class back together and list some of their suggestions on the flipchart, discussing which they think are most vivid and have most impact.

- Challenge the pairs to think up some more phrases or words that they would use to describe the fox, adding these to the word bank.

- Tell the children they are going to write a short poem about the fox, choosing words or phrases from the word bank. If they want, they can experiment with a shape or concrete poem, using the shape of the animal or its head.

- Allow the children time to write their poems then share some with the class, inviting constructive feedback.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Pairs can work as response partners to help children edit and improve their poems.

For younger/less confident learners: Model a simple poem before children begin drafting.