

Plot, character and setting

SECTION

4

Burglar dance

Objective: To explore how suspense is created in a text.

What you need: Copies of *Burglar Bill*, paper, pencils, two pieces of contrasting music (one that has a dark, ominous feel to it, such as John Williams' theme from *Jaws*, and the other a light-hearted piece, such as *Baby Elephant Walk* by Henry Mancini).

Cross-curricular links: PE (dance), music

What to do

- Re-read the book, asking the children to identify sentences that convey Burglar Bill's movement. These include mentions of creeping, climbing, falling, swinging, bouncing and running. Write these movement words and phrases on the board.
- Play the recording of the creepy-sounding music and ask the children to think about which movement descriptions fit best to this music. Encourage them to make freeze-frame body

shapes to illustrate the movements mentioned on the board. Help the children to put some of these movements to the music.

- Now repeat this activity using the jolly piece of music.
- Gather the children together again to discuss how words in the text are carefully put together to create a mood. Ask: *What would happen if there were no descriptive movement words? What would happen if you substituted certain descriptive words for different words?* (For example, stagger, jump.) *Does it change the dance?*

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Allow time for children to put their movements together to make a sequence and to perform their dance with gesture and facial expression.

For younger/less confident learners: Model a variety of movements and actions for children to practise.

'The error of my ways'

Objective: To give reasons for events in a story or changes in characters.

What you need: Copies of *Burglar Bill*, paper, pencils.

What to do

- Working in pairs, ask the children to read the spread beginning 'Burglar Bill walks through the town...'. Ask them to discuss what the statement 'I can see the error of my ways' might mean. What do they think has caused the two burglars to come to this realisation?
- Encourage the children to think about how other famous storybook characters might change their behaviour if they were to see the error of their ways. Record on the board the names of characters who do bad things in fairy tales.
- Ask the children to regroup into their pairs and choose a character, thinking of ways that character might change their behaviour. What would they do to make amends?

- Return as a class and invite the children to present their ideas using the following question-and-answer format:

Child A: '[Character name], what have you done wrong?'

Child B answers in character.

Child A: 'And do you see the error of your ways?'

Child B: 'I do. From now on I will...'

- Ask the children whether they think their character feels happier now he has decided to change. What do they think the consequences of Burglar Bill changing his behaviour have been?

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Challenge the children to write a new ending to their character's story, incorporating their ideas of character reformation.

For younger/less confident learners: Children could tape-record their ideas in a pair or group discussion.