

Get writing

SECTION

6

Snowy views

Objectives: To use a range of technical and descriptive vocabulary; establish and maintain viewpoints.

What you need: *Please Mrs Butler*, flipchart or board, photocopiable page 29, pens.

Cross-curricular links: Science (weather).

What to do

- Read together 'Only Snow'. Ask the children to summarise the poem and identify the two viewpoints (a teacher's and the children's). Whose views on snow do the third and fourth verses express? (The teacher's.)
- Invite the children to suggest different ways of thinking about snow – for example, how would another poet or a scientist or a farmer see snow? Divide the board into two columns with the headings 'Magical Snow' and 'Only Snow'. In one column, list the children's suggestions for all the fun and magical things about snow, such as

snowmen and snowball fights. Add descriptive words and phrases, including sounds (crunching underfoot), appearance (glistening), and how it transforms everything (blanketing; muffling noise). In the other column, consider factual views of snow, such as the science of why it happens, or snow as a nuisance in disrupting transport and so on.

- Hand out copies of photocopiable page 29. Ask the children to work in pairs to complete it.
- Bring the class back together to review their work, encouraging the children to notice differences in language – factual or subjective.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask children to write a short piece on how they view snow.

For younger/less confident learners: Encourage children to draw and label pictures that represent different views of snow.

Dog trouble

Objectives: To signal sequence, place and time to give coherence; punctuate sentences accurately, including use of speech marks and apostrophes.

What you need: *Please Mrs Butler*, flipchart or board, paper, pens.

What to do

- Read together 'Dog in the Playground'. Ask the children to summarise what happens and who gets involved.
- Then focus on the form and pace of the poem. A fast pace and sense of panic and excitement is created by short, incomplete sentences; repetition of key words and phrases; use of multiple voices; rhythm and rhyme. Notice the use of the present tense to give immediacy.
- Write the second verse on the board and ask the children what it needs to turn it into prose.

(Verbs to complete the sentences and speech marks to punctuate them.) Invite volunteers to rewrite the verse as prose.

- Working in pairs, challenge the children to write the first five verses in correct prose, adding verbs and punctuation. Then review the texts. How does writing the verses in prose change the effect made by the poem? (It slows down the pace and reduces the sense of excitement and panic.) Discuss how although prose conveys the meaning, it loses the drama and atmosphere created by the free verse.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask pairs to turn the rest of the poem into prose.

For younger/less confident learners: Ask pairs to turn one or two more verses into prose.

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