

Plot, character and setting

SECTION

4

Quick write

Objective: Appraise a text quickly, deciding on its value, quality or usefulness.

What you need: Copies of the Diary or copies of various entries, large sheets of paper.

What to do

- Tell the children they are going to look at certain Diary entries to find out about plot, character and setting. (Tuesday, 11th April 1944 is good for all three features. Choose other entries of an appropriate length.)
- Ask the children to discuss the techniques of skimming and scanning to find information.
- Now tell them they are going to be working in groups of three. One child will make notes about setting, one about plot and one about character.
- Explain that they will write on large sheets of paper.
- Challenge the children to write as quickly as

possible.

- Hand out or point the children to a new Diary entry after five minutes.
- Repeat this formula three or four times.
- Bring the children together to find out which group has made the most sensible and useful notes.
- Ask the children how they tackled the task – did they underline or highlight, or write straight on to their sheet. Stress the importance of using a method which finds the information and works best for them as individuals.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Offer individuals the opportunity to work on their own. They will be making notes on all three aspects.

For younger/less confident learners: Work with these children, supporting the reading and acting as scribe if necessary.

Plotting

Objective: Consider how a writer from a different time and place presents experiences.

What you need: Photocopiable page 15, copies of the Diary.

What to do

- Discuss the fact that *The Diary of a Young Girl* does not have a plot in the same way as other forms of writing, such as a story. In many ways Anne wrote down random thoughts, feelings and comments on the events in her life and the lives of those around her.
- Tell the children they are going to locate entries in the Diary which describe external events – those pertaining to the war in general and the treatment of Jews in particular. It is these events that provide much of the plot of the book.
- Talk about chronology: how the war develops, how Anne's relationships with Peter and the

others develop.

- Show the children Photocopiable page 15, and instruct them to complete the boxes as described.
- Direct the children to certain entries: June 20th and November 19th, 1942; June 6th, July 15th and 21st, 1944. Note how Anne stays optimistic and hopeful at such times.
- Discuss how Anne presents her experiences and the different techniques she uses.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Challenge the children to comment on the links between what happens outside and inside the Annexe. Are there any conclusions to be drawn about the way people tackle things domestically when things are going well or otherwise?

For younger/less confident learners: Provide a list of Diary entries including those outlined above.