

Expected outcomes

- All children will use rich vocabulary and inverted commas to create interesting characters and dialogue.
- Most children will develop effective characterisation and dialogue.
- Some children will make good use of alliteration and a wide range of punctuation to enhance their writing and when reading aloud.

Curriculum objectives

- To identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise these.

Resources

The Twits by Roald Dahl (ideally the book and an audio version); media resource 'Mr and Mrs Twit' on the CD-ROM; photocopiable page 44 'Who's worse?'; vocabulary support sheets (optional, not provided)

Week 4 lesson plans

The chapter now moves on to one of Roald Dahl's best-loved short books: *The Twits*. The book is a masterclass in how to create rich, engaging characters with a minimum of words, and lends itself well to re-enactment of scenes and exaggerated characterisation. (There is a superb audio recording by Simon Callow, and playing this to your class will reap rich rewards.) The first three lessons cover a complete reading of the book, with opportunities for children to create their own revolting characters and to consider style and content, moving on to learning about the use of inverted commas for recording direct speech, both writing and reading it.

I: Meet the Twits

Introduction

- Hiding the book and any other clues, explain to the class that they will shortly be meeting the most awful characters they have ever met.
- Ask for names of other awful characters or creatures that the class might know of from books, stories, films or animations, and ask for words or phrases to explain why the characters are unpleasant. Write these on the whiteboard in categories such as: *Name, Appearance, Habits, Diet, Sayings*, and so on.
- Build up expectations by diminishing these characters' awfulness in comparison to the Twits.

Whole-class work

- Explain that this week you will be looking at another Roald Dahl short masterpiece: *The Twits*.
- Display the illustration 'Mr and Mrs Twit' from the CD-ROM.
- Explain that Roald Dahl did not like beards, and that the idea for *The Twits* originated in trying to do 'something against beards'.
- Read the opening half of the book, up to and including 'The House, the Tree, and the Monkey Cage', or play an audio version to the class.
- Discuss the relationship between Mr and Mrs Twit. Recap on their pasts and ask for ideas as to how they might have met, how long they might have been together, and so on. Wherever possible, model how to refer to (but not necessarily quote) the book when making points.

Group work

- Explain that children will be working in groups to discuss and debate a given view. This may not necessarily be a view they agree with, but nevertheless groups must try to create a compelling statement to support their view.
- Arrange the class roughly into six groups and distribute photocopiable page 44 'Who's worse?'.
- Assign a 'Who's worse?' view to each group – *Mr Twit, Mrs Twit, or As bad as each other* (with two groups having each view) – and clarify how to use the photocopiable sheet to support group discussion.

Differentiation

- Support less confident learners by grouping them appropriately with clear rules for group interaction and contribution.
- Extend children's learning by challenging them to draft opinion pieces arguing their case. Such pieces would need to reference both characters and list arguments.

Review

- Gather the class together and facilitate a discussion on different groups' views, starting with each group reading their statement. To conclude, decide who is worse with a whole-class vote. For interest, ask how many children changed from their own group's argument, and why (or indeed why not).