

PLOT, CHARACTER & SETTING

1. Making predictions

Objective

To predict what might happen from details stated and implied.

What you need

Copies of *Flat Stanley*, photocopiable page 29 'Making predictions'.

What to do

- Use this activity after reading the first section of the first chapter, as far as 'see Doctor Dan and hear what he has to say'. When posing the questions suggested here, encourage partner discussion before progressing to whole-class exchanges.
- Ask the children to close their copies of *Flat Stanley*. Explain that they have only read the first section of this chapter; there are two more pages left. Comment that this author often divides his chapters into sections by leaving a larger than usual space between paragraphs. He uses these gaps to signify changes in the setting, characters or plot. Ask: *Who has been in the story? What is the setting? What has happened so far in the plot? What is likely to happen next? Where has Mrs Lambchop mentioned going to?* Share information as you progress from partner to class discussion.
- Revise the terms 'setting', 'character' and 'plot'. Ask the children to fill in the first two sections of photocopiable page 29 'Making predictions'.
- Let the children read the rest of the first chapter together. Discuss the progress of the chapter. Ask: *What took you by surprise?* Invite the children to complete the photocopiable sheet.

Differentiation

Extension: Ask children to predict how the story will progress in the second chapter. How will Stanley and his family cope with him being flat?

2. Dramatic events

Objective

To prepare plays to read aloud and perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action.

What you need

Copies of *Flat Stanley*.

What to do

- Use this activity after reading the first chapter.
- Show the children an example playscript, examples can be found in the Resource Bank on www.scholastic.co.uk or elsewhere on the internet. Point out important features: clear distinction between characters' names and their words; no speech marks; a new line for a different speech; division into scenes.
- Suggest that this first chapter would make an exciting and funny play. Guide the children in investigating the first chapter. Point out: dialogue that could be used in the play; paragraphs of description to be omitted or replaced by dialogue; characters; and the settings of the kitchen, bedroom and Doctor Dan's surgery.
- Put the children into pairs and create groups of six to share the task of writing the playscript for the first chapter. Partners should write the kitchen, bedroom or surgery scene.
- Allow groups time to rehearse their acting of the play before they perform for the rest of the class. Encourage constructive feedback as you consider the intonation, tone and volume of voices so that the meaning is clear to the audience.

Differentiation

Support: Provide a writing frame and encourage short speeches.

Extension: Remind children that new dialogue must sound natural and appropriate to the character.