

Learning with Roald Dahl

SEND A POSTCARD TO A ROALD DAHL CHARACTER

Lesson plan plus additional activities: an outline to adapt for Year 3/P3 and above, linking with work on any Roald Dahl books.

As preparation, ask the children to bring in a postcard they have been sent (this is a good activity to run just before or just after the summer holidays).

STARTER:

When he was at boarding school, Roald Dahl wrote a postcard or a letter home to his mother every week. Show Roald Dahl's postcards with the children and point out that his postcards were not always about exciting events but were a way of conveying important information such as arrangements for travelling home or a request for an item to be sent to him. Discuss with the children the difference between methods of communication in the 1930s – Roald Dahl was using postcards in the same way that we would use the telephone, email or a text message.

Look at the postcards that the children have brought in and talk about why most people write postcards. Ask the children what kind of information you would include in a postcard:

• location • weather • activity • people

Discuss the need for economy and clarity of language – when writing postcards, people often miss out words and only include the most important phrases, for example: 'We're having lovely weather here' becomes 'Lovely weather'. Look again at Roald Dahl's postcards and consider how successful he was at communicating the information in a few words.

MAIN:

Ask the children to choose a Roald Dahl character to focus on for the postcard-writing task. Then, in pairs, ask one child to be a 'travel agent' and the other, the Roald Dahl character.



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Conduct an interview with the character about where they would like to go and what they would like to do on their holiday. If necessary, provide the children with a list of questions to consider, for example:

- What sort of weather do you like?
- What sort of activities would you like to do on your holiday?
- What sort of food do you like to eat?

They can then swap roles.

Once the children have considered what the different characters might do on their holiday they can decide what details they might include on a postcard home. Write an example as a class before asking the children to compose their own postcard. These could be written on to a postcard-sized template which the children could then illustrate on the other side.

PLENARY:

Share some examples of the children's work.

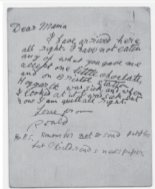
Further development:

- **Invent a holiday island for a Roald Dahl character in small groups and make a topographical map showing:** Geography – is the island mountainous or flat, desert or forested? Flora and fauna – do anemones grow freely on the island and do Boly-Poly Birds fly through the treetops?
- **Design marketing materials for the holiday resort,** including filming a short advert. Older classes could 'pitch' their resort to the rest of the class and an overall winner could be found by voting for their favourite island.
- **Design a holiday outfit for a character,** make them a suitable sunhat and have a fashion parade of outfits and hats.



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POSTCARDS FROM ROALD DAHL



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Dear Mamma

I have arrived here
all right. I have not eaten
any of what you gave me
except one little chocolate.
Hoggarth was sick ^{at station} and
I looked at it & was sick when
you & I am quite all right.

Love from
Roald

P.S. remember not to send letters
but Children's news paper

Nov. 27th 1944.

Dear Mamma,

This is my order:-

Bread 1 lb
Ginger 1/2 lb
Tea 1 lb
Honey 1 lb
Green soap 1 lb
Lard 1 lb
Gelatine
Ginger 1/2 lb
Tea 1 lb
Almonds 1 lb

I have gone down in
divinity because
a boy told me the wrong
preparation and I did
not know what about
it.

Love from

Roald



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Dear Mama Dec 9th
Just to make it a bit
planner, I will be coming
home on Dec 17th not the 18th
I will drive a Cardiff a four
O'clock please meet me, if
that is not quite planner ~~safe~~
maybe let me know what you
want to know about it.
Love from Boy

Dear Mama
I hope you are quite well
I don't mind when you
come, but if you come on
the 11th I think it would
be better, because we have
our pocket money to buy
some fireworks and then you
can come and see the big display
Please let me know soon.
Love from Boy

