

Activity 3: Feature feelings paragraph

Objective

To identify features that writers use to provoke readers' reactions (Year 3 Strand 8).

What to do

Continuing the work on 'Feature feelings' this activity focuses on writing.

- Organise the children into groups of four, sharing responses they had to the scary settings on photocopiable page 26 'Feature feelings'.
- Ask the children to select one of the features and decide which response is the most interesting for this feature and expand their original thoughts, using photocopiable page 27. Then invite each group to plan a paragraph that starts with the character seeing their chosen feature. They should start with 'Just then I saw a...' and go on to include the questions, hunches and feelings developed in their planning.
- Point out that characters in scary stories often seem rather naïve. Whereas most people in a creaky old house would run if they heard a noise in the attic, many characters go up the stairs. When reading a scary story like this, we may think 'Don't go up the stairs!' Can the children tease the reader in this way as the character contemplates what to do? Can they manipulate the reader to want to shout a warning?
- Ask a scribe to write up their group's paragraph and then invite them to individually devise a short story involving their chosen feature.

Activity 4: Scary places!

Objective

To use settings and characterisation to engage readers' interest (Year 4 Strand 9).

What to do

In this activity the children will consider what makes a scary setting.

- Begin by asking the children to think of a good setting for a scary story. Insist they do not choose a haunted house but examples could include a derelict factory or a boarding school.
- Open the CD-ROM file 'Scary places!' and click on one card from each category (location, time of day, weather and sounds). Then as a class use the four selected cards to write a descriptive paragraph of a scary setting.
- Allow time for the children to select their own four cards and use them to independently plan and write a descriptive paragraph on photocopiable page 28 'Scary places!'. You also have the option to display the 'Spooky house' image and play the 'Eerie wind' audio clip, both from the 'Media resources' section of the CD-ROM, and let the children incorporate them into their own paragraph about a setting.
- Alternatively, they could use their initial idea for a setting and think up at least four new features not on the cards to make their setting as scary as possible. Their features could include details of the place (such as cobwebs or mice scuttling by) or words (such as 'eerie' or 'isolated') that will enhance the description.
- Whichever option chosen, encourage the children to include as much detail as they can about the setting.

What's on the CD-ROM

Scary places!

- Select four cards to form the basis of a scary setting.
- Type a descriptive paragraph which creates a scary setting.

Media resources

- Use the 'Spooky house' image to stimulate ideas about setting.
- Play the 'Eerie wind' audio clip to stimulate ideas about setting.