

Tales and Tellings

Title of Scheme: <i>A Monster Calls</i>	WEEK 4
Resources required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 2 <i>Our Own Monsters</i>. • PPT 4 <i>Tales and Tellings</i>. 	

LESSON 4

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for this lesson are to:

- understand the narrative structure of *A Monster Calls*.
- understand the role of the tales in the narrative structure.

Grammar focus

Time adverbials: these are very common in narratives (e.g. *yesterday, later, that night*), but in fairy tales the time is usually distant and unspecified (e.g. *once, long ago*).

Common and proper nouns: most stories use proper nouns to give characters' names, but fairy tales rarely name characters. There are some exceptions (e.g. Cinderella, Rumpelstiltskin), but often names are the character's role or job (e.g. queen, prince, parson, woodcutter).

Introduction

Pairs/groups: using the narrative plot cards, re-sequence the story into the correct order.

Teacher: show the correct order (PPT 4.2-4.3) and remind students about archetypal story structures (PPT 4.4).

Pairs/groups: use the narrative plot cards and group them into the story structure sections: opening, problem, climax, resolution, ending.

Teacher: discuss the challenges of doing this and what aspects of story structure are most evident in *A Monster Calls*. In particular, consider what the opening of the story is – what problems does it introduce? Is the problem Conor's mum's cancer or the nightmare? What is the resolution? Is there an ending in the book or is the ending beyond the book?

Development

Pairs/groups: allocate groups either the first, second or third tale. Re-read the allocated tale (Tale 1 is on p. 62; Tale 2 is on p. 109 and Tale 3 is on p. 156) and write a concise plot synopsis of the story.

Teacher: share and check the plot synopses of the three stories and discuss the way Tale 3 crosses from the monster's story-telling into the main narrative of the story.

Pairs/groups: looking again at the allocated tale, what features of fairy tales does it have, and where does it differ?

Teacher: discuss the fairy tale quality of the stories. These qualities could include the archetypal openings with 'distant time' adverbials, such as '*There was once...*', magical interventions, unnamed characters with common nouns not proper nouns and stock characters, such as the wicked queen. Discuss the typical ending of fairy tales. These could include happy endings, with good winning over evil. Why do the monster's stories not have a happy ending where good defeats evil?

Pairs/groups: the fourth tale is Conor's own story, his nightmare and his truth. Tell each other Conor's story and discuss why the truth was such a nightmare for him.

Conclusion

Teacher: Look at what the monster says about stories (PPT 4.5) – what does he mean? What is the connection between the stories the monster tells and Conor's own life story?

Homework/ActiveLearn

Support

- Offer support to groups who find it hard to cluster the narrative plot cards into the story structure.

Challenge

- Allocate Tale 3 to those needing a challenge as the way it crosses from story to reality is complex.