

Grammar for Writing: Teaching Activities



Writing Learning Focus:

- How to intensify a key moment in a plotline

Grammar Learning Focus:

- How using a sequence of co-ordinated clauses can help intensify a key moment in a plotline

Context:

This activity would fit within a teaching unit where Roald Dahl's *BFG* is shared reading, and where children are working on developing understanding of narrative writing, especially plot development. The activity could be adapted to suit the reading of almost any other narrative text, as this pattern of sequenced co-ordinated clauses is very common.

Let's Talk!

During the paired task, support children in reading the sentences aloud to hear their effect. Help all children to see the repeated *and*; extend learning by inviting children to recognise the verbs, and for the most able, the clauses.

During the feedback, use questioning to ensure all see the *and* pattern, and the verbs. You could talk about the effect of the alliteration and rhyme (humorous?).

During the final whole class discussion, manage the discussion carefully to allow children to explore their views of this pattern, and create space for alternative interpretations eg it emphasises how hard the giants are fighting; it makes us laugh at the giant's movements...

Children often don't realise that in a list of clauses a comma can substitute for *and*: this is a good opportunity to point this out.

Activity Outline:

Whole class: Share again the reading of the sections where these come from (pages 95/6;194;95; 90)

Pairs/threes: teachers hands out or displays the four sentences, exemplifying the co-ordinated clause pattern, and asks children to read them aloud and to explore any patterns they can see. If necessary, prompt with *Are there any repeated words?*

Whole class: take feedback from pairs on patterns noticed: they might pick up on alliteration and rhyme in the second sentence; or the number of verbs in these sentences; as well as the repetition of 'and'.

Teacher: use colour to highlight the '*and*' repetition, and underline the verbs. Explain that these are a sequence of co-ordinated clauses (finite verb joined by *and*). Also note the comma instead of *and* in the final text.

Whole class: discuss the effect of these sequences of co-ordinated clauses, drawing out how they intensify the action being described.

Next steps: students to look at their own narrative and consider whether using a sequence of co-ordinated clauses would intensify a key moment in the plot.

Text examples:

~~~~~  
 << They punched and kicked and scratched and bit  
 and butted each other as hard as they could.  
 ~~~~~

~~~~~  
 << He rolled and wiggled, he fought and he figgled,  
 he squirmed and he squiggled.  
 ~~~~~

~~~~~  
 << The giants roared and screamed and cursed, and  
 for many minutes the noise of battle rolled across  
 the yellow plain.  
 ~~~~~

~~~~~  
 << He took a deep breath, puffed out his cheeks and  
 then whoof!  
 ~~~~~

