

Grammar for Writing: Teaching Activities



Writing Learning Focus:	➤ Creating a setting in a narrative.	
Grammar Learning Focus:	➤ How prepositional phrases can describe a setting in narrative	
Context:	The prepositional phrases here all come from Julia Donaldson's <i>The Gruffalo</i> . She uses prepositional phrases to illustrate where each animal lives and to create a picture of the wood.	
<p>Let's Talk!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play with the reading of story, encouraging collective responses for the repeated responses; • When talking about the prepositional phrases, perhaps play with other prepositions they could have used, using the illustrations in the book as a stimulus, 'beneath the tree', beside the river;' 'near the rocks etc. • During the joint composition which makes extensive use of talk, encourage playful thinking of possibilities for other characters. Draw out as many ideas as possible before deciding together on one to work on. • Before gathering prepositional phrases for the new setting, invite them to articulate what they are visualising and what they can see near where he lives. Remind them of the prepositions: under; on; near; by; beside etc. Push for authenticity in their offers – this is not an exercise in generating prepositional phrases, but in describing a setting. • Compose together, inviting discussion and comments about choices, always focusing on the narrative purpose not the grammar. 	<p>Activity Outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Share together and enjoy the reading of <i>The Gruffalo</i>. ❑ Create a display of some common prepositions eg: <i>with; by; near; for; in; of; under</i> ❑ Give children in groups a set of cards strips with all the prepositional phrases in <i>The Gruffalo</i> printed on them. Ask them to sort the prepositional phrases into three piles: those that describe the wood; those that describe where each animal lives; and those that describe something else. Explain that one way we use prepositional phrases is to describe the setting of a narrative, the place where things happen. Do not dwell on the terminology, but ensure they understand the idea of the setting ❑ Joint Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Think of some examples of another animal that the mouse could meet on his journey (a wolf; a beaver; a woodpecker). Choose one that you will use to write a extra section for the story with a new animal character ➤ Think of where this new animal might live in the wood and gather prepositional phrases that might describe it eg <i>in my riverbank house</i> ➤ Visualise where this animal lives and think about what you can see: create some more prepositional phrases that will describe this eg <i>under a shiny black stone;</i> ➤ Write together a new section of the story with new character in it using a few of the most appropriate prepositional phrases 	<p>Text example: from <i>The Gruffalo</i></p> <p>through the deep dark wood</p> <p>by this lake</p> <p>by these rocks</p> <p>in my logpile house</p> <p>in my treetop house</p> <p>in the leaves ahead</p> <p>on the end of his nose</p> <p>in my underground house</p> <p>in the trees ahead</p> <p>in his terrible jaws</p> <p>all over his back</p>

