

OBJECTIVE

To use poetic devices in stories.

WHAT YOU NEED

Photocopiable pages 27, 28 and 29.

MAIN POINTS

Using poetic devices in writing prose can help children give layers of meaning to their writing and move beyond the literal in few words. Poetic devices can make writing more vivid by putting memorable images in the reader's mind.

DON'T PANIC!

- For children who have difficulty understanding the difference in the poetic devices, enlarge the list on photocopiable page 28 and display it.
- An annotated copy of the text (on photocopiable page 29) can be used for further support.

A SENSE OF SOUND

In this lesson the children will be examining a piece of text by David Almond to identify how the author has used imagery, rhythm and alliteration to create an atmospheric setting and vivid prose. They will explore different poetic devices and try to use some of them in their own writing.

WHOLE CLASS ACTIVITY

- Give each child a copy of photocopiable page 27. Ask them to read it to themselves.
- Working in pairs ask the children to describe the setting briefly in their own words to each other, thinking about Who? What? Where?
- Next, ask them to discuss how the extract makes them feel. Does it give them a 'physical' feeling? How would they feel if they were in the same setting? Ask them to picture it in their heads.
- Ask what sort of story they think this comes from and to find evidence in the text to support their opinions. Who is the narrator? Ask them to look at the first line and suggest who 'him' might refer to. How has this person affected the narrator's opinion and feelings about the setting?
- Read the noun-phrases in the first sentence aloud with the children, emphasising the hard sounds of the consonants, particularly 'dilapidated quays' and 'broken buildings'. Ask the children to suggest why the author chose these adjectives and nouns.
- Write the sentence on the board, beginning with 'The dark alleyways' as if it were a verse from a poem, for example:

The dark alleyways
The dilapidated quays
The broken buildings
The place he said was mad, was evil
The place he said was death.

- Discuss how, when writing poetry, a poet says a great deal in few words. Explain that authors often use imagery and poetic devices that convey much to the reader using few words. Explain that this technique can help them give layers of meaning to their writing, especially in a timed situation, such as the SATs writing paper.
- Tell them to go through the text together and underline any striking images, repetitions and imaginative words and phrases. What effect do they have on the sounds and images of the writing? Ask them to identify alliteration, same or similar vowel sounds (assonance), metaphor, rhythmical sentence structures, unusual contrasts (oxymoron).

INDEPENDENT WRITING ACTIVITY

- Mask the bottom half of photocopiable page 28 and provide each pair of children with a copy. Ask them to write a list of nouns associated with each setting, and experiment with creating alliterative phrases, onomatopoeia and oxymoron that they could use in their own writing. Give them a thesaurus to help them experiment with alternative words.

PLENARY

- Ask some of the children to read their images aloud while others identify which poetic device they have used. Ask them to identify which they feel are the strongest and best images. Give extra praise for children who have used unusual contrasts and included metaphor.
- Ask the children to record their best poetic phrases in their writing notebooks to help them remember them for future use.