

Matilda - Miss Honey and The Trunchbull

Lesson
plan

Overview

Learning objective

- To be able to use figurative language in writing.

Learning outcome

- To create a description of a new teacher using figurative language.

Book reference

- Chapters 7 and 8: Miss Honey and The Trunchbull; also Chapter 12: Bruce Bogtrotter and the Cake; Chapter 14: The Weekly Test and Chapter 20: The Third Miracle.

Cross-curricular link

- Literacy, Art, Drama.

Resources

- Where possible, pictures of a porcelain figure, a monster, a red-hot rod of metal, a tank, a rhinoceros, a kitchen blender, a stag-hound, a bullfrog, a giant, a cobra, a rat, a terrier, a bomb and a tiger.



Starter

- Read aloud the following quotations from chapters seven, eight, twelve, fourteen and twenty. As the quotes are being read, the children stand up and mime an interpretation of the images and actions:



Matilda - Miss Honey and The Trunchbull cont.

"Her body was so slim and fragile one got the feeling that if she fell over she would smash into a thousand pieces, like a porcelain figure."

"...A fierce tyrannical monster."

"...You could almost feel the dangerous heat radiating from her as from a red-hot rod of metal."

"...If a group of children happened to be in her path, she ploughed right on through them like a tank."

"...An enraged rhinoceros."

"...If you get on the wrong side of Miss Trunchbull she will liquidise you like a carrot in a kitchen blender."

"She looked, in short, more like a rather eccentric and bloodthirsty follower of the stag-hounds than the headmistress of a nice school for children."

"Her whole body seemed to swell up like a bullfrog's."

"...This great red-necked giant..."

"Being in this school is like being in a cage with a cobra. You have to be very fast on your feet."

"He was watching the Headmistress with an exceedingly wary eye and he kept edging farther and farther away from her with little shuffles of his feet, rather as a rat might edge away from a terrier that is watching it from across the room."

"...an enormous human bomb..."

"...A tigress..."

".... A plucked chicken in a shop window."

Main teaching activity

- Show pictures of a porcelain figure, a monster, a red-hot rod of metal, a tank, a rhinoceros, a stag-hound, a kitchen blender, a bullfrog, a giant, a cobra, a rat, a terrier, a bomb and a tiger.
- In pairs, discuss the characteristics of each picture and why they are effective ways to describe Miss Honey, Miss Trunchbull or a frightened child.
- In pairs, think of other similes to describe Miss Honey and Miss Trunchbull.
- Demonstrate how Roald Dahl thinks of names that reflect a character's personality.
- Divide the board in two. On one side, write 'Synonyms for Eating' and on the other, 'Types of Dangerous Animal.' Field words for eating, such as gulp, gobble, munch and crunch. For the second list, field types of dangerous animal such as dragon, lion, tiger and bull. Use this to demonstrate how Roald Dahl played with words, mixing words together to create the name Miss Trunchbull.



Group or independent activity

- In pairs, the children design both a good and a bad teacher. The teacher must have:
 - A simile to describe the way they walk or stand;
 - A simile to describe the way they look;
 - A simile to describe the way students act when near the teacher;
 - An appropriate name that reflects his or her personality.



Plenary

- Groups introduce their good and bad teachers to the rest of the class.

Other activities

- Roleplay a scene in which the good and bad teachers both meet. Why have they met? What will they talk about? What problem will they argue about? How will the scene end?
- Make a picture showing the teacher next to the object, to demonstrate how the teacher is like the object. Write an explanation of the simile beside the pictures.
- Explore caricature and the concept of a caricatured character. Find examples from stories, films, plays and so on – such as Pantomime Dames or comic strip characters, or characters from fairy tales. Discuss to what extent Miss Trunchbull is a caricature.

