

The Twits The Twits Get The Shrinks



Overview

Learning objective

- To be able to use critical thinking skills to interpret evidence.

Learning outcome

- To create a news report documenting the mysterious disappearance of Mr and Mrs Twit.

Book reference

- Chapter 29: The Twits Get The Shrinks.

Cross-curricular link

- Literacy, Drama, Critical Thinking, Citizenship, PSICHE.

Resources

- Props as evidence for the disappearance; in the text, this is described as "two bundles of old clothes, two pairs of shoes and a walking-stick."



Starter

- As a class, recap the story so far and predict how it might end.
- Read the final chapter of *The Twits*.
- Discuss in pairs:
 - Do you think this is an effective ending to the story?
 - Why or why not?
 - How else might the story have ended?
- Share ideas with the class.



Main teaching activity

- Introduce the Detective Inspector. As a class, decide upon a name for the Detective Inspector. Use wordplay, slang, metaphor, rhyme or assonance if possible (taking examples from Roald Dahl's inventive use of names: Mr Twit, The Roly-Poly Bird, Muggle-Wump.)
- Explain that the Detective Inspector has come to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Mr and Mrs Twit.
- Place "two bundles of old clothes, two pairs of shoes and a walking-stick," (or your alternative evidence) on the floor. These form the Detective Inspector's evidence.
- Discuss as a class: what would you think if you were Detective Inspector and saw this on the floor? What could have happened to the Twits? Mindmap some ideas on the board.
- As a class, refer to the text and write a list of all the evidence for the Detective Inspector. How else does the room look when Fred the Gasman finds it?
- In pairs, consider the evidence, discuss the following questions and draw a mindmap:
 - How could the Detective Inspector interpret the evidence?
 - What theories could he draw as to what happened to Mr and Mrs Twit?
 - Who could the Detective Inspector interview regarding the mystery?
- Pairs feedback ideas.



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Group or independent activity

- In groups, allocate parts of Newsreader, Fred the Gas Man, a Detective Inspector and any extra parts (for example, extra witnesses.)
- Groups create a news report in which the Detective Inspector interviews the witnesses.

Plenary

- The groups present their news reports to the rest of the class.
- Individuals from the rest of the class critique the effectiveness of the different theories put forward. Criteria could be:
 - Which theory is the most possible/plausible?
 - Which theory is the most humorous?
 - Which theory is the most visually exciting? (For example, most likely to be made into a film?)
 - Which theory is the most complex and thoughtful?

Other activities

- Study the key features of a newspaper headline article. Use the ideas from the lesson to create a headline report on the disappearance of Mr and Mrs Twit. Include:
 - A headline using alliteration and/or wordplay;
 - A by-line;
 - Appropriately paragraphed reportage.
- Rewrite the last chapter, following one of the Detective Inspector's new theories to show what happened to the Twits.
- Create an additional chapter entitled The Return of the Twits. How might it be possible that they come back? What is the first thing the Twits will do upon returning? Use these ideas as the basis for a role play or piece of imaginative writing.
- In history or technology lessons, study some famous unsolved mysteries of the world, for example, the mystery of the Marie Celeste, Stonehenge, the building of the Pyramids. Apply the same critical thinking techniques to these.