

Humor, Horror, Thrills and Chills **Creative Reading & Writing with Roald Dahl Series**

Subject Areas: Language Arts, English, Literature, Reading, Writing

Synopsis: Explores the elements of Roald Dahl's characters through interviews with the author, readings from his books, animated scenes from his plots, and captioned demonstrations of his various writing devices. Examines Roald Dahl's four rules of writing: make your readers laugh, make your readers squirm, enthrall your readers, and excite your readers.

Learning Objectives:

- Objective 1)** Students will be able to identify Roald Dahl's four rules of writing: make your readers laugh, make your readers squirm, make your readers enthralled, and make your readers tense and excited.
- Objective 2)** Students will be able to cite examples of humor, revolting descriptions, extraordinary events, and excitement in Roald Dahl's books.
- Objective 3)** Students will be able to define the terms alliteration and onomatopoeia.

Vocabulary:

humor, squirm, recipes, alliteration, enthrall, fantastical, magical, extraordinary, bored, tense, excited, atmosphere, onomatopoeia

Pre-Viewing Questions and Activities:

Have a class discussion about Roald Dahl's books. What is your favorite Roald Dahl story? What do you like about Roald Dahl's books? What do all of his stories have in common?

Post-Viewing Questions and Discussion:

- 1) What are Roald Dahl's four rules of writing? Give examples of each from Roald Dahl's books. Which rule do you think is the most important? Why?
- 2) How did Roald Dahl make his stories humorous? Share a humorous moment in one of Roald Dahl's stories.
- 3) How did Roald Dahl make his readers squirm? Give some examples of disgusting things in Roald Dahl's books. What words did Roald Dahl use to make these things even more disgusting?
- 4) Give an example of alliteration. How is alliteration used in Roald Dahl's stories? How does alliteration affect the reader?
- 5) How did Roald Dahl enthrall his readers? What are some extraordinary things that happened in Roald Dahl's stories? What makes these events extraordinary? How do magical events make the plot more interesting?

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- 6) What makes you want to keep reading a book? Discuss the most exciting parts of Roald Dahl's books.
- 7) What is onomatopoeia? Give an example. How does Roald Dahl use onomatopoeia in his stories?
- 8) What kinds of lists did Roald Dahl keep by his side as he wrote? How did these lists help him write? Why is it important to use interesting words in stories?

Additional Activities:

- 1) Discuss Roald Dahl's use of onomatopoeia, such as the bad dreams described by the BFG as bogthumpers and trogglehumpers. Ask each student to write a made-up word on a piece of paper and put it into a hat. Students will then draw a word out of the hat, define the word and illustrate it. How does the sound of the word convey or reinforce its meaning? Display the words and accompanying illustrations in class.
- 2) Review the use of alliteration in Roald Dahl's books. Use alliteration to create insulting phrases similar to Miss Trunchbull's phrase in *Matilda*, "you clotted carbuncle". In addition to poetry and story writing, find other examples of alliteration. Look at some political speeches (especially those of Spiro Agnew, Vice President of the U.S. during Richard Nixon's term as President). Why is alliteration often found in advertising? When does it lose its effectiveness or become silly?
- 3) Choose a recipe from a cookbook and subvert it into a revolting recipe like Mrs. Twit's wormy spaghetti.
- 4) Start a class list of nice and nasty words to use in stories.
- 5) Write a story using all four of Roald Dahl's rules for writing.

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