Charlie Bone and the Time Twister

Fiction

Content domain focus:

2b retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

2d make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

2g identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases

Text summary

This extract is taken from *Charlie Bone and the Time Twister* by Jenny Nimmo. Fidelio and Charlie Bone have gone to the Pets' Café – a café open only to pet owners and run by the unfortunately named Mr and Mrs Onimous. The boys are searching for their time-traveller friend Henry, who is imprisoned in a dungeon at the end of a secret passage under the Pets' Café.

Unit summary

The unit starts with a series of straightforward information-retrieval questions to tune the children into the extract. The children are then asked to give an impression of a particular setting in the passage from the language that is used. Finally, the focus is on making inferences from the text, particularly about the feelings of the characters at different points in the extract.

⌐ Teaching prompts

• Explore the children's understanding of the difference between *skimming* (to get the general gist of what they are reading) and *scanning* (to find specific details). Discuss when they would use each strategy and the techniques that they are aware of and can use.

• If necessary, revisit the idea of 'show not tell' and remind the children that they should look out for clues that an author gives in a text in order to fully understand characters and their behaviour.

Revisiting the text

Ask the children to:

• role-play the scene where Charlie and Fidelio are following Mr Onimous down the long passage

• draw a picture of Mr Onimous based on the description of him in the extract

• draw an annotated map of the journey that the boys take – as described in the extract

• identify and list the speech verbs used in the extract. Create banks of synonyms for each speech verb.

✓ Answers

Links to content domain requirements are in brackets after the answer.

1. Mr Onimous   [2b]

2. It is lined with shelves of pet food. There is a rough stone floor.
    The floor becomes a path of hard earth.   [2b]

3. a mole   [2b]

4. a single lantern   [2b]

5. Any two of the following: it is dark and gloomy; it is full of things; it is enclosed.   [2g]

6. Because Mr Onimous spoke suddenly/loudly. Because they didn't know what was happening.   [2d]

7. It was well hidden so it must be a secret./Because there was something
    valuable behind the door.   [2d]

8. Because it's valuable/very important to him.   [2d]

9. Answers that draw on the text, e.g. he is mysterious because he doesn't say
    where he's taking the boys. He sounds scary because he makes the boys jump.   [2d]

10. They are uncertain of what is happening because Fidelio says "Now what?"
    They don't want Mr Onimous to hear what they are saying because Fidelio
    whispers to Charlie. They are scared because it says they jumped nervously
    and that Charlie gulped.   [2d]

☑ Assessment

The children are secure in their ability to retrieve information if they can identify clues in the questions in order to look for key words in the text. They are able to make inferences if they can make connections between the text and their own experiences, and can empathise with characters by putting themselves into the text.

They can explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words if they can unpick the words and phrases in the description of the 'small round cavern' that gives a sense of being enclosed.

Next steps

Give the children copies of texts and challenge them to find specific words and phrases in a given time. Develop their scanning skills by giving them specific challenges, e.g. find three adjectives; four nouns; five words ending in *-ing*.

Use passages of fiction to focus on techniques that authors use to create strong impressions of characters. Involve the children in using one colour to highlight words and phrases that give information about a character, and using another colour to highlight words and phrases that give clues about the character. This develops the children's awareness of how an author's choice of language has an impact on the meaning of a text.