

### Starting a new class book?

Introducing a new book to a class can be intimidating, particularly with reluctant readers. Why not start with a taster activity which will build excitement and anticipation and will leave your students wanting to find out more?

### Page 99

Or choose whichever page you think might work best. Pupils enjoy playing detective to try to find out more about the book from this one page. Before you reveal anything about the book – the title, the cover, the plot – read this extract in isolation. Once you've read it you can start asking questions with the class. As you do this, you will be modelling the kind of questioning that will allow children to explore their ideas, express their tentative and speculative thoughts, extend their contributions ('tell me a little more'), build on one another's contributions and change their minds. This is 'booktalk' in action. Possible questions could be:

- What happens on this page?
- Do you meet any characters? Are they important to the story? How are they related to each other?
- What kind of story is this?
- Where and when is it set?
- What has happened before this page?
- What's going to happen after?
- What does this page tell us about the author and their writing style?



Remember – don't reveal anything else about the book. Save that for the following session.

### Introducing the book

Re-read the extract and recap pupils' thoughts and predictions. Has anyone had any further thoughts?

Then you are ready to show pupils the book itself. Show them the front cover.

- Are they surprised?
- Do they know this author?
- Does the title fit what they have experienced of the story so far?
- Examine the front cover – is it what they expected?

## Starting the book

Read the opening pages aloud. Ask the students to think about how this differs from what they thought before. Here are some questions you can ask:

- What do you like about this book so far?
- Has anything surprised you?
- Is there something you are wondering about/want to know more about?
- Does it remind you of another story you have read/know?
- How do you feel about the beginning? Does it draw you in/ make you want to read on?
- Which words and phrases make you feel this?
- Do we know yet where and when this story is set?
- Who is telling the story?

## Teaching the whole text

Teaching an extended series of activities using a whole text supports pupils to explore multiple aspects of the craft of writing in depth and enables them to engage, respond, consider and reflect upon these aspects of the text: characters, settings, events, dilemmas. This resource is built on this principle: that through the in-depth study of a text, the teacher is able to explore characters, events, themes, settings, structure and the writer's craft with their pupils. This in-depth study allows teachers to make the links between reader and writer explicit, and support children in reading like a writer and writing like a reader.

This extract is taken from our Reading for Pleasure CPD, which helps teachers and literacy leaders:

- Engage with research and understand the benefits for your pupils of reading for pleasure
- Examine a range of approaches, including choosing and using whole texts
- Develop and implement an action plan for creating a community of readers in your school, involving critical reflection and evidence gathering to share with the group
- Plan for embedding these successful approaches more widely across your school

E-mail [schools@literacytrust.org.uk](mailto:schools@literacytrust.org.uk) to find out more!