Winter Writing 2021

Years 34

This set of lessons will focus on analysing and considering the writing style of various famous writers, thinking about how the class can emulate their work and better understand their own writing style through considering that of others. We will be focusing on classic authors from history, studying the way they explore and develop themes, use figurative language, looking at one author per fortnight. The class will also be conducting language analysis on their work, thinking about what is effective in what they do, and will be using this to help them think creatively, and practice writing in lots of varied and interesting styles, formats, and voices.

*Weeks 1 & 2:* **J. K Rowling**

The first series of lessons will start with a class on fantasy writing through the lens of J. K. Rowling, one of the top-selling authors of all time and a favourite of many students. We will learn about her top tips for creating an entire fantasy world, thinking about the way she develops characters and discuss her work on creating rules for a fictional society. We will discuss the idea of a *bildungsroman,* and the class will create their own Rowling inspired protagonists. The students will also be encouraged to think about how her unconventional route to becoming an author is reflected in some of the themes and ideas she explores and will be encouraged to think about social issues they care about in response to this.

*Weeks 3 & 4:* **Roald Dahl**

In these lessons we will focus on Roald Dahl, looking at the way he weaves comedy, mystery and magical realism into his work. We will look at the kinds of stories he tells, thinking about the eccentricity of many of his characters and the way they interact with their worlds. The students will get to practice mirroring the way he uses language creatively and we will be analysing both his more familiar comic work and his more mysterious short stories. We will also look at what makes his work so iconic, thinking about the role of illustration in his work and why the messages his books send are so memorable. Finally, the students will learn about the inspiration behind Roald Dahl’s writing, learning about his life and thinking about what they can infer could have forged his love of writing and storytelling.

*Weeks 5 & 6:* **William Shakespeare**

In these lessons, the students will be introduced to William Shakespeare, one of the most famous authors of all time. We will look at how Shakespeare used the genres of comedy and tragedy and think about why he wrote plays instead of books, considering the history of the Elizabethans and their obsession with theatre. The students will get to play around with adapting Shakespeare’s famous stories, and we will speak about how his work has been adapted and modernised over many years. Finally, the class will learn some classic Shakespearian techniques, such as iambic pentameter and how to make up inventive Elizabethan words, practicing using his style to inspire their own plays, poems and plots!

*Weeks 7 & 8:* **C. S. Lewis**

Our final author in this series of lessons will be C. S. Lewis, the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In these classes we will focus on how to weave literary techniques into writing, thinking about the way Lewis uses symbols and encouraging the students to come up with their own ideas for ways to represent themes through metaphor. We will look at the world-building Lewis is so famous for, comparing this to that of the other authors we have studied, and will think about how he constructs the world of Narnia. We will also discuss his use of techniques such as anthropomorphism (talking animals) and think about how the students can work with new and original perspectives in their own work. Finally, we will consider the biography and think about what our knowledge of the author might tell us about his reasons for writing.

*Lesson 9****:* Writing Workshop**

This lesson takes all of what the students have learnt over the past few weeks and aims to teach them how to self-evaluate by workshopping a piece of writing of their own and revising the core components of our classes over the course. Using a piece the students have written in the past for homework, this class will comb through every part of their work and encourage the class not only to evaluate their own ideas but also to give positive feedback and constructive criticism for the work of their peers. Finally, we will also focus on planning processes, considering what to include in a plan and how to get the most out of the time in an exam, in preparation for the mock exam in lesson 10. In this lesson, the students will have the opportunity to ask any questions they like about writing and will be encouraged to consolidate all of their knowledge on the styles, themes and genres of the four authors we have studied.

*Lesson 10:* **Mock Exam**

This lesson will contain a mock exam to help test the students’ skills, enabling them to showcase all they have learnt about writing over the past nine sessions. They will be asked to complete a thirty-minute exam under timed conditions, which we will then go through step by step as a class. They will have their exam graded and returned to them after the lesson and can use these mocks to track their progress and work out their strengths and areas of improvement in writing. This lesson is designed to consolidate their knowledge and to help them get used to the format of writing in exams. They should aim to use as many different advanced writing techniques, high-level vocab examples and interesting structural devices as possible- all of which we will have covered in the preceding weeks.