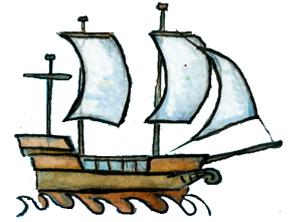


Design a book cover TEACHING NOTES

RESOURCES:

- Artwork *
- Design a book cover - notes sheet (one per child)
- Design a book cover - interview sheet (one per child)
- Design a book cover - blurb sheet (one per child)
- Display board (optional – see below)
- Plus: crayons, scissors and glue.



*The artwork download for this activity consists of 4 sheets:

- 3 book covers with character outlines (each child needs one of these characters)
- The 4th sheet contains accessories – eye-patches, hats, telescopes, t-shirts, waistcoats, moustaches, bandanas (every child needs one of these sheets).

OBJECTIVES

- To complete a character portrait and develop their unique physical features; from this, develop the character's key personality traits and points of interest ie: their big secret, a challenge they need to overcome / the present they are searching for etc., and the reason for this voyage (which could be a Christmas voyage or a treasure hunting expedition or a trading voyage or whatever you decide).
- We want the children to think about how to describe a character as more than a noun and a couple of grudging adjectives! The intention is to develop a character with a bit of a back story, a secret and a challenge – a character who could be clearly described and picked out in a line-up! This would be the beginning of creating a character and possibly the beginning of a story (plot development could be picked up from here).
- Writing to persuade – the short blurb on the back of the cover needs to get to the point and is very useful 'writing for purpose'. There is room for interesting discussion about how we choose books to read.

Keystage objectives:

- Descriptive writing
- Use of simile
- New vocabulary
- Character development
- Presentation
- Writing to persuade
- Interviewing and reporting
- Presenting to the classroom – speaking to persuade

DISPLAY SUGGESTIONS

- A display board forms a nice backdrop for any presentation activities as each child introduces their book ... maybe you could set up some kind of 'book review programme' and have 'publishers' come along to sell the idea of their books before putting the covers on the board.

DELIVERY SUGGESTIONS

Having read Grubson Pug's Christmas Voyage (or whilst reading it but after chapter 3 which contains the majority of crew introductions) this is the chance to create your own sea-faring crew character to sail aboard a brand new ship!



Step 1 - CREATE YOUR BOOK CHARACTER

- Book cover character outlines (one each)
- Accessories sheets (one each)
- Create your own book character notes sheet (one each)

NB: Although the activities only include drawing in the features of the characters at this stage, some children might be very tempted to fill in the background and add a lot of extra detail. But everyone needs to LEAVE SPACE for a book title which will be added at the end and they need to leave room to add their own name as author of the book. You need to draw in the missing features for your chosen animal (cat, dog, mouse).

These features need to be right for your chosen animal, but you need to think about how you can make them a bit different – this will make your character unusual. They need to be different from one another.

Maybe have a class brainstorm to think of how they can differentiate the features – write words on the board.

Using the outlines of crew characters, draw on key features:

Ears - Eyes - Tails - Whiskers

On your notes sheet, write in 3 describing words for each of the features you have just drawn.

And any reasons for ripped ears, scrawny tails, lop-sided ears and so on. (Starting to build a backstory for the characters).

What is their job on board ship? This is a great opportunity to discuss jobs on board ship, nautical vocabulary and language.

Add the right accessories and fill in the rest of the notes sheet.

Then you can colour in your character – remembering to leave room for the title and your name on the front cover.

Step 2 - MAKE YOUR CHARACTER A STAR!

- Interview sheets (one each)

Your character is going to be the star of their story in their own book! You need to make them interesting before you can put them on the cover of a book ...

Brainstorming on what makes a character interesting enough for a book ...

Why they will be making a voyage?

Are they a good character or an evil character?

Do they have to face a challenge – what is it?

Do they have a dangerous secret?

The only thing I'd advise here is to steer away from magical powers or weaponry ... otherwise you could end up with a lot of book characters based on ninja sailors with extraordinary abilities to maim and kill.

Then use the interview sheets to really bring your character to life ...

In pairs interview one another's characters / interview your own character using the questions on the notes sheet and write down the most important parts of what they say.

NB: you must remember that you are answering questions in character!

We've also used the interview sheets to video children asking one another questions like reporters questioning a character.



Step 3 - WRITE YOUR BLURB!

- Blurb sheets – useful prompts to get the children thinking about what to include

Your character is going to appear on the book cover.

Think of a title which describes the kind of voyage your character might be embarking on (brainstorm).

Carefully write in the title in the space on the cover.

Carefully add in your own name as the author!

When you are choosing a book to read – how do you choose?

Discussion about covers and ...

you need to know something about the main character and the type of story to decide whether you would like to read it. This is on the back of the book – and is often called THE BLURB!

You have notes about your character and their job and you know what kind of voyage they will be sailing. Write a few lines for your blurb by thinking about:

Your character, the voyage and who would like the story.

You can use the guided writing sheet to help, or write your own.

Then very carefully and neatly, put these in the blurb section of your book cover.

You might have room to get a review quote from a friend!

Display the book covers on the board. (May be story-writing opportunities out of these?)

This has resulted in days of writing for some children and a classroom full of sailor stories – we'd love to hear about it if you and your class get immersed and find yourself writing full stories!

