

Treasure Island - Learning Resources

Poetry for the sea (up to 60 mins)

This exercise will introduce pupils to the fundamentals of poetry, and encourage them to use descriptive language and stage directions from the production of Treasure island to make their own descriptive poems, following a template.

Who is it for?

This learning resource is for students Literacy Key Stage 2 (years 5 & 6).

Learning outcomes

Learners will:

- Plan their writing selecting the appropriate form and use similar writing models for their own
- Draft and rewrite by structuring their text and making appropriate vocabulary and grammar choices
- Assess the effectiveness of their own and others writing
- Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation so that meaning is clear

You will need

Access to the production of Treasure Island in the On Demand player

Activities

1.

Explain to the children that stage directions help a director and actor to create a picture for the audience. Show them the table of stage directions from the play Treasure Island.

2.

Ask pupils to choose one stage direction that creates a particularly vivid picture in their mind, and think about the impact that image has on their five senses – touch, sight, sound, smell, taste.

3.

Using a simple table like the one provided as an example in the appendix, demonstrate to the pupils how one direction can help conjure a picture using all your senses. Take one stage direction and work with the class to come up with one suggestion for how each sense is affected by a thought process prompted by the stage direction.

4.

Now ask pupils to take a stage direction of their own and think about how it impacts their senses using a table of their own. They can also do this in pairs if you feel your class would be less confident. You can use the word bank in the appendix to help pupils with suggestions for touch, taste and smell words – these are

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Treasure Island - Learning Resources

often the ones children struggle with the most.

5.

Pupils should now have five ideas which can be used as the basis of a poem, which can create a vivid picture of a scene from the story. Show them how to build on their ideas by expanding their phrases into the stanza of a poem: start by saying where they are, listing the impacts on each of their sentences, and end with repeating the first line and expanding on it. An example is provided in the appendix.

6.

As you work through your example with the class, explain how sentences must have a verb (in case they've forgotten!), but also use poetic techniques that they will have come across (similes, metaphors, onomatopoeia, alliteration etc).

7.

As you write your poem, show them how you can keep adding to your first idea – editing as you go – changing words to show the process of writing.

8.

Now let the children return to their first idea and write their own poem to create a vivid picture based on a stage direction.

Appendix

- i. List of stage directions from the play:
- The wind freshens
- Approaching hooves
- Cries of pelagic birds
- Sound of gunfire
- A circle of torch-carrying, grog-fuelled pirates...
- Cutlasses thrust
- This adorable crew
- Flutters frighteningly
- A fire blazes into being...
- He looks out to sea, along the road, everywhere...
- Thiswards and thatwards...
- The world starts to list...
- Whispering and murmuring...
- Manacled and chained....
- Keen to bite and throttle...
- A sudden strange glooping
- Insects buzz and bite...
- A strange unnerving language.

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- Under the unrelenting sun...
- Weaponed and threatening
- Some island sounds...
- A weird terrifying approaching tapping
- Waves, high as mountains
- Crows and rooks caw...
- Seagulls shriek and scream
- Superstitious rituals
- A scuffle, a splash
- A strange unnerving language
- Gold-fever-frenzied...
- A sound of bones
- Lifeless hand, clutching a doubloon
- Running hither and thither
- ii. Table of thought processes and impact on senses

'The wind freshens'

	SIGHT	SOUND	TOUCH	TASTE	SMELL
Thought process	As the wind freshens, I can picture the	If the wind is getting up I expect there would be	If I were on the boat I would be able to feel the	Standing on the deck as the wind gets up I could taste	I could smell the
Image in my head	sails billowing	cries of seagulls	Ropes burn- ing through my hands	the salty sea air	fresh cold breeze

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iii. Word bank of touch, taste and smell words

TOUCH	TASTE	SMELL
Soggy	Bitter	Fresh
Dewy	Sweet	Earthy
Hard	Dry	Woody
Soft	Tasteless	Clean
Warm	Tangy	Pure
Cold	Delicious	Sweet
Damp	Wet	Musty
Wet	Scrumptious	Pleasant
Chilly	Tasty	Stale
Shivery	Bland	Smoky
Clammy	Flavourless	Lovely
Squelchy		Refreshing
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iv. Poem under construction

	Standing on deck		
sails billowing	Sails billowing in the freshening wind like surging waves		
cries of seagulls	Cries of seagulls crack the brittle air		
Ropes burning through my hands	Sail ropes burn my hands as the canvas swells.		
the salty sea air	Breathing in the salty air,		
fresh cold breeze	The fresh breeze catches my hair and fills my senses		
	(Repeat the first line and expand) Standing on deckmy life begins		