

Bear Tale

Author's Purpose: Informing or Entertaining

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Grade Level	2nd Grade	**Time Frame**	2-3 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	120 minutes

Essential Question

Why did the author write this piece?

Summary

This lesson uses fiction and nonfiction books to have students think about the author's purpose for writing the piece. The goal is to help students understand that nonfiction works have common elements with the purpose to inform, while fiction stories have common elements with the purpose to entertain. Students will gain experience discerning an author's purpose for writing and will practice their own writing with the goal to either inform or entertain their audience.

Snapshot

Engage

The class reads "The Mitten" and engages in a discussion about the author's purpose in writing.

Explore

Students compare and contrast a book that was written to entertain and a book that was written to inform.

Explain

Students collaboratively build a T-Chart with characteristics of fiction/entertainment and non-fiction/informational books.

Extend

Students choose to write an informational or entertaining response to a picture writing prompt.

Evaluate

Students evaluate different texts to determine whether the author's purpose is to entertain or to inform.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 2)

2.3.R.1: Students will determine the author's purpose (i.e., tell a story, provide information).
2.4.W.2: Students will select appropriate language according to purpose in writing.
8.W: Writing: Students will write independently for extended periods of time. Students will vary their modes of expression to suit audience and task.

Attachments

- Bear Writing—Bear Tale.docx
- Bear Writing—Bear Tale.pdf

Materials

- "The Mitten" by Jan Brett book or video read-aloud
- Nonfiction book about bears, such as "Brown Bears" by Cari Meister
- Bear Writing handout (attached)
- Sticky notes

Engage

Read aloud "The Mitten" by Jan Brett (or watch a read-aloud video of the story). After reading the story, ask students, "Why do you think the author wrote this story?" "What do you think the author wanted you to feel?" "What do you think the author wanted you to learn?" Discuss as a class.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=d3rRWzdHv5M

Explore

Explain that authors have different purposes. Ask students to think about why the author wrote "Brown Bear" by Cari Meister as you read the nonfiction book about bears aloud. Using the Think-Pair-Share strategy, have students consider the question, “Why did the author write this piece?"

Teaching Note

Your goal is to build up the contrast between the purpose of the first story (to entertain) and the purpose of the second story (to inform). To do so, ask probing questions such as, "What are the bears doing?" "Who is telling the story?" "Are there facts in the book, or are there things that could not really happen?"

Draw a Venn diagram on the board. In a whole-class discussion, have students compare and contrast the two books by filling in the diagram. If students need help, have them think about factors such as who or what the book is about, the setting, and how the story is told.

As a class, discuss the following questions:

1. Are the author’s purposes the same or different?
2. What is the author’s purpose for each piece?

Modification Note

If your students are comfortable writing and working in small groups, this discussion could be completed as a small-group activity.

Explain

Create a T-Chart on the board with the labels "Inform" and "Entertain" at the top. Explain that informational books are often nonfiction. Explain that entertainment books are often fiction. Add "Fiction" and "Nonfiction" labels to the chart as well.

Provide students with a stack of familiar classroom books. Ask the students to sort the books into the fiction/entertainment pile or the nonfiction/informational pile.

Using a sticky note, have each student share one thing that they think the fiction/entertainment books have in common. Ask students to come up to the board and place the sticky notes under the fiction/entertainment part of the T-Chart.

Possible answers:

- Characters
- Setting
- Beginning, middle, and end (plot)
- Needs to be read in a particular order

Repeat the process for informative books. Using a sticky note, have each student share one thing that they think the nonfiction/informative books have in common. Ask students to place the sticky notes under the nonfiction/inform column.

Possible answers:

- Can read from any page
- Do not have to be read from beginning to the end
- May have bold words
- May have a glossary
- May have an index
- May have captions, diagrams, charts, photographs, or labels

Teacher's Note

Although nonfiction can certainly entertain us, for the purposes of this lower grade level lesson, a beginning differentiation of nonfiction/information and fiction/entertainment is a place to start. As a point of further discussion, you can ask students if they know about any stories or movies that are nonfiction and also entertaining like fiction.

Extend

Students will use the Gallery Walk strategy as they look at three to five books or brief pieces of writing placed around the room. Students will determine if the author's purpose is to entertain or inform. Ask students to write their decision on a sticky note along with an explanation of their reasoning. Students will leave their sticky notes next to the book or writing sample.

Suggestion

Include at least one informational piece or book that has drawn illustrations to help prevent the misconception that informational books use only photographs.

After students have practiced identifying elements that characterize informational and entertainment writing, leave their sticky notes on the board to use as a reference for the next activity in which they will write a short story to entertain or inform.

Suggestion

Consider creating anchor charts for fiction and nonfiction. The anchor charts can grow as students continue to understand the similarities and the differences in the genres.

Evaluate

Using what they have learned so-far about author's purpose, ask students to look at the bear picture in the attached **Bear Writing** handout and write a short story to either entertain or inform. Students should circle their choice (Entertain or Inform) on the handout and write their story in the space to the right.

Resources

- Brett, J. (1989). *The mitten*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery walk / carousel. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/118
- K20 Center. (n.d.). T-Chart. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/86
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Venn diagram. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/2918
- Meister, C. (2015). *Brown bears*. Minneapolis: Bullfrog Books.
- Nook. (2014, Jan. 30). *Online storytime: The mitten* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3rRWzdHv5M