Model Writing a Book Review

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display the cover of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Copy the “Opinion,” “Reason,” and “My Recommendation” boxes from the Book Reviews graphic organizer on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Use the graphic organizer to model forming another opinion about the book. Say: I wrote a book review about this book. I wrote my opinion about Great Big Billy Goat Gruff. My recommendation was that others would enjoy reading the book. When we write book reviews, we don’t have to like what we read. Sometimes we don’t like the characters or the book, and we explain our opinions to other people. Today I want to write about a character I don’t like: the Troll. My reason is that he’s a big, mean, selfish bully. Write your notes on the graphic organizer.

Say: My recommendation for this book might change now because of my feelings about the Troll. I want to let readers know that they might not like this book because of him. I’ll jot down some notes to help me remember.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion:</th>
<th>I don’t like the Troll.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason:</td>
<td>Big, mean, selfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Recommendation:</td>
<td>Warning—might not like book because of the Troll; He’s a bully.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Book Reviews Graphic Organizer (BLM 3)

Ask students to help you use your notes to write an opinion and a reason. Say: Let’s look at my notes on the graphic organizer and then write a sentence that tells my opinion. What could I write about my opinion of the Troll? (Allow responses.) What reason could I give in my book review for my opinion of the Troll? After students make suggestions, write a sentence on chart paper such as “I don’t like the Troll because he’s mean.” As you write, model how you apply concepts about print, sound/symbol relationships, and comprehension strategies to help you write your sentence.

Say: Now I’ll add my recommendation, which is that readers shouldn’t read this book if they don’t like bullies! Add the rest of the book review to the chart paper.

I don’t like the Troll because he’s mean.

Don’t read this book if you don’t like stories about bullies.

Sample Book Reviews Draft
Say: We’ve written about what we like about the book and what we don’t like. But we can write about lots of different features in the book, not just the characters. This book has lots of interesting features.

Point to examples of the following in the book:

- the cover
- the illustrations
- the use of boldfaced print and uppercase letters to show loud sounds and speaking
- the use of blue, green, and red letters to show the goats’ dialogue
- the use of other type treatments (such as the words down, down, down on page 21)

As you point to different features in the book, ask students to tell what they like or don’t like about them. Say: My opinion is this: I think that using different colors for the type is clever because it makes it easy for readers to follow along with what’s happening and understand how the different characters feel.

2. Rehearse (10 minutes)

Ask students to turn to their partners. Say: Discuss where you are in your last report and what you will do today to finish it. Talk to your partner about your topic sentence and facts. Move among the pairs of students to monitor and support their efforts.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (15 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Support students’ independent writing, revising, or editing as needed. Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you address students’ individual needs.

4. Share (5 minutes)

Invite several students at the editing stage to share their informational reports so far. Encourage students to tell what they like best about their reports and what they would like to change.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
- My topic sentence will tell the main idea of my report.
- I will listen for sounds in words as I write.
- I will check for uppercase letters and end punctuation.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
- Go back and reread what you’ve written so far. That will help you decide what to write next.
- How could you describe _____?
- What is another way to write _____?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
- Read your message. What’s missing?
- How could you say that? How could you fix it?
- What could you ask yourself here?

Validating and Confirming
- You included the parts of a report: a title, a topic sentence, and facts! Good work!
- I liked the way you wrote this describing word here.
- Your facts tell about your topic sentence. Strong writers always support a topic sentence with facts.
- I noticed that you went back and fixed ______. Strong writers revise to make their writing the best it can be!

Teacher Tip

Continue to reinforce the idea of making recommendations by asking students to tell what they recommend, or suggest, for various activities throughout the day. Ask them to explain their recommendations.