1. Focus

Introduce the Mentor Realistic Fiction Story

Say: Today I’m going to read you a realistic fiction story, “Tia’s Bad Day.” The author is Amanda Jenkins, who lives in Texas and has written many books for children and teens.

Ask: What does the title make you think of? What can you predict about the conflicts, or problems, the characters might face in this story? Allow students to share their predictions. If your class includes English learners or other students who would benefit from vocabulary and oral language development to comprehend the narrative, use “Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs.”

Read Aloud the Mentor Realistic Fiction Story

Read aloud the text, stopping at some or all of the places indicated (or at other points you choose) to highlight two key features of this realistic fiction story:
1. It is told in the third person.
2. The story includes conflicts, or problems, that the characters try to solve or overcome.

Third Person Point of View

Page 14, after second paragraph. Say: Right in the first sentence, I know who is telling the story. It is a third person narrator who is not a character in the story. This third person narrator tells the story using words such as she, he, they, and the characters’ names. The narrator starts out with Tia’s name: “Tia knew that it was going to be a bad day.” The next few sentences use the word she instead of Tia’s name. When Tia speaks, the narrator uses her name: “Tia said.” The narrator never uses the word I. The third person narrator is not a character in the story.

Third Person Point of View

Page 14, after fourth paragraph. Say: I notice that the narrator always knows what Tia is thinking and feeling. That’s why the narrator can say, “Tia knew that it was going to be a bad day.” The narrator tells us what Tia does and also what she sees and hears. For example, the narrator says, “Tia slid into her seat. Then she heard a ding!” Other kids are characters in the story, but Tia is the main character.

Character Conflict

After reading page 14. Say: Tia’s dialogue tells me she has a problem. She says, “Oh, no!” She rushed from home to school, so she forgot her homework. She wants her teacher to believe she’s telling the truth. Tia’s problem in this paragraph is that she doesn’t know if Ms. Parsons will let her turn the...
homework in late. In a realistic fiction story, at least one character deals with a problem, or conflict. It is usually the main character.

Character Conflict
Page 19, after first paragraph. Say: When Tia kicked the football, she accidentally broke a flowerpot belonging to Mr. Morgan. In this paragraph, I meet this character a the first time. Like Tia, I don’t know if he is going to be angry or not. The narrator’s description of the action keeps me guessing about what is going to happen. This helps me as a reader feel Tia’s conflict. All the narrator says is that Mr. Morgan “looked at the mess and said, ‘Boy, you sure did!’” It’s not until the next sentence that I understand he may not be angry because he has come up with a practical solution.

2. Rehearse

Respond Orally to the Mentor Realistic Fiction Story

After reading the story aloud, invite students to discuss their ideas about the third person point of view and characters’ conflicts by asking questions such as:

• What did you see in your mind, or visualize, as you listened to the part of the story that took place in the courtyard of the apartment building?
• What made this story seem like it could really happen?

If necessary, model the following sentence frames to support ELs and struggling students:

• I visualized ______.
• The story seemed real because ______.

Bring students together and invite them to share their ideas about the conflicts Tia faces during her bad day. Record students’ ideas on chart paper.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: As you write your realistic fiction story, keep in mind that you can use a third person narrator. If you do, you will use words such as he, she, and they and the names of the characters to tell what happens. The narrator will know everything that the main character thinks and does. Make sure that at least one character in the story has to deal with a problem, or conflict.

Ask students to draw or write about a personal connection they made to a character, setting, or event in the mentor story.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their ideas about the conflict in the story.

Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs

Beginning
Point to the picture of Tia on page 15. Say: This is Tia. The story is about Tia. She has a bad day. Tia looks sad. (Point to the picture of Tia on page 18.) The ball broke the pot. Tia looks surprised.

Beginning and Intermediate
Say: This realistic fiction story is narrated in the third person. The main character is Tia. She is late for school. She forgets to bring her homework. She forgets to bring her lunch. After school, no one has time to play. Then she breaks a flowerpot by accident. She is having a bad day. But the man who owns the pot is not mad. He cheers up Tia. It is not a bad day for Tia, after all.

Intermediate and Advanced
Encourage a conversation about good days and bad days to build background information and vocabulary. Say: Tell me about a good day you have had. Tell me about a bad day you have had. What happened?

All Levels
If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates to help them understand the lesson focus: conflict/el conflicto; flowers/las flores; narrator/el narrador/la narradora.