1. Focus

Explain Genre Features

Say: Like every writing genre, science fiction has certain features, or characteristics. For example, when you read a biography, you expect that it will present true facts about significant events in a person’s life. You expect that it will be written in the third person. Those are features of a biography. When you read an informational report, you expect it to mention sources for the facts presented. You expect the information to be presented in a logical order. These are features of an informational report. Today we’re going to identify and analyze some common features of science fiction.

Build a Class Genre Features Anchor Chart

Say: I want you to think about what you already know about science fiction. Think of the stories we have read together and that you have read by yourself. Let’s build an anchor chart to summarize the features, or characteristics, we would expect to find in any science fiction story.

Display a blank chart like the one shown here on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Also distribute copies of the chart on BLM 1 to students. Work with students to record features of science fiction stories in the left-hand column. (Students will complete the right side of the chart later in the lesson.) If necessary, use the following prompts to guide students:

- What types of settings are found in science fiction?
- What is the tone of a science fiction story?
- What themes do you find in science fiction?
- What kinds of information or facts is science fiction based on?

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Identify science fiction genre features to create a class anchor chart.
- Listen to a science fiction mentor text and find the features of the genre in the narrative.

Preparation

Materials Needed

- Mentor text: “Dino-Pals Are Dino-Mite!”
- Chart paper and markers
- Science Fiction Features (BLM 1)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If necessary, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.
Read Aloud a Science Fiction Story

Before you read, point out the right-hand column on your chart and on students’ BLMs. Explain that you are going to read aloud (or reread) a science fiction story and that, as students listen, they should look for examples of the genre features in the story. Explain that, after reading, students will work together in small groups to complete the chart. They will write down examples of each genre feature. Read aloud (or reread) “Dino-Pals Are Dino-Mite!” Note: You may wish to project the text using the interactive whiteboard resources so that students can follow along.

2. Rehearse

Analyze the Mentor Text

Form small groups of students to complete the second column of the graphic organizer on BLM 1. If you are using the interactive whiteboard resources, invite students to revisit parts of the text at the interactive whiteboard as they look for the examples they need.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Ideas

Bring students together and invite volunteers to share the examples they found in “Dino-Pals Are Dino-Mite!” Record their findings on your anchor chart. Post this anchor chart for students to refer to throughout the unit as they think about the features they need to include in their science fiction stories.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: As you write your story, remember that most science fiction has certain features that readers of this genre expect to see. Consult our classroom anchor chart to remind yourself of these features.

Encourage students to think about the features of a science fiction story as they draft their stories. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to review the features of science fiction stories. Encourage them to tell how they plan to use these features in their stories.

Strategies to Support ELs

**Beginning**

Pair beginning ELs with fluent English speakers during the “Analyze the Mentor Text” small-group activity. Keep in mind that they will not be able to contribute many ideas orally. You will want to work with them individually to reinforce concepts while other students write independently.

**Intermediate**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the small-group activity. Write the following simple sentence frames on chart paper and model how students can use them to contribute ideas in the group:

- The setting in a science fiction story can be ______.
- The tone of science fiction is ______.
- Science fiction has themes such as ______.

**Advanced**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the small-group activity.

**All Levels**

If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share the following English/Spanish cognates to help them understand the lesson focus: characteristics/las características; tone/el tono.