Write a Book Review

Fiction Big Book

Objectives

Concepts About Print
• Use uppercase and lowercase letters correctly.
• Use end punctuation correctly.

Oral Language and Grammar
• Express an opinion and state a reason.
• Use common nouns and adjectives.

Purposeful Phonics Connections
• Listen for sounds in words.
• Write some CVC words.
• Write new high-frequency words.

Reflecting Reading in Writing
• Analyze story elements.
• Make judgments.

Writing
• Write a book review.
• Demonstrate writer’s voice.

Materials
• Big book: The Enormous Watermelon (Benchmark Literacy Unit 4, Week 2)
• Chart paper and markers

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display the cover of The Enormous Watermelon. Read aloud the title. Say: We read this story yesterday and then we read a book review about the story. I will read it again today. As I read, think about which character is your favorite and why. You will write a book review about a character in this book.

After a quick reread, close the big book and say: My favorite character is Old Mother Hubbard. Every time she has a problem, she finds a way to solve it. Now I will write my opinion. Remember that an opinion is part of a book review.

Write an opinion on chart paper, for example, “I like Old Mother Hubbard.” As you write, model the following:

• Continue to emphasize the concepts about print that students still need to practice.
• Continue to model how to say a word slowly and use letter/sound relationships to write words. For words with higher-level spelling patterns, say: Remember that if you don’t know how to spell a word, you can just write the letters for the sounds you hear.
• Tell how you remember to write those words you see often in print, such as I, the, and my.
• Model rereading after each word by pointing to the words you’ve written so far and then pointing to where the next word should go. Say: We’re ready for the word ______. Then discuss and write the word.
• Model adding end punctuation and checking for the correct beginning and end to your sentence.

Ask students to reread your sentence with you. Then say: Another part of a book review is the reason for an opinion. I need to tell why I like Old Mother Hubbard.

Write a reason or reasons, for example, “She works hard. She shares with her friends.” Model applying the strategies listed above as you write.

Ask students to help you reread your sentences to check them. Then say: Today you get to start writing book reviews! I want you to think of a different character in the story that you like. First write which character you like. Then write why you like that character. Remember that an opinion and a reason are two of the most important parts of a book review!
NOTE: Although the mentor big book teaches four parts of a book review—title and author, opinion, reason, and recommendation—these kindergarten lessons focus on the opinion and reason.

For students who need more challenge, continue to display the book reviews in the mentor big book so they have models to refer to. Later you may also want to add the title/author and a recommendation to your modeled book reviews (while emphasizing that students need write only an opinion and a reason) to help reinforce the four parts.

2. Rehearse (5 minutes)

Invite students to tell a partner about the character they like best. Say: Tell your partner which character you plan to write about. Remember to include the character’s name and why that character is your favorite.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:

- My favorite character is ______.
- I like this character because ______.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Invite students to write their book reviews. Ask questions as needed to help students develop their sentences, and remind them to reread after each word. Continue to ask students to say words slowly, write the sounds they hear, and write the high-frequency words they know. Reinforce the editing and revising strategies taught in the Journal Writing unit, such as adding adjectives, using an uppercase letter for the word I, and checking for the correct beginning and end on each sentence. Encourage students to get ideas from one another as well.

Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

4. Share (5 minutes)

Invite two or three students to share their book reviews. Point out and celebrate examples of opinions supported by information from the text. You may wish to provide additional modeling based on your observations during Independent Writing and Conferring.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
- Notice how I choose a character to write about. I will explain my opinion about the character.
- I will say the word ______ and listen for the first sound.
- I will use an exclamation point to show excitement.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
- Which character will you write about? Why?
- Try saying the word slowly to help you write it.
- What words could you use to describe ______?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
- What did you tell your partner about your favorite character?
- What letter would you expect to see at the beginning? In the middle? At the end?
- Which words gave you trouble? What helped you write them?

Validating and Confirming
- You made me think about the character in a new way.
- Good job giving reasons for your opinions.
- You asked yourself questions. That’s something strong writers do to write and explain their opinions.

Teacher Tip

Although drawing is not mentioned in the Focus lesson, allow students who would benefit from continuing to draw before writing to do so. Alternatively students could draw pictures after writing to reinforce the idea that their opinions and reasons are based on the text.