Write a Book Review: Analyze Illustrations

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display the cover of Katy’s First Day of School. Read aloud the title. Say: We learned that we can write our opinion about the illustrations in a story. Today I will retell this story about Katy as you listen and look at the illustrations. As you look at them, ask yourself, “What do I like about the illustrations? Is there anything I don’t like about them?” Retell the story in your own words using the illustrations as prompts.

Turn to the illustration on pages 14 and 15. Say: This is my favorite illustration. I think it’s funny that Katy is getting her hair fixed, eating her breakfast, and gathering her school things all at the same time! Now I will write my opinion about the illustration. Remember that an opinion is part of a book review.

Write an opinion on chart paper, for example, “I like the picture of Katy getting ready for school.” As you write, model the following:

- 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.
- 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, and then ask: What do I need to write next? (Allow responses.) That’s right! I need to tell why I like this illustration.

Write a reason, for example, “That picture makes me laugh!” Model applying the strategies listed above as you write.

Ask students to help you reread to check your sentence. Then say: Now I want you to think of something different to write about the illustrations. Remember that you can tell something you like or something you don’t like. Then tell why.
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 talk about the illustrations. Make sure Katy’s First Day of School is available so students can review the illustrations. Say: Tell your partner what you’re going to write about an illustration. Remember to give a reason for your opinion.

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

• I like _____ because _____.
• I don’t like _____ 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.