Create a Title for Your Realistic Fiction Story

1. Focus

Explain the Importance of a Title

Ask: When you go to the library here at school, what is one of the first things you notice about a book? Allow responses. If necessary, suggest to students that the title is one of the first things people notice about a book.

Say: The title of a story is usually one of the first things your readers see when they begin reading. It should make them want to read more. A good title grabs readers’ attention and gives them some idea of what the writing is about.

Model Brainstorming a Title

Display the mentor text “Tia’s Bad Day” in book form or using the interactive whiteboard resources. If you are using the book, post chart paper so that you can jot key words as you model how to create a title. You can circle or highlight words and phrases with the interactive whiteboard resources.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Learn strategies for developing a title for a fictional story.
• Brainstorm title ideas with a group.
• Discuss how to apply the strategies to their own fictional stories.

Preparation

Materials Needed

• Mentor text: “Tia’s Bad Day”
• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive white board resources

Sample Title Brainstorming list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tia</th>
<th>bad day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zero on her homework</td>
<td>forgot her lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad day</td>
<td>nobody to play football with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awful</td>
<td>worst</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Say: Let’s imagine that I’ve written this fictional story about a girl who has a bad day. I’ve revised it and edited it and I think that it is almost ready to be published. But I still don’t have a title for it. I feel stuck. I want to write a good title, but I can’t think of any ideas. I will look back at what I’ve written and find words and ideas from my story that might give me a clue for my title. I’ll show you how to do this.

Reread page 14. Say: My story is about Tia, so I’ll write Tia. In the first sentence, I wrote that Tia knew it was going to be a bad day. I will write bad day on my chart. Model writing words on your chart.

Reread pages 15–16. Say: I wrote that after Tia got a zero on her homework, she knew that it was going to be a bad day. I will write got a zero on homework. Maybe these words will help me write my title. I also wrote that when she realizes that she forgot her lunch, she said that she knew it was going to be a bad day. I keep using the words bad day a lot. I will write forgot her lunch and also the words bad day again to remind me how many times I use them. On page 16, I wrote that Tia was mad that no one would play football
with her. I will write nobody to play football with. Tia said that it was an awful day. Awful means the same thing as bad. Model writing the words on your list.

Reread pages 17–19. Say: On page 17, Tia said that it was the worst day ever. The word worst also means “bad.” I will add the word worst to my list. Model writing the words on your list.

Say: I used the words bad day several times. I also used the words awful and worst, which are another way to describe bad. The other things I listed were bad things that happened. The story is about Tia and her day. I think my title should be “Tia’s Bad Day.”

2. Rehearse

Practice Generating Title Ideas

Invite students to begin thinking about a title for their realistic story. Ask them to go through their writing and jot down words and phrases that can help them choose a title.

Share and Discuss

Bring students together and invite them to talk about the process of generating titles. How did the strategy of rereading to look for key words and phrases help them create a title?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that you can use key words from your stories to help you create a good title. You want your title to reflect what the story is about. It should grab readers’ attention and make them want to read more. Keep this in mind as you create a title for your story.

Encourage students to apply this strategy when they prepare to publish their realistic fiction stories. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite volunteers to share the titles they developed and explain their reasoning for the titles.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Display familiar books from your classroom. Point to the title of each book and read it aloud to students. Say: The title of the book is ______. Have students repeat.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share this English/Spanish cognate: title/el título.