Analyze the Features of a Personal Narrative

1. Focus

Explain Genre Features

Say: Every genre has features or characteristics that identify it. For example, you can identify a procedural text because it includes a list of materials and numbered steps or sequence words in a paragraph that provide information about the order of the steps. Those are features found in a procedural text. Similarly, personal narratives contain features that identify them as personal narratives. Today we will discuss and analyze those features.

Build a Class Genre Features Anchor Chart

Say: Think about the personal narratives you’ve read and those we’ve read together as a class. Consider what they all have in common. Those characteristics that they all share are some of the features of personal narratives. We’re going to create an anchor chart to summarize and list the features of personal narratives.

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 personal narratives in the left column. (Note: The right column will be completed in the next part of the lesson.) If necessary, use the following prompts to guide students:

- Who narrates the events in a personal narrative?
- What is the focus of a personal narrative?
- What kind of information would you find in a personal narrative?
- What would you find out about the writer?
- How long is a personal narrative?

objetives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

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

Preparation

Materials Needed

- Mentor text: “Climbing the Snow King” from A Trip to Remember
- Personal Narrative Features (BLM 1)
- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson, if needed. Also copy a blank Personal Narrative Features chart onto chart paper.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Narrative Features</th>
<th>Examples from the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person point of view</td>
<td>Narrator is the writer. She uses <em>I</em>, <em>me</em>, and <em>my</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus is on one particular incident in the author’s life</td>
<td>This narrative focuses on a long hike up a mountain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes author’s thoughts and feelings</td>
<td>page 20: “But I have long-lasting memories because my family and I hiked up Snow King together.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes dialogue</td>
<td>The writer uses dialogue to show her enthusiasm for climbing up the steep mountain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes specific details about the time, place, and people involved</td>
<td>page 16: The writer identifies the month (August) and place (Jackson, Wyoming).  page 18: The writer describes the flowers on the mountainside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be short or long</td>
<td>This narrative is a few pages long because it provides a lot of details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Personal Narrative Features Anchor Chart (BLM 1)
Personal Narratives

Read Aloud a Personal Narrative

Before you read, point out the right-hand column on your chart and on students’ BLMs. Explain that you are going to read aloud a personal narrative and that students should listen carefully to the text to identify examples of the genre features in the narrative. Explain that after the reading, students will work in small groups to complete the chart by recording examples of each genre feature in the text. Read aloud “Climbing the Snow King” from A Trip to Remember. 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 the text you read aloud. Record their findings on your anchor chart. Post this anchor chart for students to refer to throughout the unit as they think about the personal narrative features they need to include in their narrative.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: The personal narrative features we identified today are features you will include in your own personal narrative. You can refer to the anchor chart to remind you of the features as you work on your personal narrative.

Ask students to choose one feature of personal narratives and to write a paragraph using that feature.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to identify the feature of a personal narrative they focused on and to read what they wrote.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Pair beginning ELs with fluent English speakers during the small-group “Analyze the Mentor Text” 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. Display the following simple sentence frames using the interactive whiteboard resources or on chart paper and model how students can use them to contribute ideas in the group. For example:

In “Climbing the Snow King,” I see ______.
“Climbing the Snow King” has ______.

Advanced

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

All Levels

If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: intense/intenso(a); mountain/la montaña; ski (adj.)/de esquí; skiing (n.)/el esquí.