INTRODUCE THE GENRE

Read Aloud a Mentor Book Review 1

1. Focus

Introduce the Mentor Persuasive Book Review

Say: As we become persuasive book-review writers, we can learn a lot by reading or listening to examples of other people’s reviews. Today I’m going to read you a review by a writer named Cynthia Swain. As we read, we will look for features that are common to all persuasive book reviews. You will be using these features in your own persuasive book reviews.

Say: This review is called “Stay Under the Sea!” That is the title of the review, not the title of the book that the review is about. The book review is about the story of a little mermaid. Based on the title of the review, what do you think the reviewer’s opinion of the book might be? Allow students to share their predictions or “I wonder” questions.

If your class includes English learners or other students who would benefit from vocabulary or oral language development to comprehend the review, use “Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs.”

Read Aloud the Mentor Persuasive Book Review

Read aloud the text, stopping at some or all of the places indicated (or at other points you choose) to highlight three key features of a persuasive book review:

1. Persuasive book reviews present the title of the book being reviewed and information about the author; a summary of the book; and an analysis of the characters, plot, and ideas of the story.
2. Persuasive book reviews analyze the characters, plot, and ideas of the story.
3. Persuasive book reviews include a summary of the book.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:
• Listen to a persuasive book review read aloud to learn that a book review includes a title and information about the author; a summary of the book; and an analysis of the characters, plot, and ideas of the story.
• Share personal responses to the persuasive book review.

Preparation

Materials Needed
• Mentor text: “Stay Under the Sea!”
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Title and Author

Page 7, after first paragraph. Say: In the first paragraph, we learn that the review is about the story “The Little Mermaid,” which was written in 1837 by Hans Christian Andersen. Book reviews usually tell this type of information in the first few paragraphs.

Analyze Characters, Plot, and Ideas

Page 7, after second paragraph. Say: The reviewer analyzes the description of the story’s setting by saying that it is “so vivid that you will feel as though you are under the sea.” She calls Andersen “a master of description!” Here the reviewer tells us something that she likes about the story and gives reasons why. Book reviewers don’t just summarize the story. They make comments about the story features and share opinions.

Analyze Characters, Plot, and Ideas

After reading page 7. Say: The last paragraph tells us more about the plot.
The reviewer says that Andersen gives detailed explanations of each sister’s adventure on land. It sounds like the reviewer thinks the discussion of the sisters went on too long. The reviewer says she “got as impatient as the Little Mermaid” waiting to read about the main character. Book reviewers tell both what they like and dislike about stories in their reviews.

Summary of Book
After reading page 8. Say: Wow, this book has an interesting plot, but it sounds sad, too. The first two pages of the review summarize the story for me. The writer describes the main characters and the important events in the plot. The reviewer is careful not to give all the details or tell what happens in the end. She wants to give her readers an idea of what to expect but leave information for them to uncover themselves. Knowing what the story is about from the summary will help me decide if I want to read it.

2. Rehearse

Respond Orally to the Mentor Persuasive Book Review

After reading, invite students to share their own reactions to the text by asking questions such as:
• Did you like this book review? Why or why not?
• What did you find most interesting about the review? Explain.
• Based on the review, would you read “The Little Mermaid”? Why or why not?

If necessary, model the following sentence frames to support ELs and struggling students:
• I liked the review because ______.
• The most interesting thing to me was ______.
• I would/would not want to read “The Little Mermaid” because ______.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: You learned that a persuasive book review includes the book’s title and author, a summary of the book, and an analysis of the characters, plot, and ideas. When you write your own persuasive book review, remember to include this information.

Encourage students to think about the features of a persuasive book review as they jot down notes about one or two of the books they’ve read. 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 share their notes about the books they’ve read. Ask students to discuss the features of a persuasive book review.

Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs

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<th>Level</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning</strong></td>
<td>Point to the picture on page 6. Say: She is a mermaid. She has a tail. She lives in the sea. (Then point to the picture on page 10.) Now the mermaid has legs. She lives on the land.</td>
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<td><strong>Intermediate and Advanced</strong></td>
<td>Explain that “The Little Mermaid” is a fairy tale—a story for children that involves magical forces and characters. Say: Tell me what you know about fairy tales. Encourage a background-building discussion about the types of characters, settings, and events in fairy tales.</td>
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<td><strong>All Levels</strong></td>
<td>If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share the following English/Spanish cognates: character/el carácter; potion/la poción; prince/príncipe.</td>
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