Madame Doubtfire by Anne Fine


Watch Mrs. Doubtfire film - first 15 minutes
• What is “a setting”?
• Where is the film set?
• In which country is the film set?
• What evidence is there that this might be a comedy?
• Who are the actors?

*TLW 1(c) Read first chapter of Madame Doubtfire and compare with the film version:
• Characters seem nicer on film.
• Discuss the different audiences.
• Why does the film emphasise drama and comedy so much?

Fill in the grid below to note the differences between the film and the book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Film</th>
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<td>Child’s Party</td>
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2. Treatment of the plot.

Watch the rest of the film. Ask children to take note of the different scenes.
Discuss the plot of the film (series of linked episodes forming the story/film)
Fill in Plot worksheet to map the episodes of the film.
• What do you think will happen to Daniel and the children in the book?

3. Character portrayal

Read a chapter, picking out phrases, and actions that Daniel uses.
Show how adding extra words in speech gives you more information about the character
eg. Said sarcastically
he said.. speaking through clenched teeth

Discuss:
• Is he making an effort to get along with his wife?
• Do you like him in the book?
• Is he an organised person? How do we know?
• Does he have a temper?
• How does he compare with the Robin Williams character in the film?

Children fill in a character analysis about Daniel. See Daniel worksheet

4. Speech marks

Write down an imaginary conversation between Daniel and his wife
Demonstrate the use of speech marks, commas, exclamation marks or question marks and a new line for a new speaker.
Ask children to fill in the correct punctuation. See Punctuation worksheet
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5a. Role Play – character portrayal and speech marks!

Revisit use of speech marks and ask pairs to role play and write a conversation between Daniel and his wife arguing about not having custody of the children.

5b. Film scripts

Use one of the children’s pieces of work from 5a. Demonstrate how this can be written as a film script. Look at the organisation of words/sentences. Ask the children how this part might be represented in a film.

• What is different from the written text?

Demonstrate how the spacing of the work makes it easier to read out your part in the script.

• How do we know when to speak?
• How are actions described?
• How do we know when to enter the “stage”?

Write out a script between Daniel and his wife as a film script. Children could then act them out!

6. To take account of viewpoint in a novel

Read chapter 3 of Madame Doubtfire

• Which character do you like in the story and who do you dislike? Why?
• How would your viewpoint change if Natalie or the older children wrote the story?

Class completes sentences about Miranda:

The narrator makes Miranda a ................. person because .................
Daniel thinks Miranda is................................. because .........................
The children think Miranda is......................... because .........................
I think Miranda is ................................ because .........................

*Brainstorm adjectives to describe Miranda from Daniel’s viewpoint, from the children’s and from the narrators.

7. To take Daniel’s viewpoint into account about not having access to the children.

• Whose side are we on?
Read accounts in the book which make us like Daniel or make us think that Miranda is acting unfair. List positive points of both parents on the board.
Eg. Daniel has a job
The children love him
He has a sense of fun
He has time to collect the children from school

Can the children make a list of 10 positive things about each person?

8. Structuring a letter/ argument for Daniel. Persuasive writing

Revisit Daniel’s positive points from activity 7.
• What words/phrases could we use to persuade the courts to let Daniel have access to the children?
Show the children a planning sheet for writing a letter.
Firstly, secondly, Finally  See letter worksheet
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9. TLW 3 To articulate personal responses

Begin with a recap of the story so far. Ask the class to predict what might happen using their memory to help them justify their point of view.
- Will any difficulties be solved?
- What is a resolution?
- Can we expect a satisfactory resolution?

Show children a story plan and ask them to write out the story of Madame Doubtfire so far but tell them it is THEIR resolution you are interested in and their justifications for their ending to the book.

10a. To select and present information (in a journalistic style) to produce a job advert

Share the advert on p39 of Madame Doubtfire. Discuss what facts in the advert are included/what facts are not included.
- Why would some adverts include a lot of information?

Demonstrate how to select this information (organise their writing) by compiling a checklist for a job advertisement:
- Name of organisation
- Address
- Duties and responsibilities (what the job will involve)
- Qualities needed for the job
- Hours
- Pay
- Deadline for applications

Using newspapers or job adverts worksheet Look at different styles of job adverts and how they are presented.
- bullet points
- landscape or portrait
- title at the top
- address and details at the bottom
- persuasive writing/positive language (read example of advert and underline positive language used or compare a real and a fictitious ad!)

Children write an advert using the framework discussed. IT opportunity to design advert on the computer. See Worksheet

10b. To develop a journalistic style through investigating balanced and ethical reporting

Discuss the phrase “balanced and ethical.”
Discuss what isn’t balanced reporting:
Exaggeration, Reporters intruding on personal lives, affairs, etc.
Note controversy about the coverage of the death of the Princess of Wales or of Prince William starting Uni.
The next step would be to discuss balanced and ethical by
a) keeping to the facts (fact and opinion sheets), b) respecting the feelings of people concerned c) giving both sides of the story (again – provide examples …)

CONFESSIONS!

In pairs ask the children to interview a member of the class, writing down as many facts as possible in a time limit about something they would like to confess. The interviewer is not an honest reporter and has to make up the story, exaggerating it and sensationalizing it. Do not worry about layout but ask the children to have an eye-catching headline and a good opening paragraph.
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10c. The interest of the reader

Share or read openings of news articles.

- What do the children notice about the style and language?
  - The style is clipped with words such as the and a missed out.
  - The number of words is kept to a minimum.

- Move on to look at opening sentences.
  - They are usually longer and contain a great deal of information to convey the main points of the story.
  - The aim is to capture the reader's interest so they will read on.

Collecting useful words and phrases.

Ask the children to collect examples of useful words and phrases often used.

eg. It is believed, is currently, it is alleged.

Make a list. (NB use of impersonal passive verbs)

Man dressed as woman!

Ask the children to plan a report from the headline “Man is Woman!” demonstrating how Daniel could have made the news when he was found out.

Using the newspaper framework below:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Headline by……………</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening sentence. On 1st September …. Daniel Hilliard, father of 3 was found dressing up as a woman!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How he was found out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The children’s point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In depth interviews (neighbours etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing paragraph</td>
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Invite suggestions on how to develop each section.

10d. To use the style and conventions of journalism to report on imagined events

Revise the following newspaper layout: columns, paragraphs, captions, headings, use of type face, bullet points.

Briefly discuss the purposes of these features. (To read it easily, locate information, add interest etc)

Children redraft their report. Planning their page, ruling all columns and boxes (using measurements from actual newspapers. Use an example to redraft if necessary).

Children redraft and represent their report on Daniel trying to achieve as authentic effect as possible through layout. USING DESKTOP PUBLISHING.

Watch Mrs. Doubtfire film - first 15 minutes
- A ‘setting’ is ...
- The film is set in ...
- We know it might be a comedy because ...
- The actors are ...
- Read the first chapter of Madame Doubtfire.

Fill in the grid below to note the differences between the film and the book.

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2. Treatment of the plot.

Watch the rest of the film.
- I think that in the book, Daniel and the children will ...

3. In the book ...

These are some of the phrases Daniel says:

Speech descriptions give us information about the character.
- e.g. ‘said sarcastically’
- ‘he said, speaking through clenched teeth’

Find an example

Questions: True or false?
- Daniel is / is not trying to get along with his wife. I think this because ...
- He is / is not an organised person. I think this because ...
- Daniel has / does not have a bad temper. I think this because ...
- In the book, Daniel is ..............................................................................
- In the film, he is ...................................................................................
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4. Speech marks
Write out a conversation between Daniel and his wife. Use speech marks.

5a. Role Play - character portrayal and speech marks!
With a partner, act out the conversation.

5b. Film scripts
- Use the conversation from section 4.
- Write it like a film script.
- Remember to include spaces, names, actions described.

6. To take account of viewpoint in a novel
Read Chapter 3 of Madame Doubtfire

- I like the character ........................................ because ............................................
- I do not like ........................................ because .............................................
- Natalie does not like ................................ because ............................................

Class completes sentences about Miranda:

The narrator makes Miranda a ........................................ person because ..........................................................
Daniel thinks Miranda is ........................................ because ..........................................................
The children think Miranda is ........................................ because ..........................................................
I think Miranda is ........................................ because ..........................................................

What is Miranda like?

Daniel
She is...

The children
She is...

Narrator
She is...
7. Good things about both parents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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Firstly ...
Secondly ...
Lastly ...

9. The story so far. What has happened?

The beginning ...
The middle ...
The end - I think that ...
10a. To select and present information to produce a job advert

Look at different styles of job adverts and how they are presented:

- bullet points
- landscape or portrait
- title at the top
- address and details at the bottom
- persuasive writing/positive language (read example of advert and underline positive language used)

Read page 39 of *Madame Doubtfire*.

Write a checklist for a job advertisement.

- name of organisation
- address
- duties and responsibilities (what the job will involve)
- qualities needed for the job
- hours
- pay
- deadline for applications

10b. The interest of the reader

Man dressed as woman!

Plan a report from the headline ‘Man is Woman!’ demonstrating how Daniel could have made the news when he was found out.

Use the newspaper framework below.

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