



# ROALD DAHL BOY

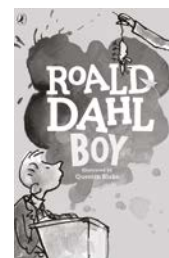
## LESSON PLANS

Bring  
**BOY** to life  
in your  
classroom!

**YPO**

is a proud  
partner of Roald  
Dahl education  
resources.





## LESSON PLAN 1:

**BOOK THEME:** Information Gathering

**LITERACY OBJECTIVE:**

Understanding the term 'autobiography', its structure and purpose. Using organisational devices to structure text.

**PSHE OBJECTIVE:**

Developing self-awareness and listening skills.

**EXTRACT USED:**

from 'Writing Home'

## LESSON PLAN 2:

**BOOK THEME:** Tuck

**LITERACY OBJECTIVE:**

Using a range of conjunctions to identify and create compound and complex sentences.

**PSHE OBJECTIVE:**

Understanding the principles of healthy eating.

**EXTRACT USED:**

from 'First Day'

## LESSON PLAN 3:

**BOOK THEME:** Colourful Characters

**LITERACY OBJECTIVE:**

Identifying and using expanded noun phrases and adjectives to write engaging descriptions.

**PSHE OBJECTIVE:**

Listening carefully to others.

**EXTRACT USED:**

from 'The Bicycle and the Sweet-shop' and 'Captain Hardcastle'

## LESSON PLAN 4:

**BOOK THEME:** Makers of Mischief

**LITERACY OBJECTIVE:**

Identifying the past tense and using it correctly and consistently.

**PSHE OBJECTIVE:**

Understanding consequence and making good choices. Giving constructive feedback.

**EXTRACT USED:**

from 'The Great Mouse Plot' and 'Mr Coombes'

## LESSON PLAN 5:

**BOOK THEME:** Descriptions

**LITERACY OBJECTIVE:**

Writing an effective description.

**PSHE OBJECTIVE:**

Developing listening skills.

**EXTRACT USED:**

from 'Getting Dressed for the Big School'

## LESSON PLAN 6:

**BOOK THEME:** Inspiration

**LITERACY OBJECTIVE:**

Identifying themes and summarising key ideas.

**PSHE OBJECTIVE:**

Working co-operatively as a group.

**EXTRACT USED:**

from 'Chocolates'

## YPO PAGE





## BOOK THEMES:

- Information gathering

## LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Understanding the term 'autobiography', its structure and purpose
- Using organisational devices to structure text
- Developing self-awareness and listening skills

## THINGS YOU MAY NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

Display paper, glue and whiteboards.  
See page 38.



## PREPARATION:

Photocopy enough copies of **RESOURCE 1: SOURCES OF INFORMATION** for children to work in pairs and enough of **RESOURCE 2: NOTES ABOUT ME** and **RESOURCE 3: THE STORY OF ME** for each individual.

## STARTER ACTIVITY:

Explain that the word autobiography comes from the Greek language and is a compound of autos (self) + bios (life) + graphe (write). It is an account of a person's life written by that person. Read the extract together and discuss the following questions.

- Is this a work of fiction or non-fiction?
- Why do you think Roald Dahl wrote this book?
- Have you read any other autobiographies?
- Whose autobiography would you like to read?

Confusingly, Roald Dahl describes 'Boy' as not being an autobiography as he says that these books are usually 'full of all sorts of boring details.' He goes on to say that this is not a history of himself but a number of things that happened to him that made a tremendous impression on him. However, others would describe the book as an autobiography, an individual's account of his life, written in chronological order. Reinforce that chronology is the passing of time in the order that events happen. Some of Dahl's tales are exciting and strange, some are frightening and others are funny – but they were all true!

Continued...



### MAIN ACTIVITY:

1. Read through the extract again. The book describes events in Roald Dahl's life up to becoming a young man. Roald Dahl used the resources he had access to before 1984 (the year the book was published) to write it. Why does Dahl write that he was lucky to receive all his letters back from his mother? Which other sources of information might he have used to help him to write his autobiography so many years later? Children should work in pairs to note down their ideas using **RESOURCE 1: SOURCES OF INFORMATION**. Ask each pair to feedback their ideas to the rest of the class and record their ideas on a central spider diagram on a flipchart or IWB.

2. Explain that children will be planning an autobiography of their own life and experiences in school. Most authors start their work with a draft – an initial attempt at writing down the basic ideas for their writing – and they will be doing the same. Introduce children to **RESOURCE 2: NOTES ABOUT ME** on which they should make a note of key events and information from their memories about their life at school. Remind the children to use events that actually happened and that would be interesting to a reader. (NB It should be noted that there should be some sensitivity exercised when it comes to introducing this activity to some children and they should be reassured that this will not involve recalling difficult or challenging events in their lives outside of school.) Ask the children:

- What might interest the readers of their autobiography?
- Should they include humorous events, and why?
- Should they include sad or challenging events?
- What are their biggest achievements? E.g. learning to read, acting in a play, organising an event or playing sport.

3. Once they have made their notes, ask the children to sort those memories and events into chronological order using **RESOURCE 3: THE STORY OF ME**.

### DEVELOPING THE ACTIVITY:

1. Challenge the children to collect further information over a week using the methods that they listed on their spider diagrams. Glue their draft sheets in the centre of a larger sheet of paper and add photocopies/digital copies of some of their information sources around the border. Create a temporary display of the sheets and invite the children to look at each other's draft sheets. Encourage them to question each other and suggest improvements.

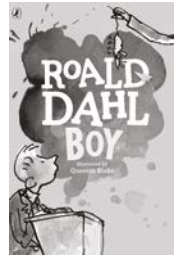
2. Select a well-thought out original draft sheet and share it with the whole class using a visualiser. Highlight key facts, exciting or interesting events and the evidence of chronology. What does the author have to do to make positive improvements and next steps e.g. re-writing, editing and then a final piece of autobiographical writing?

*Continued...*



# BOY

## LESSON PLAN 1



### EXTENSION:

Children may like to go on to write their autobiography using the notes and planning sheets they have completed.

### PLENARY:

Invite children to tell their partner something about themselves that they think the class will find interesting or funny but don't already know. Then invite each child to share their partner's fact or anecdote with the rest of the class.



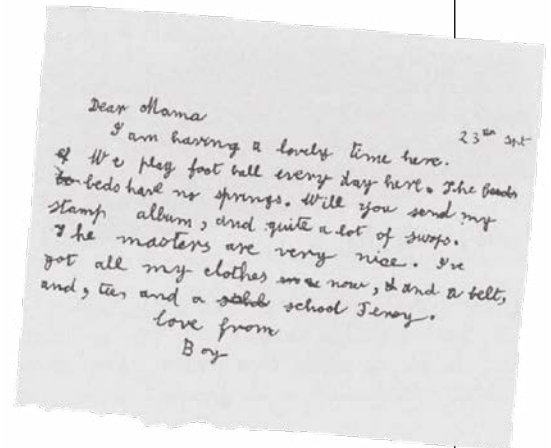
## EXTRACT ONE

from 'Writing Home', pp. 92-94

At St Peter's, Sunday morning was letter-writing time. At nine o'clock the whole school had to go to their desks and spend one hour writing a letter home to their parents. At ten-fifteen we put on our caps and coats and formed up outside the school in a long crocodile and marched a couple of miles down into Weston-super-Mare for church, and we didn't get back until lunchtime. Church-going never became a habit with me. Letter-writing did.

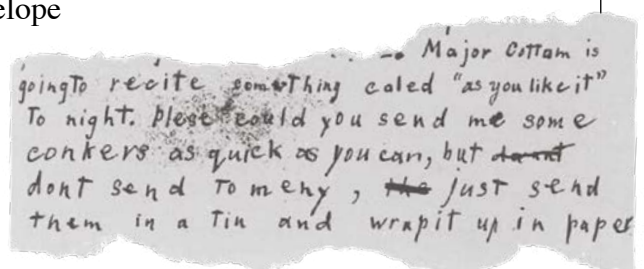
Here is the very first letter I wrote home From St Peter's.

From that very first Sunday at St Peter's until the day my mother died thirty-two years later, I wrote to her once a week, sometimes more often, whenever I was away from home. I wrote to her every week from St Peter's (I had to), and every week from my next school, Repton, and every week from Dar es Salaam in East Africa, where I went on my first job after leaving school, and then every week during the war from Kenya and Iraq and Egypt when I was flying with the RAF.



My mother, for her part, kept every one of these letters, binding them carefully in neat bundles with green tape, but this was her own secret. She never told me she was doing it. In 1957, when she knew she was dying, I was in hospital in Oxford having a serious operation on my spine and I was unable to write to her. So she had a telephone specially installed beside her bed in order that she might have one last conversation with me. She didn't tell me she was dying nor did anyone else for that matter because I was in a fairly serious condition myself at the time. She simply asked me how I was and hoped I would get better soon and sent me her love. I had no idea that she would die the next day, but she knew all right and she wanted to reach out and speak to me for the last time.

When I recovered and went home, I was given this vast collection of my letters, all so neatly bound with green tape, more than six hundred of them altogether, dating from 1925 to 1945, each one in its original envelope with the old stamps still on them. I am awfully lucky to have something like this to refer to in my old age.



# WRITING TEMPLATE



**Imagine you are writing your own autobiography.  
Where could you find information about your school life?**

Note at least one possible source of information in each box.

# NOTES ABOUT ME



<b>First memories of school?</b>	
<b>Funny moments</b>	
<b>Achievements</b>	
<b>Challenges</b>	
<b>Friendships</b>	
<b>What's happening in your school life now?</b>	



# NOTES ABOUT ME



Now put your memories and school events into  
chronological order . . .

1	2
3	4
5	6
7	8

Arrows indicate a clockwise flow from box 1 to 2, 2 to 4, 4 to 3, 3 to 5, 5 to 6, 6 to 8, 8 to 7, and 7 to 5.



### BOOK THEMES:

- Tuck

### LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Using a range of conjunctions to identify and create compound and complex sentences
- Understanding the principles of healthy eating

### THINGS YOU MAY NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

Healthy eating stickers, poster and A4 paper.  
See page 38.



### PREPARATION:

Print copies of the extract for each child or pair. Each child will need a copy of **RESOURCE 1: TUCK IN** and **RESOURCE 2: COMPOUND OR COMPLEX** and you will need to print and laminate a set of **RESOURCE 3: CONJUNCTION WORD CARDS** for groups of four. You may also want a supply of highlighters and a flipchart and, for the extension task, box making materials such as card, plastic sheet, recycled materials, tape, glue, scissors, range of decorative coverings (wrapping paper, sequins, comics, fabric, sticky back plastic).

### STARTER ACTIVITY:

Roald Dahl was describing his first great adventure at the age of nine: he was going to boarding school for the first time. Some children may not have heard of these types of schools, so explain that prep schools are private fee-paying schools for children up to either eleven or thirteen years old. Read the extract, either together or independently and consider the following questions:

- How do you think Roald Dahl might have felt leaving home for the first time?
- Have you ever stayed away from home and can you remember how you felt?
- What is a tuck-box? Why do you think Roald Dahl recalled his tuck-box in such detail?
- What might the squashed fly biscuits be?

Ask the children to discuss their ideas in pairs. Did they come up with similar or different conclusions? Invite each pair to contribute their ideas to a class mind map on a flipchart.

(NB An item the children may not be familiar with is the Bassett's lemonade powder. Fizzy, or flavoured drinks, were not so widely available during Roald Dahl's childhood so children would make their own by mixing highly sugary and artificially coloured powder with water to make a drink.)

*Continued...*



### MAIN ACTIVITY

1. Ask the children what they consider to be a healthy snack and list their suggestions on the flipchart. Then, using the extract and **RESOURCE 1: TUCK IN**, children will work individually to make comparative lists from Roald Dahl's tuck-box to one that they would like in school. Invite children to share their tuck-box lists with the class. Are there healthy choices in both tuck-boxes?

2. Now explain to children that they are going to examine the language Roald Dahl uses to convey his ideas to the reader. He uses a wide range of compound and complex sentences. A compound sentence is where two main clauses are joined by conjunctions such as and, so or but. A complex sentence is where a main clause is joined to a subordinate clause with a conjunction. The main clause will make sense by itself but the subordinate clause will not. In the complex sentences Roald Dahl uses a range of subordinate conjunctions including, therefore, which and because. Ask the children which of these sentences is which.

- a) The owner has a key in his pocket and that is where it stays.
- b) A tuck box is a small pinewood trunk which is very strongly made.

Provide each child with a copy of **RESOURCE 2: COMPOUND OR COMPLEX?** Ask them to mark the conjunctions with highlighters and decide if it is a compound or complex sentence. Ask the children to exchange their sheet with a partner and compare their answers.

### DEVELOPING THE ACTIVITY:

Divide the class into small groups and give each group a set of **RESOURCE 3: CONJUNCTION WORD CARDS** to be turned face down on the table. The children take it in turns to take a card and come up with a sentence about their tuck-box snack using that conjunction. They could record these on paper, mini-whiteboards or even as an audio-recording.

### PLENARY:

Ask each group to choose one sentence from their group activity and to say it clearly to the class. Ask the rest of the class to identify whether they are listening to a compound or complex sentence by writing which it is on mini-whiteboards and revealing their answers at a given moment.

### CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Children should design and make a simple tuck-box to hold their healthy snacks. Conduct a web search to see what other designers and manufacturers of tuck-boxes have come up with. Ask the children to refer back to their tuck-box content ideas and consider how to make their boxes secure and air-tight. The box could be constructed from card, plastic sheet or junk modelling. They could also use their mathematical skills of making nets or deconstruct ready-made boxes to look at their construction.



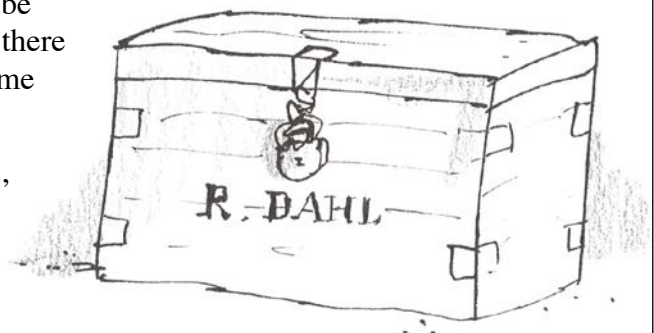
## EXTRACT ONE

from 'First Day', pp. 86-88

On the first day of my first term I set out by taxi in the afternoon with my mother to catch the paddle-steamer from Cardiff Docks to Weston-super-Mare. Every piece of clothing I wore was brand new and had my name in it. I wore black shoes, grey woollen stockings with blue turnovers, grey flannel shorts, a grey shirt, a red tie, a grey flannel blazer with the blue school crest on the breast pocket and a grey school cap with the same crest just above the peak. Into the taxi that was taking us to the docks went my brand new trunk and my brand new tuck-box, and both had R. DAHL painted on them in black.

A tuck-box is a small pinewood trunk which is very strongly made, and no boy has ever gone as a boarder to any English Prep School without one. It is his own secret store-house, as secret as a lady's handbag, and there is an unwritten law that no boy, no teacher, not even the Headmaster himself has the right to pry into the contents of your tuck-box. The owner has the key in his pocket and that is where it stays. At St Peter's, the tuck-boxes were ranged shoulder to shoulder all around the four walls of the changing-room and your own tuck-box stood directly below the peg on which you hung your games clothes. A tuck-box, as the name implies, is a box in which to store your tuck. At Prep School in those days, a parcel of tuck was sent once a week by anxious mothers to their ravenous little sons, and an average tuck-box would probably contain, at almost any time, half a home-made currant cake, a packet of squashed fly biscuits, a couple of oranges, an apple, a banana, a pot of strawberry jam or Marmite, a bar of chocolate, a bag of Liquorice Allsorts and a tin of Bassett's lemonade powder. An English school in those days was purely a money-making business owned and operated by the Headmaster. It suited him, therefore, to give the boys as little food as possible himself and to encourage the parents in various cunning ways to feed their offspring by parcel-post from home.

'By all means, my dear Mrs Dahl, do send your boy some little treats now and again,' he would say. 'Perhaps a few oranges and apples once a week' – fruit was very expensive – 'and a nice currant cake, a large currant cake perhaps because small boys have large appetites do they not, ha-ha-ha ... Yes, yes, as often as you like. More than once a week if you wish ... Of course he'll be getting plenty of good food here, the best there is, but it never tastes quite the same as home cooking, does it? I'm sure you wouldn't want him to be the only one who doesn't get a lovely parcel from home each week.'



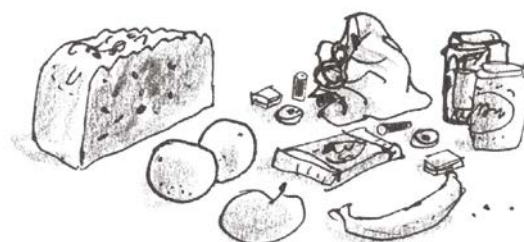


# TUCK IN

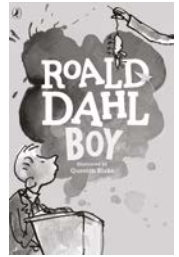


Roald Dahl's Tuck Box	My Tuck Box

Mark your choices with an H or a tick to show that it is a healthy snack.



# COMPOUND OR COMPLEX?



**Roald Dahl used a range of sentences in his writing – both compound and complex.**

Can you underline the conjunctions in each sentence and then identify whether it is a compound or a complex sentence?

At St Peter's, the tuck-boxes were ranged shoulder to shoulder all around the four walls of the changing-room and your own tuck-box stood directly below the peg on which you hung your games clothes.

**Compound / Complex**

Every piece of my clothing I wore was brand new and had my name in it.

**Compound / Complex**

Into the taxi that was taking us to the docks went my brand new trunk and my brand new tuck-box, and both had R. DAHL painted on them in black.

**Compound / Complex**

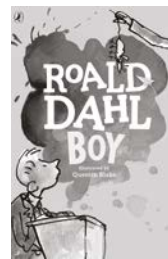

It suited him, therefore, to give the boys as little food as possible himself and to encourage the parents in various cunning ways to feed their offspring by parcel-post from home.

**Compound / Complex**

*Of course* he'll be getting plenty of good food here, the best there is, but it never tastes quite the same as home cooking, does it?

**Compound / Complex**

# CONJUNCTION WORD CARDS

<b>and</b>	<b>but</b>	<b>so</b>	<b>or</b>
AFTER	<b>although</b>	because	<b>before</b>
<b>AS</b>	even	<b>if</b>	<b>SINCE</b>
though	<b>that</b>	unless	UNTIL
<b>when</b>	where	wherever	<b>whether</b>
<b>WHICH</b>	<b>while</b>	<b>who</b>	<b>WHY</b>



### BOOK THEMES:

- Colourful characters

### LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Identifying and using expanded noun phrases and adjectives to write engaging descriptions
- Listening carefully to others

### THINGS YOU MAY NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

Colouring pencils, A3 drawing paper and story writing resources. See page 38.



### PREPARATION:

Children will need copies of the two extracts and all three resources: **RESOURCE 1: NOUN AND ADJECTIVE CARDS**, **RESOURCE 2: COLOURFUL CHARACTERS** and **RESOURCE 3: QUENTIN BLAKE'S ILLUSTRATIONS**. You will also need coloured pens or pencils and a flipchart.

### STARTER ACTIVITY:

Divide the class into small groups. Challenge each group to write a brief description of a famous person of their choosing. What information will they need to share so that the class can guess who it is? Give the groups five minutes to come up with their descriptions before presenting them for the rest of the class to identify the person. Select some good examples and display them on the board. Ask the children to identify the nouns and adjectives in the descriptions and underline nouns in blue and adjectives in red.

### MAIN ACTIVITY

Roald Dahl observed people very closely, even as a young boy. He often used these observations in his later writing, using a range of noun phrases, adjectives and similes to create vivid descriptions.

1. Ask the children to read the first extract in which Roald Dahl is describing Mrs Pratchett, the sweet shop owner. The children should be looking for nouns and how the author has expanded, or enhanced those nouns to make them really engaging. Share ideas, noting them on the IWB or flipchart. Next read the second extract, in which we are introduced to Captain. Working individually, children should underline the nouns in blue and the adjectives in red. Ask the children to swap their sheets with their neighbour and check each other's work. Did they mark the same nouns and adjectives? Again, share ideas, noting them on the IWB or flipchart. Did the descriptions help the reader to form a clear visual picture of the characters Roald Dahl was describing? How important do they think this is in writing?

*Continued...*





2. Display these phrases on the board:

**THE HUGE GIANT**  
**THE COLD ICY SNOW**

and ask the children what is wrong with these adjectives in these descriptions. They are unnecessary and unimaginative! We know that giants are huge and snow is cold! Cold and icy are also synonyms so we don't need both of them. Let's be like Dahl and put together some powerful and engaging descriptions! Introduce **RESOURCE 1: NOUN AND ADJECTIVE CARDS**. Children should work in pairs to sort the nouns from the adjectives and then to place these in piles face-down on the table. They should then take turns in picking pick a noun and two adjectives to a create a variety of combinations. Which make interesting descriptions and which are boring or silly?

3. Now ask children to return to their descriptions of famous people from the beginning of the lesson. Can they use what they have observed in Dahl's descriptions and their work in the previous activity to improve their original descriptions? They should work in groups to edit and improve, ready to share with the class.

### DEVELOPING THE ACTIVITY:

Invite children to use the descriptions of Mrs Pratchett and Captain Hardcastle to create two portraits on **RESOURCE 2: CHARACTER PORTRAITS**. The children should work in pairs. One person will draw read one description aloud as their partner draws them. Then they exchange the sheet and swap roles for the other portrait. Challenge pairs to now recall and write some expanded noun phrases to match their characters.

### PLENARY:

Make a temporary exhibition by hanging the children's drawings around the classroom. Were there certain facial or bodily characteristics that most people included in their drawings?

Which of Roald Dahl's phrases were the most effective in helping them to draw the characters?

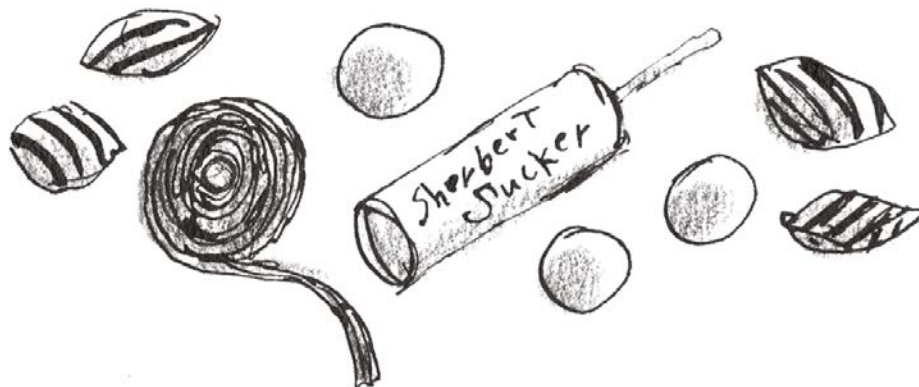
## EXTRACT

*'The Bicycle and the Sweet-shop', pp. 32-33*

The sweet-shop in Llandaff in the year 1923 was the very centre of our lives. To us, it was what a bar is to a drunk, or a church to a Bishop. Without it, there would have been little to live for. But it had one terrible drawback, this sweet-shop. The woman who owned it was a horror. We hated her and we had good reason for doing so.

Her name was Mrs Pratchett. She was a small skinny old hag with a moustache on her upper lip and a mouth as sour as a green gooseberry. She never smiled. She never welcomed us when we went in, and the only times she spoke were when she said things like, 'I'm watchin' you so keep your thievin' fingers off them chocolates!' Or 'I don't want you in 'ere just to look around! Either you *forks* out or you *gets* out!'

But by far the most loathsome thing about Mrs Pratchett was the filth that clung around her. Her apron was grey and greasy. Her blouse had bits of breakfast all over it, toast-crumbs and tea stains and splotches of dried egg-yolk. It was her hands, however, that disturbed us the most. They were disgusting. They were black with dirt and grime. They looked as though they had been putting lumps of coal on the fire all day long. And do not forget please that it was these very hands and fingers that she plunged into the sweet-jars when we asked for a pennyworth of Treacle Toffee or Wine Gums or Nut Clusters or whatever. There were precious few health laws in those days, and nobody, least of all Mrs Pratchett, ever thought of using a small shovel for getting out the sweets as they do today. The mere sight of her grimy right hand with its black fingernails digging an ounce of Chocolate Fudge out of the jars would have caused a starving tramp to go running from the shop. But not us. Sweets were our life-blood. We would have put up with far worse than that to get them. So we simply stood and watched in sullen silence while this disgusting old woman stirred around inside the jars with her foul fingers.





## EXTRACT

from 'Captain Hardcastle', pp. 129-131

We called them masters in those days, not teachers, and at St Peter's the one I feared most of all, apart from the Headmaster, was Captain Hardcastle.

This man was slim and wiry and he played football. On the football field he wore white running shorts and white gymshoes and short white socks. His legs were as hard and thin as ram's legs and the skin around his calves was almost exactly the colour of mutton fat. The hair on his head was not ginger. It was brilliant dark vermillion, like a ripe orange, and it was plastered back with immense quantities of brilliantine in the same fashion as the Headmaster's. The parting in his hair was a white line straight down the middle of the scalp, so straight it could only have been made with a ruler. On either side of the parting you could see the comb tracks running back through the greasy orange hair like little tram-lines.

Captain Hardcastle sported a moustache that was the same colour as his hair, and oh what a moustache it was! A truly terrifying sight, a thick orange hedge that sprouted and flourished between his nose and his upper lip and ran clear across his face from the middle of one cheek to the middle of the other. But this was not one of those nailbrush moustaches, all short and clipped and bristly. Nor was it long and droopy in the walrus style. Instead, it was curled most splendidly upwards all the way along as though it had a permanent wave put into it or possibly curling tongs heated in the mornings over a tiny flame of methylated spirits. The only other way he could have achieved this curling effect, we boys decided, was by prolonged upward brushing with a hard toothbrush in front of the looking-glass every morning.

Behind the moustache there lived an inflamed and savage face with a deeply corrugated brow that indicated a very limited intelligence. 'Life is a puzzlement,' the corrugated brow seemed to be saying, 'and the world is a dangerous place. All men are enemies and small boys are insects that will turn and bite you if you don't get them first and squash them hard.'

Captain Hardcastle was never still. His orange head twitched and jerked perpetually from side to side in the most alarming fashion, and each twitch was accompanied by a little grunt that came out of his nostrils. He had been a soldier in the Great War and that, of course, was how he received his title. But even small insects like us knew that 'Captain' was not a very exalted rank and only a man with little else to boast about would hang on to it in civilian life. It was bad enough to keep calling yourself 'Major' after it was all over, but 'Captain' was the bottoms.



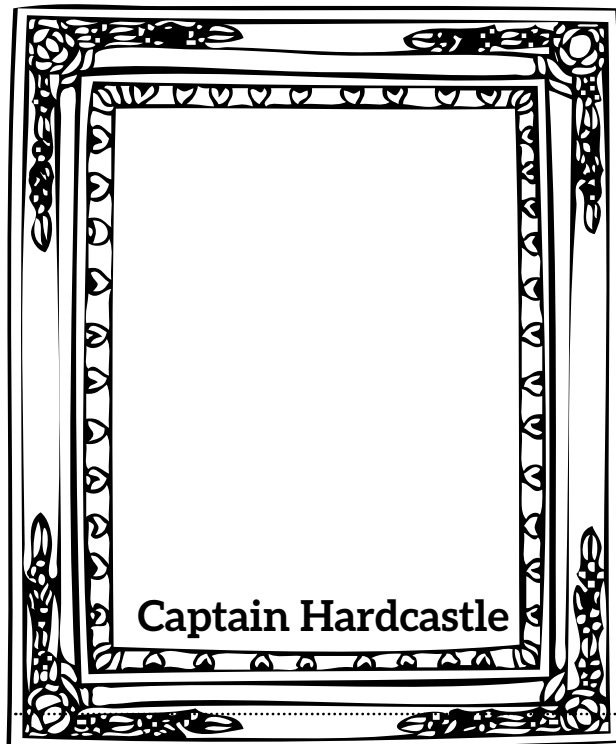
# NOUNS AND ADJECTIVE CARDS



<b>sweets</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>black</b> ✂
APRON	<b>filthy</b>	dirty
<b>mouth</b>	slim	<b>SOUR</b>
<b>BROW</b>	disgusting	<b>greasy</b>
hair	<b>skinny</b>	vermilion
<b>moustache</b>	orange	WIRY
fingernails	<b>thick</b>	FOUL
<b>HANDS</b>	<b>droopy</b>	<b>mutton</b>
<b>legs</b>	grimy	<b>THIN</b>
HEAD	<b>curly</b>	corrugated
fingers	<b>grey</b>	thin



# COLOURFUL CHARACTERS



Now write some expanded noun phrases about Mrs Pratchett.

And some expanded noun phrases for Captain Hardcastle too.

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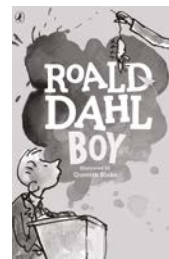
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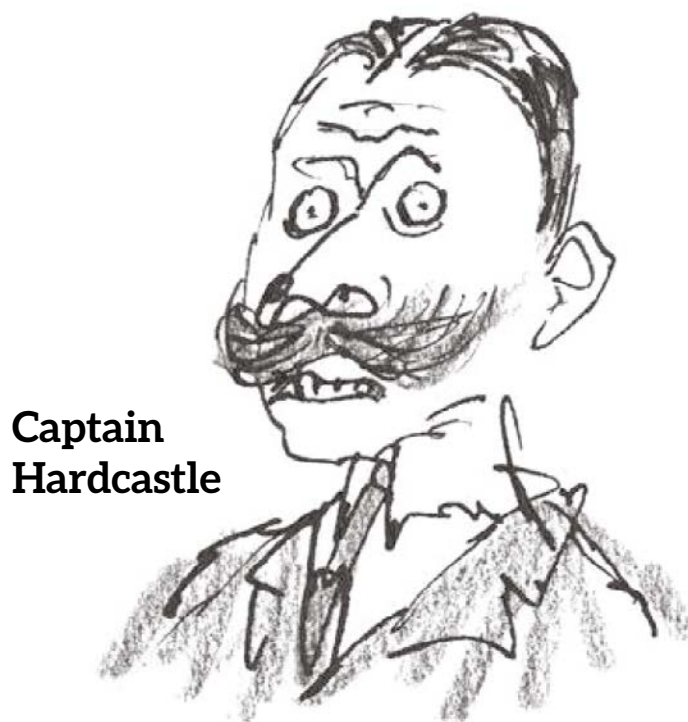
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# QUENTIN BLAKE'S ILLUSTRATIONS



**Mrs  
Pratchett**



**Captain  
Hardcastle**



## BOOK THEMES:

- Makers of Mischief

## LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Identifying the past tense and using it correctly and consistently
- Understanding consequence and making good choices
- Giving constructive feedback

## THINGS YOU MAY NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

Handwriting pens, A3 drawing paper and thesaurus.  
See page 38.



## PREPARATION:

Each child will need a copy of both extracts and copies of **RESOURCE 1: PRESENT TO PAST**. Each group will need a set of cards from **RESOURCE 2: PLOT CARDS**. You will also need some sheets of A3 paper.

## STARTER ACTIVITY:

Explain that, between the ages of seven and nine, Roald Dahl attended Llandaff Cathedral School. Give children the extract to read. Ask them to identify which tense the extract is written in and why. Introduce **RESOURCE 1: PRESENT TO PAST**, in which children are asked to underline the verbs in the past tense and then re-write the paragraph in the simple present. Share and discuss. Were there any verbs which were harder to convert?

## MAIN ACTIVITY

The five friends thought they were getting back at Mrs Pratchett. Was the Great Mouse Plot a good idea or not? What motivated them to devise such a plot?

Children should work in small groups to come up with their own plot for a short drama to be performed to the class. Use **RESOURCE 2: PLOT CARDS** to prompt and support the groups in creating a storymap on A3 paper, considering setting, characters (each member of the group should have a role), the action and the consequences (whether good or bad). Children may use the suggestions on the completed cards or use the blank cards for their own ideas. Groups should present their play to the class who should be encouraged to review it, highlighting all the positive aspects and suggesting one way in which the play could be improved.

*Continued...*



### DEVELOPING THE ACTIVITY:

Explain that children should now write an account of their plot. Remind children that, although they performed their plays in the present tense, the account will be written in the past tense as it has already happened. Challenge them to check a partner's own writing to see that the past tense is used consistently.

### PLENARY:

What do children think was the outcome of the Great Mouse Plot? Discuss and then read EXTRACT TWO, in which Roald Dahl and his friends begin to suspect there will be negative consequences as a result of the plot. Had they considered the outcome of their actions? Did they make good or bad choices in planning their plot? Can children think of three strategies that would have helped the boys to deal with a nasty character like Mrs Pratchett?

Set up a 'Conscience Alley', where one child plays Roald and the rest of the class divides into two, half for the mouse plot and half against it. The two sides line up opposite one another to form an 'alley'. 'Roald' then walks slowly down the alley as the two sides shout their advice. When Roald comes to the end, he should make a decision about the best course of action.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Some film and play writers write two conclusions to a story and give the audience the opportunity to choose the one that they like the most. Challenge the children to come up with an alternative ending to their short play. Can they develop both a positive and a negative ending?



*the cane*

## EXTRACT ONE

from *'The Great Mouse Plot', pp. 35-37*

One day when we lifted it up, we found a dead mouse lying among our treasures. It was an exciting discovery. Thwaites took it out by its tail and waved it in front of our faces. 'What shall we do with it?' he cried.

'It stinks!' someone shouted. 'Throw it out of the window, quick!'

'Hold on a tick,' I said. 'Don't throw it away.'

Thwaites hesitated. They all looked at me.

When writing about oneself, one must strive to be truthful. Truth is more important than modesty. I must tell you, therefore, that it was I and I alone who had the idea for the great and daring Mouse Plot. We all have our moments of brilliance and glory, and this was mine.

'Why don't we,' I said, 'slip it into one of Mrs Pratchett's jars of sweets? Then when she puts her dirty hand in to grab a handful, she'll grab a stinky dead mouse instead.'

The other four stared at me in wonder. Then, as the sheer genius of the plot began to sink in, they all started grinning. They slapped me on the back. They cheered me and danced around the classroom. 'We'll do it today!' they cried. 'We'll do it on the way home! You had the idea,' they said to me, 'so you can be the one to put the mouse in the jar.'

Thwaites handed me the mouse. I put it into my trouser pocket. Then the five of us left the school, crossed the village green and headed for the sweet-shop. We were tremendously jazzed up. We felt like a gang of desperadoes setting out to rob a train or blow up the sheriff's office.

'Make sure you put it into a jar which is used often,' somebody said.

'I'm putting it in Gobstoppers,' I said. 'The Gobstopper jar is never behind the counter.'

'I've got a penny,' Thwaites said, 'so I'll ask for one Sherbet Sucker and one Bootlace. And while she turns away to get them, you slip the mouse in quickly with the Gobstoppers.'

Thus everything was arranged. We were strutting a little as we entered the shop. We were the victors now and Mrs Pratchett was the victim. She stood behind the counter, and her small malignant pig-eyes watched us suspiciously as we came forward.

'One Sherbet Sucker, please,' Thwaites said to her, holding out his penny.

I kept to the rear of the group, and when I saw Mrs Pratchett turn her head away for a couple of seconds to fish a Sherbet Sucker out of the box, I lifted the heavy glass lid of the Gobstopper jar and dropped the mouse in. Then I replaced the lid as silently as possible. My heart was thumping like mad and my hands had gone all sweaty.

'And one Bootlace, please,' I heard Thwaites saying.

When I turned round, I saw Mrs Pratchett holding out the Bootlace in her filthy fingers.







## EXTRACT TWO

from 'Mr Coombes', pp. 39-41

The flush of triumph over the dead mouse was carried forward to the next morning as we all met again to walk to school.

'Let's go in and see if it's still in the jar,' somebody said as we approached the sweet-shop.

'Don't,' Thwaites said firmly. 'It's too dangerous. Walk past as though nothing has happened.'

As we came level with the shop we saw a cardboard notice hanging on the door.

We stopped and stared. We had never known the sweet-shop to be closed at this time in the morning, even on Sundays.

'What's happened?' we asked each other. 'What's going on?'

We pressed our faces against the window and looked inside. Mrs Pratchett was nowhere to be seen.

'Look!' I cried. 'The Gobstopper jar's gone! It's not on the shelf! There's a gap where it used to be!'

'It's on the floor!' someone said. 'It's smashed to bits and there's Gobstoppers everywhere!'

'There's the mouse!' someone shouted.

We could see it all, the huge glass jar smashed to smithereens with the dead mouse lying in the wreckage and hundreds of many-coloured Gobstoppers littering the floor.

'She got such a shock when she grabbed hold of the mouse that she dropped everything,' somebody was saying.

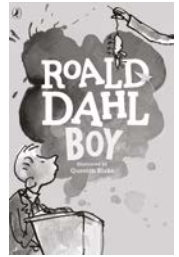
'But why didn't she sweep it all up and open the shop?' I asked.

Nobody answered me.

We turned away and walked towards the school. All of a sudden we began to feel slightly uncomfortable. There was something not quite right about the shop being closed. Even Thwaites was unable to offer a reasonable explanation. We became silent. There was a faint scent of danger in the air now. Each one of us had caught a whiff of it. Alarm bells were beginning to ring faintly in our ears.



# PRESENT TO PAST



**Here is a short extract from the chapter 'Mr Coombes'.**

Underline the verbs in the past tense and then then re-write the extract using the simple present tense, e.g. We turned becomes We turn

*We turned away and walked towards the school. All of a sudden we began to feel slightly uncomfortable. There was something not quite right about the shop being closed. Even Thwaites was unable to offer a reasonable explanation. We became silent. There was a faint scent of danger in the air now. Each one of us caught a whiff of it. Alarm bells were beginning to ring faintly in our ears.*

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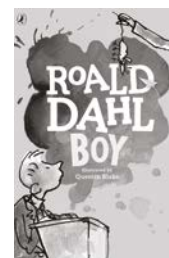
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# PLOT CARDS



<b>Location</b>  SWEET SHOP	<b>Victim</b>  MRS PRATCHETT	<b>Action</b>  ..... .....	<b>Consequence</b>  ..... .....
<b>Location</b>  SCHOOL	<b>Victim</b>  CAPTAIN HARDCASTLE	<b>Action</b>  ..... .....	<b>Consequence</b>  ..... .....
<b>Location</b>  THE CLASSROOM	<b>Victim</b>  A CLASSMATE	<b>Action</b>  ..... .....	<b>Consequence</b>  ..... .....
<b>Location</b>  THE LUNCH HALL	<b>Victim</b>  THWAITES	<b>Action</b>  ..... .....	<b>Consequence</b>  ..... .....
<b>Location</b>  ..... .....	<b>Victim</b>  ..... .....	<b>Action</b>  ..... .....	<b>Consequence</b>  ..... .....



## BOOK THEMES:

- Descriptions

## LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Writing an effective description
- Developing listening skills

## THINGS YOU MAY NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

Scissors, PVA glue and pencils.  
See page 38.



## PREPARATION:

Several days prior to the lesson, invite children to provide you with a photograph of themselves in a favourite outfit or uniform, but they must keep it a secret from their classmates! It could be a favourite pair of jeans, T shirt and trainers or something more formal like a school or scout/brownie uniform. It could even be the outfit someone made them wear to go to a wedding!

On the day, each child will need a copy of **RESOURCE 1: LOOKING GOOD** and **RESOURCE 2: IN THE PICTURE**. You will also need a supply of A3 and A4 paper, drawing pencils, coloured pencils, scissors and glue.

## STARTER ACTIVITY:

Roald Dahl was fortunate to have the six hundred letters he sent to his mother over many years. He became a keen photographer when he was at Repton School so photographs and copies of his childhood letters appear throughout the book alongside illustrations by the artist, Quentin Blake. These little snippets of visual information add another layer to the readers' understanding. Challenge the children to think of other books they have read that include photographs and passages from letters or diaries. (*The Diary of Anne Frank* is a good example.)

Continued...



## MAIN ACTIVITY:

1. Ask the children to read the extract, which is about the new uniform Dahl had to wear to go to Repton when he was thirteen. Are the descriptions clear and vivid enough to enable the children to picture the uniform? Can they recall how they felt about wearing a new uniform? Are there any elements of the young Dahl's uniform which are similar to the children's own school uniform?
2. Using **RESOURCE 1: LOOKING GOOD**, challenge the children to write a description of the outfit or uniform pictured in their photograph. Remind them that the description has to be really clear!

## DEVELOPING THE ACTIVITY:

Now pair the children up. One will read out their clothes description to their partner. The partner should listen carefully to the verbal description and then have a go at drawing the clothes on **RESOURCE 2: IN THE PICTURE**. The drawing may have labels and a caption to add extra detail. Tell children that this isn't about being an amazing artist but it is about listening, and writing effective descriptions which include as much detail as possible. The partners then swap roles. Did the drawings match the photographs?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Invite children to design a new school uniform and to write a leaflet for new parents at the school, detailing the requirements. Will the uniform be street-style? Chic? Smart and sharp? Encourage them to include details about features, fabrics and so on, to give parents a very clear picture of what they should buy.

## PLENARY:

Tack the drawings up on the board or wall. Invite children to read out their descriptions and challenge the others to match the description to the drawing. Which descriptions were the easiest to match up and why? Were there any really good examples of vivid writing that conjured up clear ideas about what someone was wearing? Why is this an important skill in writing?





## EXTRACT

from 'Getting Dressed for the Big School', pp. 167-170

I inserted the front stud into one side of front of the shirt and slipped the shirt over my head. With the help of a mirror, I now set about pushing the top of the front stud through the first of the two slits in the front of the collar. It wouldn't go. The slit was so small and stiff and starchy that nothing would go through it. I took the shirt off and put both of the front slits in my mouth and chewed them until they were soft. The starch didn't taste of anything. I put the shirt back on again and at last I was able to get the front stud through the collar-slits.

Around the collar but underneath the butterfly wings, I tied a black tie, using an ordinary tie-knot.

Then came the trousers and the braces. The trousers were black with thin pinstriped grey lines running down them. I buttoned the braces on to the trousers, six buttons in all, then I put on the trousers and adjusted the braces to the correct length by sliding two brass clips up and down.

I put on a brand new pair of black shoes and laced them up.

Now for the waistcoat. This was also black and it had twelve buttons down the front and two little waistcoat pockets on either side, one above the other. I put it on and did up the buttons, starting at the top and working down. I was glad I didn't have to chew each of those button-holes to get the buttons through them.

All this was bad enough for a boy who had never before worn anything more elaborate than a pair of shorts and a blazer. But the jacket put the lid on it. It wasn't exactly a jacket, it was a sort of tail-coat, and it was without a doubt the most ridiculous garment I had ever seen.

Like the waistcoat, it was jet black and made from a heavy serge-like material. In the front it was cut away so that the two sides met only at one point, about halfway down the waistcoat. Here there was a single button and this had to be done up. From the button downwards, the lines of the coat separated and curved away behind the legs of the wearer and came together again at the backs of the knees, forming a pair of 'tails'. These tails were separated by a slit and when you walked about they flapped against your legs. I put the thing on and did up the front button. Feeling like an undertaker's apprentice in a funeral parlour, I crept downstairs.

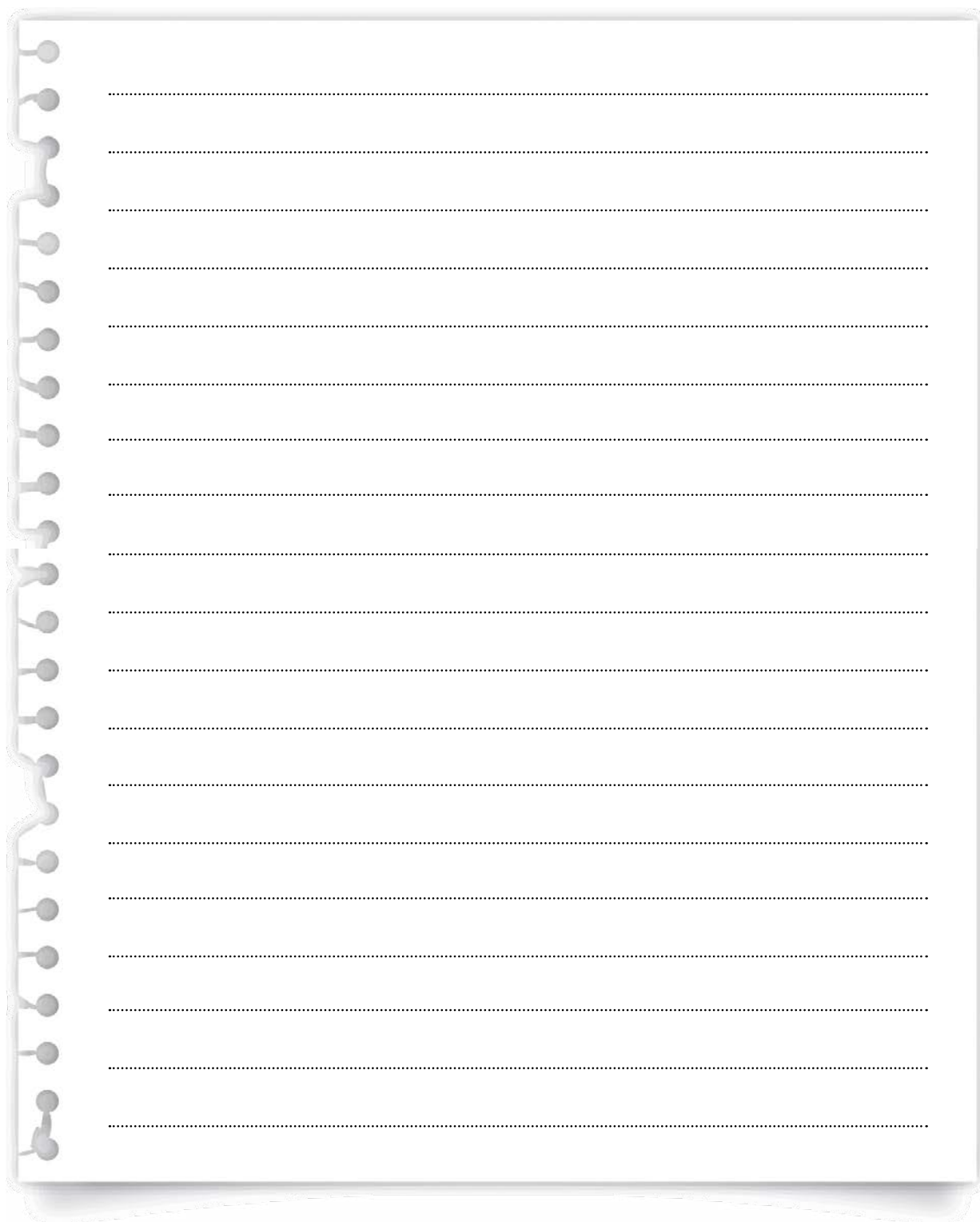
My sisters shrieked with laughter when I appeared. 'He can't go out in those!' they cried. 'He'll be arrested by the police.'

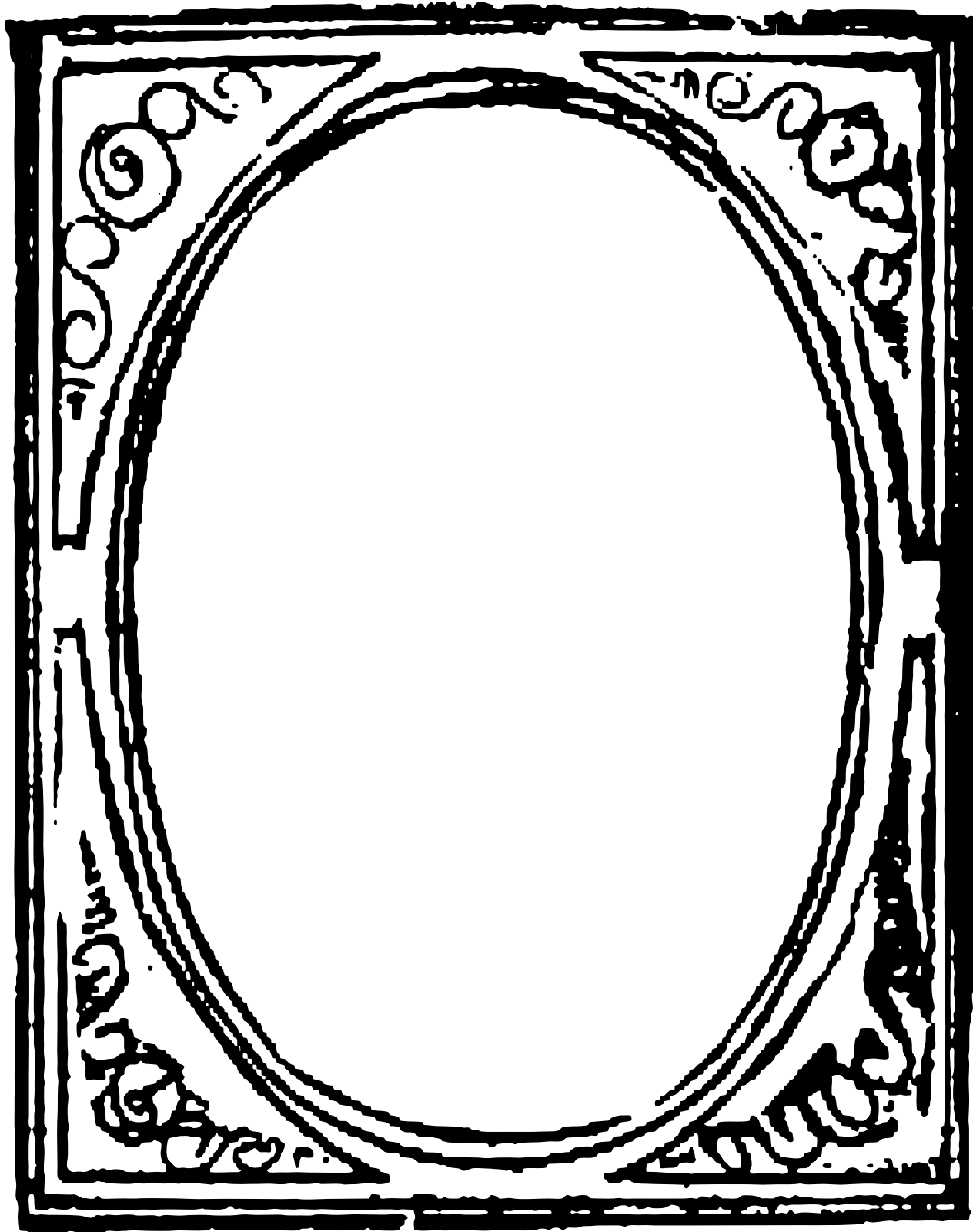
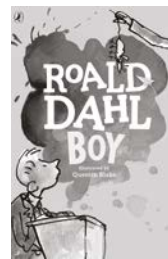
'Put your hat on,' my mother said, handing me a stiff wide-brimmed straw-hat with a blue and black band around it. I put it on and did my best to look dignified. The sisters fell all over the room laughing.

# LOOKING GOOD



**Write a description of yourself wearing the clothes in your photograph.**  
Remember to use words to wow and to ensure your reader gets a very clear picture of your outfit.







## BOOK THEMES:

- Inspiration

## LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Using descriptive language
- Writing to persuade

## THINGS YOU MAY NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

Sticky notes, colouring pencils and talk about how we feel set. See page 38.



## PREPARATION:

Print enough copies of the extract for individuals or pairs of readers. You will need one copy of **RESOURCE 1: THE BEST SWEET EVER!** for each pupil. You will also need a selection of unwrapped or disguised sweets and chocolates and a blindfold.

## STARTER ACTIVITY:

Share the extract with the children. Throughout *Boy*, Roald Dahl describes many of his childhood experiences. Not all his boyhood experiences were funny or exciting. However, in this extract, he writes with warmth about chocolate and his dreams of inventing new types of chocolate sweets. He goes on to explain that, thirty-five years, later those dreams were the inspiration for the plot for his book, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Why do the children think that being a chocolate taster made such an impression on Roald Dahl?

## MAIN ACTIVITY

1. Ask the children to read through the extract. Whilst they are reading ask them to think about how Roald Dahl felt about his role as a chocolate tester at school:

- What vocabulary does the author use to reflect his feelings about testing chocolate?
- Why did he think schoolboys would make good testers of chocolate?
- Can you describe how you feel when eating chocolate or sweets?
- Why would a confectionery manufacturing company be interested in the boys' opinions?

Make a list of ideas on the interactive whiteboard or flipchart.

2. Display your selection of small sweet samples and invite some of the children to taste the sweets, blindfolded. They should describe how it looks, smells and then the taste (ensuring allergies and dietary restrictions are not compromised). A recap on the senses might be appropriate here! Challenge the children to guess the sweet from the adjectives used and reveal whether they were correct or not.

Continued...



3. Invite the children to think about their favourite chocolate or sweet, but not to actually reveal the name of it, as the rest of the class will be challenged with guessing its identity. They will need to think about how it looks, its smell, taste and texture. **RESOURCE 1: THE BEST SWEET EVER!** prompts children to answer questions to describe their sweet and to include some really powerful verbs and adjectives.
4. Create a temporary display of the children's descriptions where the class can access them, possibly a display board. Invite the children to read the descriptions and write their guess on a sticky note, attaching it to the description sheet.
5. Ask each child to reveal their favourite sweet and see if anyone guessed it correctly.

## DEVELOPING THE ACTIVITY:

The children are going to work on a poster campaign to market a new confectionery product. (They may work individually, in pairs or in small groups.) Look at some advertisements for chocolate and sweets and identify the kind of language used. Explain that describing a product accurately and capturing buyers' imaginations is tricky in a multi-million pound market! How will they make their sound product as appealing as possible? What will persuade other children to buy this particular sweet?

## PLENARY:

Children should present their poster to the class. At the end of all the presentations take a poll to see which one the children would most like to go and buy.







## EXTRACT

from 'Chocolates', pp. 181-184

Every now and then, a plain grey cardboard box was dished out to each boy in our House, and this, believe, it or not, was a present from the great chocolate manufacturers, Cadbury. Inside the box there were twelve bars of chocolate, all of different shapes, all with different fillings and all with numbers from one to twelve stamped on the chocolate underneath. Eleven of these bars were new inventions from the factory. The twelfth was a 'control' bar, one that we all knew well, usually a Cadbury's Coffee Cream bar. Also in the box was a sheet of paper with the numbers one to twelve on it as well as two blank columns, one for giving marks to each chocolate from nought to ten, and the other for comments.

All we were required to do in return for this splendid gift was to taste very carefully each bar of chocolate, give it marks and make an intelligent comment on why we liked it or disliked it.

It was a clever stunt. Cadbury's were using some of the greatest chocolate-bar experts in the world to test out their new inventions.

We were of a sensible age, between thirteen and eighteen, and we knew intimately every chocolate bar in existence, from the Milk Flake to the Lemon Marshmallow. Quite obviously our opinions on anything new would be valuable. All of us entered into this game with great gusto, sitting in our studies and nibbling each bar with the air of connoisseurs, giving our marks and making our comments. 'Too subtle for the common palate,' was one note I remember writing down.

For me, the importance of all this was that I began to realize that the large chocolate companies actually did possess inventing rooms and they took their inventing rooms very seriously. I used to picture a long white room like a laboratory with pots of chocolate and fudge and all sorts of other delicious fillings bubbling away on stoves, while men and women in white coats moved between the bubbling pots, tasting and mixing and concocting their wonderful new inventions. I used to imagine myself working in one of these labs and suddenly I would come up with something so absolutely unbearably delicious that I would grab it in my hand and go rushing out of the lab and along the corridor and right to the office of the great Mr Cadbury himself. 'I've got it, sir!' I would shout, putting the chocolate in front of him. 'It's fantastic! It's fabulous! It's marvellous! It's irresistible!'

## THE BEST SWEET EVER!



### Describe your favourite sweet, but don't reveal its name!

Which powerful verbs and adjectives can you use to conjure up an image, a taste a smell and a texture in somebody else's head?

#### Here's an example:

*The packaging is shiny gold foil covered with writing. It is a long, narrow rectangle. As soon as you tear the foil it releases a sweet smell of milk chocolate. Sink your teeth into the soft chocolate to meet a brittle, golden centre, all tiny crystallised bubbles of air. Crunch the hard centre and smell the mouth-watering aroma of slightly burnt sugar.*

**The answer is: A Crunchie.**



#### 1. What does your sweet look like?

*Think of the shape and size. Colour is always useful, as is any pattern or texture.*

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#### 2. What does your sweet smell like?

*Is the smell important and does it give any clues to what might be inside the sweet? You could compare it to something else to help people make a connection to something they already know.*

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#### 3. What does your sweet taste like?

*Is it sweet, sour, salty or bitter or a combination of several of these? Some chocolate is very sweet, but plain chocolate can be bitter. Make comparisons to the taste of other food. Remember not to use similar adjectives but a wide range to describe different attributes.*

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#### 4. Why is this the best sweet, ever?

*How could you persuade someone to try your favourite sweet? What is it about it that is so amazing?*

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## LESSON PLAN 5

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**730629** YPO HB Pencils £0.49 pack of 12

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**313327** Right Handed School Scissors £3.70 pack of 12

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## LESSON PLAN 6

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