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USING GRAMMAR TO LINK READING AND WRITING

Teaching focus

Students read and respond to a range of picture books on 'natural disasters'. Through reading and deconstructing sections from texts students develop a range of choices at the clause level to support their own choices as writers when jointly constructing.

Reading and responding

Before reading each book

- Show the cover and predict the text purpose.
- Discuss what readers would be expecting or wanting prior to reading.
- Predict the topic or subject matter? (Field)
- Record predictions:
 - Who or what is involved? (Noun groups)
 - What is happening or 'going on'? (Verb groups)
 - What are the circumstances around the 'going on'? When, where, how? (Adverbials)

During reading

- Read the book once for enjoyment.
- Reread while thinking aloud, for eg. I notice the participants tend to be non-human in the orientation and many of the events. They seem to often be parts of the environment or nature. I wonder why nature sometimes takes on human actions and behaviour. The human participants are doers as they fight nature and become sensers as they deal with what happens. There is a focus on action across the text unless the environment takes on human qualities. Humans become actors and then sensers as they deal with the events.

After reading

- Revisit initial predictions.
- Locate and discuss author/illustrator background and motivation, publication date as well as any connections to actual events.
- Revisit the text purpose and the role of narrative within our culture both past and present particularly around 'natural' disasters.
- Discuss perspectives across the texts including who or what has the power throughout the texts and how it shifts.
- Discuss why many authors make similar choices. Discuss if all the authors and illustrators would think that the disasters were 'natural'.

Deconstructing texts

- Display sections from a range of texts, already read, showing aspects of nature as actors and sensers. Have the following already identified:
 - the participants (noun groups)
 - the happenings/processes (verb groups)
 - the details or circumstances, eg. where, when, how (adverbials)
- Identify who or what are the participants, if they are human or non-human, if the happenings involve action, sensing or just description and the circumstances of the happenings around including where, when and how events occur.
- Discuss who or what has the power and how this might shift. What does this say about how we view natural disasters and human relationships with nature and weather?
- Discuss the messages for the reader based on the author's choices.

Jointly constructing texts (plan and draft)

- Display an image of a different natural disaster, eg volcano, and ask students questions similar to those from the deconstruction to guide labelling the participants, actions and circumstances in the image
- Discuss the meanings about power they would like to convey in their writing and which participants they will choose and if they will be human or non-human. Also ask students if they want participants to be described and/or actors or sensers. Label the image with noun group/participants, verb groups/processes and adverbials/circumstances.



Joint construction (planning for writing)

Further reading

Derewianka, B (2011) **A new grammar companion for teachers**, PETAA, Sydney.

Derewianka, B. & Jones, P. (2016) **Teaching language in context**, (Second edition). OUP: Melbourne.

Humphrey, S Droga, L & Feez, S (2012) **Grammar and meaning**, PETAA, Sydney.

Myhill, D. (2016) **Writing conversations: Metalinguistic talk about writing**. Bulletin Suisse de Linguistique Appliquee, 103 153-166.

<https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3871&context=sspapers>

Myhill, D. & Chen, H. (2016) **Children talking about writing: Investigating metalinguistic understanding**. Faculty of Social Sciences - Papers. 2373. <https://ro.uow.edu.au/sspapers/2373>

Rossbridge, J & Rushton, K (2015) **Put it in writing**, PETAA, Sydney.