

# LESSON 3

## U: TO IDENTIFY THE FEATURES OF DISCUSSION TEXTS.

### National Curriculum Links

#### Reading

Understand what they read by:

- identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning

#### Writing

Pupils should be taught to plan their writing:

- by identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own

### **STARTER:**

Have a selection of different sentence starters on the board. Ask children to pick out which ones they think could be included in a discussion text.

The next day...

Therefore...

As quick as a flash...

Without a sound...

On the other hand...

Firstly...

That evening...

However...

Later that afternoon...

Suddenly...

### **MAIN TEACHING:**

Tell the children that before planning and writing their discussion text, they are going to be looking at an example to help them understand what makes a good discussion text.

Hand out the following discussion text and ask them to read it through with a partner, taking it in turns to read it out loud.

Should Friar Laurence have helped Juliet?

Many people might argue that Friar Laurence was justified in giving Juliet a potion to help her escape a loveless marriage, but others would argue that he only made the situation worse. This contentious issue has strong arguments on both sides which will be explored in more detail in this discussion text.

Most people would agree that Friar Laurence thought it was important to help Juliet because she had threatened to kill herself. He believed that by giving her the potion, she would not be forced to marry Paris. Instead, she would be reunited with her true love, Romeo, and therefore would not take her own life.

On the other hand, some would argue that Friar Laurence (a man of God) should not be involved in the deception of others, even in a matter of life and death. Surely he is not following God's law by encouraging Juliet to deceive her parents and Paris. He is breaking his vow of obedience to the church.

However, many would argue that Friar Laurence had to help Juliet because she has no one else to turn to, and so his duty of care overrides his responsibility to be truthful. Juliet has fallen out with her parents and the Nurse, and desperately needs someone on her side. He is Romeo's good friend and wants to make sure that the lovers are able to be together.

However, in his attempt to reunite Juliet with her Romeo, it cannot be denied that Father Laurence's plan was too risky. Some would argue he shouldn't have helped Juliet because he put her life in danger by giving her a sleeping potion. Even though Juliet is desperate to escape marrying Paris, drinking a potion is not a reasonable solution.

In conclusion, I believe that Father Laurence should not have helped Juliet. Although he was trying to help her and his intentions were undoubtedly good, his actions did not help Juliet's situation. In fact, they made it worse and ultimately caused the untimely death of both Juliet and her beloved Romeo.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ask the children what they notice about the structure of the discussion text. What comes first? How does the discussion text end? Is it written in paragraphs?

Draw out the following structural features from the children and record on a flip chart (to add to working wall at the end of the lesson):

- **Title (question)**
- **Introduction to introduce the issue**
- **Paragraphs for and against**
- **Conclusion which states the author's opinion**

Now ask the children to think about the language features they think are found in a discussion text.

Show them the following list of features:

- **Words and phrases to link ideas between paragraphs**
- **Uncountable noun phrases (e.g. some people, most people)**
- **Adverbs of possibility (e.g. perhaps, surely)**
- **Modal verbs to show possibility (e.g. would, should, can)**

Children work in pairs to find examples of each of the above features in the discussion text they have read. They write the examples they find on 4 different post-it notes.

Each pair swaps their post-it notes with another pair. They then read the examples they have been given. If they agree with an example, they tick it. If they don't, they leave it. They should also add any examples they think have been missed.

Take feedback from the class, creating a word bank of words and phrases to be used to support writing in the following 2 lessons. This should also be displayed on the working wall.

E.g.

- **Words and phrases to link ideas between paragraphs**  
therefore, however, on the other hand, in conclusion
- **Uncountable noun phrases**  
most people, some people, many would
- **Adverbs of possibility**  
perhaps, surely, undoubtedly
- **Modal verbs to show possibility**  
would, might

Ask children to also record these words and phrases in their books to help them write their plan tomorrow.