

Creating Your Own World– lesson plan

Overview: How can you mix reality with fantasy? Students will observe the realistic versus fantasized parts in *Erec Rex: The Dragon's Eye*. They will then create a world that mixes reality with fantasy.

Objectives: Students will

- (1) Identify realistic aspects in a fantasy that help a reader relate to the story
- (2) Explore their creativity by creating a fantastical world
- (3) Learn how to create an outline
- (4) Learn to transform an outline into a paragraph
- (5) Integrate reality in fantasy as a writing technique

Materials:

Erec Rex: The Dragon's Eye

Highlighters (two colors per group of 2-4)

Teaching Plan:

Reading: Students should read *Erec Rex: The Dragon's Eye*, Chapter Ten, pages 137 - 149.

After reading, discuss:

- What are the things in this segment that could never happen in our world?
- What are the more subtle things that relate this fantasy world with ours? (ex: The people's different personalities; the different talents [more strongly represented as magical abilities,] people's varied looks; the difference in backgrounds; etc.)
- How would the absence of reality affect *Erec Rex: The Dragon's Eye*? How would it affect fantasy books in general?
- What are some realities that are included, or should be included in all magical worlds?
- What would happen to a magical world without rules? (Ex: there would be no problems if there were no limitations of magic; therefore no conflict.)

Brainstorm:

- As a class, create a magical world that combines reality and fantasy. Write the students' ideas on the blackboard, and let them build into a story. Have students offer ideas of things that make the world fantasy, things that connect the world to our current world, and limitations.

Outline:

- Have students get into groups of two to four. They should form an idea of the type of world they want to make; its rules, and the differences and similarities that it has to our own current world.

- Have the students make an outline describing their world. Explain how they can make the broader concepts more fantastical, while the finer points should be more true to life. The rules and limitations should become finer details.

Paragraphing: Have the students transform their outline into a paragraph. (Ex:

I The people can fly

A The people can only fly using pixie dust

1 You can not use pixie dust until you are an adult

a) Flying can be dangerous

i There is the danger of running in to objects.

2 You can not fly without the aid of pixie dust or other magical substances.

a) Ground dragon scales is another one of those rare substances.

Can be transformed into this:

The people of The Kingdom of the Keepers can fly. However they can only fly using pixie dust, which can only be used by adults. This is because flying can be dangerous. While flying there is the risk of running into other tall or flying objects. Pixie dust is important though. People can not fly without the aid of pixie dust or another rare magical substance, such as ground dragon scales.)

Applying lesson: In their paragraph have the kids highlight the fantasies of their world in one color, the realities of their world in a different color, and the things that fall in the middle in yet another color.

Share: Have students volunteer to share the paragraph describing their magical world.

Assessment:

Students are evaluated for their enthusiasm and participation. The outline will be graded on form, creativity, sentence structure, completeness, and demonstration of the child's understanding of the subject matter. The paragraph will be graded on its style and if it contains the elements of the outline.

Extensions:

Short stories are a great way to express an idea. What would happen if some average human walked into the fantasy world that you created for your outline? Would they be happy, disbelieving, or scared? Write a short story to explore your creativity, writing skills, and have fun.

Magic happens all the time in our world too! Some say that is magic that humans even exist. What if there was a world where there was no magic at all? No flowers, rainbows, technology, or any of the other stuff that makes our world amazing. Where might there be some magic in our world? Make a list. What would someone from a magic-less world think if they found ours?

Underneath it all, people are pretty much the same, magic or not. The difference is the options that are open to them. Pixie dust is just the easiest form of travel for the Keepers, while cars are the easiest method of travel for us! Pick five crayons and draw a picture using as many of them as you want. Then pick only one crayon and draw the same picture using only that. Did you have the same basic idea for an end result for both? Was it easier with more options? How does this relate to the previously discussed topic?

What is your definition of magic? Look up the dictionary definition of magic. Does that really explain it? If you had to write an original dictionary definition for magic, what would you write?

Suggested Reading:

Writing Smarter: Over 100 Step-By-Step Lessons With Reproducible Activity Sheets To Build Writing Proficiency in Grades 7-12) by Keith T. Manos
25 Mini-Lessons for Teaching Writing (Grades 3-6) by Adele Fiderer

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