

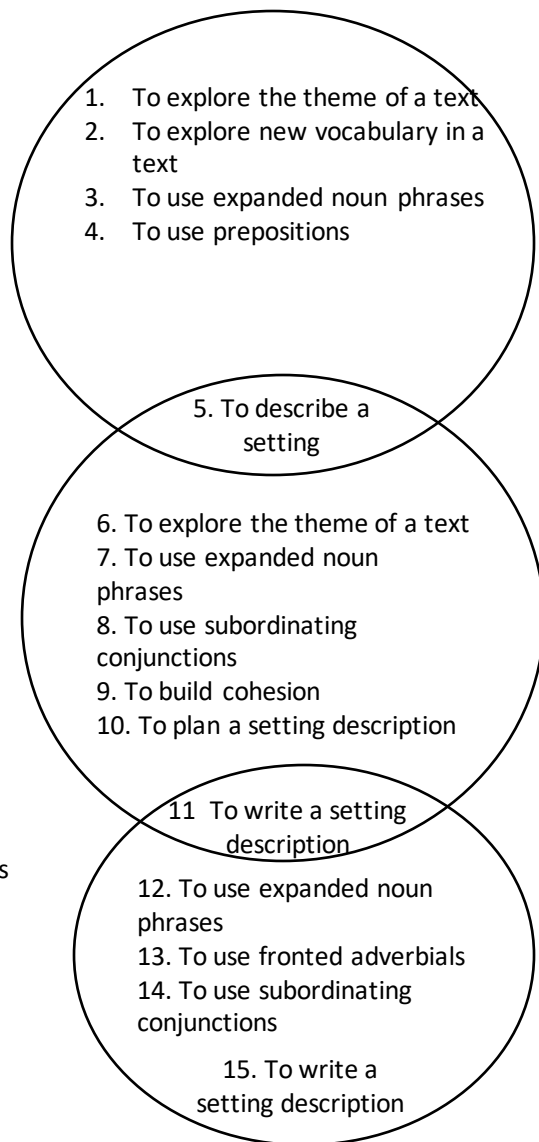
Varmints

by Helen Ward

Theme: Hope

Tier 2 words: warmed, roared, wailing, longed, fury

Varmints



SC:
 Prepositional phrases
 Expanded noun Phrases

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 Subordinating conjunctions

- Using greenhat, look at the front cover and predict what might happen in the story. Who is the main character? What might be the problem? Give children copies of the pictures from the book and in groups use talking frames to explore them. Do the same activity with examples of the text from the story. In groups, children have a Consensus Circle and they write down one word or phrase that sums up the key theme of the book. Focus on the theme 'Hope'. What does this theme make you think of? What does it mean? Children work together to build a shared definition of hope – discuss these as a class. Show two different definitions of Hope. Who do you agree with and why? Show the dictionary definition of Hope. Are our definitions similar? Concept conversations – use talking frames to discuss how hope has benefited you, others and society. Read the story and magpie phrases. Stop at different stages in the story and discuss whether hope is being shown.
- Tier 2 words lesson: warmed, roared, wailing, longed, fury
- Tell the children that they will be writing a setting description of the book – positive one. Bring in different elements of nature. For example, leaves, flowers, plants, twigs, moss etc. Children explore these at their tables and write down their connotations of them. Also, explore the senses smell, touch/texture, etc. Discuss these as a class and generate vocabulary to be used in their expanded noun phrases. Copies of descriptosaurus – nature setting – explore phrases as a class and generate more vocabulary. Show children examples of expanded noun phrases. Recap what makes an expanded noun phrase. Why do we use them? Model using the language generated to make expanded noun phrases into sentences. **LAPs/MAPs may forget to include a verb and this needs to be clearly modelled.**
- Ask the children what is a preposition? Can you think of any examples? Tell the children that we are going to be focusing on prepositions of place. Eg in between, under, etc. (Ensure children do not have the misconception that prepositions only explain the position of something. Eg time – after, before, etc) Show a picture (different to their task) and generate some prepositional phrases around the picture. For example, under the immense trees, beside the blooming flowers, etc Discuss that you can begin with a prepositional phrase as a fronted adverbial. There were luminous flowers surrounding the trees. Surrounding the trees, there were luminous flowers.
- Tell the children that they are going to be writing a (positive) setting description. Recap The Varmints. Why is there a happy ending? The sound of bees, the wind and the grass returned. Keep this in mind when describing your setting description. Show children pictures from the book as well as natural settings. Recap key vocabulary from Tuesday and have copies of descriptosaurus. Use the modelled write to model the SC to the children. 1st paragraph – zoomed out – sky, trees, sun, etc. 2nd paragraph – zoomed in – flowers, petals, bees, stream
- Look at contrasting pictures of nature and pollution. Explore what is the same and what is different. Use a consensus circle to write one word to describe the picture of nature. Repeat for pollution. Explore the theme light vs dark. What does this make you think of? Explore links to modern day climate issues. Read the beginning of Varmints, when does the darkness begin to take over? Create a word bank for light and dark. Light includes nature flourishing. Dark includes nature dying. Learners write their own word banks in their magpie books.
- Build the noun flowers together. Model expanding the noun gradually. Repeat for dark and light nouns. Explore learners' examples. Can we upgrade the language? Model writing expanded noun phrases for light and dark nouns. Ask learners to improve them. Learners write their own expanded noun phrases using the nouns on the board.
- Recap subordinating conjunctions. Model writing complex sentences. Explain why we need a comma in some sentences and not in others. Give learners sentences to correct the use of commas. Learners write their own complex sentences to describe the light or dark setting.
- Introduce the term cohesion. What does it mean? What are the cohesive devices which authors use? How can we make our writing cohesive? Share the paragraph subheadings – light and dark and ask learners to come up with the nouns we could describe. Share an example where two sentences are linked together by their subject. Follow this with an example where the subject is being referred to in the second paragraph. Ask learners to identify these cohesive devices.
- Share the planning grid. Model planning which nouns you are going to describe in both paragraphs.
- Write setting description
- Recap expanded noun phrases. Set the scene to the children and explain that they will be changing an element of the story – moving away from the light and dark theme and moving towards a desert drought. Instead of darkness, everything will be dry etc. On the IWB, look at a picture showing a desert. Pick out certain nouns and discuss vocabulary. Practise putting certain words into sentences and place them on the display boards. On the tables, children each have a picture of a desert drought placed on an A3 page. In groups of 3/4, children create a bank of adjectives/noun phrases. While they are creating a word bank, stop the class every couple of minutes to share ideas and magpie. Model creating expanded noun phrases on the board using the vocabulary gathered.
- Recap fronted adverbials. Children sort a range of fronted adverbials into the three categories – Time, Manner and Place. Give children a few minutes to discuss this and go through them. Look at 3 sentences on the board without commas, children discuss where they go in the sentence. Bring the children back together and show them a sentence without a fronted adverbial. In talk partners, children select an appropriate adverbial to place in front. Go through various ones.
- Model subordinating conjunctions. Show animals and model sentences. E.g. The lion plodded slowly through the desert with his head held low as the burning sun shone down on him. E.g. The meerkats huddled together closely in a tiny patch of shade because they wanted to protect themselves from the burning sun.
- Live modelled writing. Explain that the 1st paragraph will need to be looking at the bigger picture – sky, sun, animals, distance, mirage and the second picture is looking a little closer – plants, leaves, sand, etc.

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Lesson 5

In the distance, there stood a magnificent forest of tall trees which was like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas. Above them, a cloudless blue sky made a perfect spring day. The blazing, hot sun beamed down onto the tranquil stream which trickled between the pebbles. A symphony of songbirds sang sweetly.

On the forest floor, there was a colourful flowerbed which was like a carpet of jewels. Near the flowers there were buzzing bees and beautiful butterflies that fluttered elegantly from flower to flower. A secret, winding path twisted through the trunks of the trees leading to a quaint wishing well.

Lesson 6 – SEN/LAPs

Lesson 11

SC:

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High up in the cloudless sky, the shimmering sun shone down, casting light over the forest. A blazing carpet of bluebells covered the forest floor and the air was thick with the scent of honeysuckle from the flowers that grew all around. Filling the forest, a magnificent, towering canopy of trees that was home to tweeting birds stood like soldiers. When the world was quiet, only the buzzing of bees and the chirping of crickets could be heard.

Then, the others came... All of a sudden, a thick, blanket of grey mist swirled high in the air descending down on to the concrete jungle. The deafening sound of car engines roared through the streets which were so noisy, nobody could hear themselves think! As the traffic piled up, the wretched fumes choked the air and the putrid stench from the sewers drifted up from the drains. Bleached skeletons of dead trees were dotted through the streets, standing like fallen soldiers. Although some wildlife could still be found, it was just the scurrying of rats and flies hovering over the steaming piles of litter

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The desert was a furnace! It was a stark land of burning sand that stretched as far as the eye could see. The bright, distant sun which shone brightly overhead burnt everything in its path. The barren land was rocky and spiked with thorny bushes. A gentle wind flung sand into the air and it was deathly quiet. In the distance, a lonely lion slowly stumbled through the flat land in search of shade as the merciless sun shone down.

Suddenly, a black scorpion scuttled across the arid sand before it quickly burying itself beneath it. A lonely cacti stood desperate for a drop of water and the dry desert grass baked. Next to the cacti, a curious meerkat stared out onto the endless horizon which shimmered with heat. It was a sea of sand.