

Opinion Writing Minilesson:

Writing an Ending for a Book Review

Shannon, First Grade

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Ok writers, this morning what I wanted to talk to you about is how we have been writing - what kind of pieces have we been trying to do?”

Whole class speaking:

“Persuasive”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Persuasive pieces. So we can try to convince our readers about something about a book, ok? And you know how we've used our strip in reading workshop to help us talk about our recommendations, how we either recommend a book, kind of recommend, or don't recommend a book. And even this morning we went and read and then tagged places in our text of reasons why we liked that book. And while you were doing that in your book, I did it in our Green Eggs and Ham. We did this one together this morning after we read it, right? And we gave our reasons about why we would recommend this book to someone right? Well we used those tags as little places to help us remember what our thinking is. And while you were reading independently at your seat, I started my own persuasive, recommendation book review about Green Eggs and Ham and I wanted to share it with you. So can you be a good listener and see if I've started - how my piece is going so far?”

Whole class speaking:

“Yes.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Ok. 'Are you looking for a Dr. Seuss book? I recommend Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss. One reason is because it is full of rhyming words which makes it fun to read. Another reason is because the character Sam is determined and optimistic. Also I like how Sam finally persuades him to try green eggs and ham.' How's that sound so far?”

Whole class speaking:

“Good.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Did I give the reasons that ya'll helped me find in our text?”

Whole class speaking:

“Yes.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Ok and so now I’m thinking, ‘What would be my next step?’. You know what I thought of when I got towards the end? It made me think that, you know when we watched some of the reading rainbow book reviews that the kids do at the end of reading rainbow, and how they started their book reviews just like we do with that question to really grab our reader and make them excited, ok? Like I did here: ‘Are you looking for a Dr. Seuss book?’. Grabbing my reader’s attention. And then when I was thinking about it I thought, you know, I remember them starting with that question and giving me such exciting reasons as to why I should maybe try that book and then they also ended it in a way with just as much excitement. So I think I’m going to try to do that with my piece today because writers do that. They start their piece with excitement, they hook their reader, they give them reasons of why they should read the book, and then they don’t just stop. They give them a good way to close their piece. We open it with excitement with that question and give good reasons and we’re all excited throughout our writing. So, we need to keep the reader hooked. So, we’re going to close our piece, too, along the same lines. So, this is what I’m thinking, ‘Are you looking for a Dr. Seuss book?’. I can take that question that I started with and I can change it into a statement, ok? So I’m asking a question at the beginning, ‘Are you looking for a Dr. Seuss book?’ and then I give all my reasons. Let me read at the end. ‘Also, I like how Sam finally persuades him to try green eggs and ham. If you are looking for a Dr. Seuss book you’ve got to read this one, you won’t regret it’. Do you see how I took my question and I just basically said it again at the end in a telling way? Instead of asking, I’ve told them reasons and now I’m going to remind them. ‘If you’re looking for a Dr. Seuss book you’ve got to read this one, you won’t regret it.’ Can I add that? Would that work? Ok, let me try that ‘If you’re looking for a Dr. Seuss book...’ What did I say?”

Whole class speaking:

“You need to read this one, you won’t regret it’.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Oh, and then of course I need to give my rating. So because I think it is so fabulous, I’m going to give it five stars. ‘I would give Green Eggs and Ham five stars’. Ok, let me read the whole thing and see how it works. ‘Are you looking for a Dr. Seuss book? I recommend Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss. One reason is because it is full of rhyming words which makes it fun to read. Another reason is because the character Sam is determined and optimistic. Also I like how Sam finally persuades him to try green eggs and ham. If you’re looking for a Dr. Seuss book you need to read this one, you won’t regret it. I would give Green Eggs and Ham five stars.’ How does that sound?”

Student speaking:

“You already persuaded me to read it.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“I’ve already persuaded you to read it? Well, I have done my job. I opened up with excitement to hook you with that question, I gave you reasons throughout of why you needed to read that book, and then I just took my question in the

beginning and basically said it again at the end in a telling way. Let's practice a couple of them because that could be kind of tricky. What if I said like some of ya'll - Christian on his piece the other day said 'Are you looking for a funny book?' and he gave his reasons and then at the end he could close it by saying, 'If you're looking for a funny book...'. What could he say? 'You should read this one'. Exactly, let's see another person. Oh, Cameron said, 'Are you looking for a silly book to read?' What could she say at the very end, 'If you're looking for a silly book...'.

Student speaking:

"You've got to read this book."

Teacher speaking to whole class and individual students:

"Oh, I like that Kenny. 'You've got to read this book'. Good thinking. Ok, alright. Joseph said, 'Are you looking for an awesome book...'. How could he say that again at the end?"

Student speaking:

"If you're looking for an awesome book to read you can...you've got to read this one'."

Teacher speaking to whole class:

"If you're looking for an awesome book, you've got to read this one'. So, do you see how we started with that question to grab our reader? We opened our piece strong and excited. We want to close our piece strong and excited."

[Student speaking inaudible]

Teacher speaking to whole class and individual students:

"You are exactly right. You ask them that question to get them thinking and then at the very end you're reminding them of the kind of book that they are looking for. Ok, alright writers, so today and every day in your writing, you can always open your piece with excitement and hooking that reader, but you can also close your piece in the same way and reminding them of why they were interested from the beginning. Ok, got it? So today I'm going to give you - you're going to go off to your seats, I'm going to pass out your folders, you already have your book from this morning from independent reading time and you've already marked places in your book as to why you like that book, and why you would recommend it, ok? So that's the book that you're going to be doing today. Ok, got it? Ok, writers, off you go."