

Lesson 3:

USING LANGUAGE FOR LAUGHS

Overview:

In this lesson, kids will explore how punctuation, word choice, and parts of speech can be used as tools for writing comedy. By playing with language, kids will begin to understand how writers utilize rhythm, surprise, exaggeration, and awkwardness to get a laugh. This lesson introduces kids to grammar not as rules, but as powerful tools for comedy.

Objectives:

- Understand how punctuation (periods, exclamation marks, ellipses, etc.) can be used for comedic effect.
- Use nouns, adjectives, metaphors, similes, and homophones to add humor and clarity to writing.
- Experiment with sentence rhythm, surprise, and wordplay to build comedic tone.
- Apply learned techniques to revise or enhance a comedic sentence or short story.
- Identify and discuss why certain language choices are funny.

Materials Needed:



Seed Notebooks



"Using Language
for Laughs" Handout



Sticky
Notes



Examples of funny
sentences



Optional: whiteboard and
markers for group brainstorming

Video clips [Links below]:



**VIDEO FOR KIDS:
LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES
IN COMEDY**



**VIDEO FOR KIDS: KEVIN
WORKING WITH KIDS ON
WHAT IS FUNNY**

Part 1:

MINI-LESSON

1. Welcome and Set the Tone

- Comedy isn't just about what happens in a story - it's also about how you tell it. The words you choose, the punctuation you use, and how you arrange your sentences can all be tools to make people laugh."
- Share the idea that comedy writers are intentional. They make smart choices about language, rhythm, and timing to surprise their audience.

2. Language Techniques Review

- Distribute the "Using Language for Laughs" handout.
- Walk through and discuss the following sections together, pausing after each to read examples and get reactions from kids:
 - Punctuation for Punchlines (Periods, Exclamation Marks, Question Marks, Ellipses)
 - Description Power (Nouns & Adjectives)
 - Surprise & Rhythm (Conjunctions, Commas, Semi-colons)
 - Wordplay (Homophones, Similes, Metaphors)

Part 2:

PRACTICE: COMEDY SENTENCE REMIX

1. Kids take a story or sentence they wrote in a previous lesson and revise a section using comedic language techniques. Think about the beginning, middle, and end. Encourage them to:
 - Add exaggerated adjectives
 - Use an ellipsis or dramatic punctuation
 - Add a simile or metaphor
2. The educator will meet with individuals during this time to help them start to develop their stories.

3. Sticky Note Challenge: Wall of Laughs

- Kids work in pairs or small groups. Each group is assigned one technique from the handout (e.g., similes or ellipses). They write their own original funny sentence using that technique on a sticky note.
 - Example: Ellipsis: "I told my dog to stay off the couch... so now she sleeps on the table."
- Post the sticky notes on a "Wall of Laughs" and read a few aloud.
- Optional Extension: Give kids a boring sentence (e.g., "I had cereal for breakfast.") and challenge them to rewrite it using 2-3 of the comedy tools.
 - Example: I had cereal for breakfast. It was a soggy, sugar-drenched survival mission. My spoon surrendered by the second bite.

Part 3

REFLECTION

Seed Notebook Entry or Group Discussion:



- What language technique did you like using most today? Why?
- How did word choice or punctuation change the way your writing felt?
- What's one tool you want to use in your next comedy story?

Encourage kids to write a goal for next time