The Multi-Million Pound Mascot

Author: Chris Powling
Range: Sports story
Theme: Using one’s talents
Teaching notes authors: Gill Howell and Vicky Yates

Synopsis
When Josh's twin sister Mo eats a strange peanut, she is suddenly gifted with amazing luck. The manager of the local football team insists she becomes the team mascot in order to help them get promoted to the Premier league and win the Cup Final. Mo is reluctant as she thinks it is cheating, but in the end she brings the team just the sort of luck they need.

Group or guided reading

Introducing the book

- Look together at the cover and read the title. Ask: What sort of story do you think this will be? What sort of things might happen in this story?
- Ask the children to read the blurb on the back cover and ask them to speculate further on what might happen in the story.
- Ask the children to say what they think the main plot will be.
- Read the author's name and ask the children if they have read other books by this author.

Strategy check

- Ask the children to demonstrate the strategies they will use if they meet new vocabulary.
- Ask a volunteer to read the word ‘promotion’ on page 7 line 9 and describe the strategy they would use to work out the word.
- Do the same with the word ‘ancient’ on page 8 line 5.
- Ask the children to point out the ‘sh’ phoneme.

Independent reading

Focus: Explain that you want the children to think about this question while reading: Why didn’t Mo want to be the team’s mascot?

- Observe the strategies the children use when they meet new vocabulary, and prompt them as needed.
- At the end of some of the chapters, encourage them to recount the main points of the story so far.

Returning and responding to the text

- When the children have read the whole story, ask them to say who the main character was in the story.
- Ask the children to describe the twins. What is different about each of the twin’s personalities? Are there any similarities?
- Ask the children why Mo doesn’t want to be the team mascot. Why does Mo sit out of sight in the matches? What does she think will happen if the team thinks they will win only because of her luck?
How did the story make you feel while you were reading?

Ask the children to say what sort of story this is. Ask them to find any elements of fantasy in the text.

Can you describe the theme of the story?

Speaking and listening activities

Discuss the ending of the story and Mo’s plans for the future. Ask the children what they would do if they ate a ‘peanut of power’.

Ask a volunteer to sit in the ‘hot seat’ and describe what they would do with their own ‘super luck’.

Ask the other children to ask them questions about their motives.

Ask other children to take turns to sit in the ‘hot seat’ and describe what they would do.

Further reading activities

Prompt the children to scan the text and read the descriptions of the football manager, Freddy Wedge. Ask them to write a character sketch of him.

Ask the children to read the chapter headings and write a sentence to summarize the key event of each chapter.

Ask the children, in threes, to read aloud the dialogue between Mr Wedge, Josh and Mo in Chapter 2, using expressive voices appropriate to their characters.

Suggestions for using ICT

Scramble the sentences from the paragraph on page 97 beginning ‘I couldn’t bring myself . . .’ and compile them as a text document. Ask the children to ‘drag and drop’ the sentences into an order that makes sense.

Ask the children to write the dialogue from Chapter 2 as a playscript.

Writing activities

Discuss the ‘perfect sound bite’ Freddy Wedge thought up – The Losers Who Became a Legend – and what a reporter might write about the team in a newspaper article.

Ask the children to make notes from the story about the team and its history.

Ask them to write an article about Oldcastle Athletic and how the team’s luck changed.