

A Book Club Blackline Master

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Lesson Plan Title:

Teaching Onomatopoeia with Geronimo Stilton

Grade Levels: 2-4

Student Goal:

1. Students will identify examples of onomatopoeia in the Geronimo Stilton books.
2. Students will relate onomatopoeia to everyday life experiences and other environments.

Student Objectives:

1. Students will identify examples of onomatopoeia.
2. Students will identify sources of sounds that onomatopoeic words are based on.
3. Students will convey their understanding of onomatopoeia by reading it aloud and writing examples of it.

Materials:

1. Geronimo Stilton books
2. pens, pencils, crayons, and/or colored markers
3. writing paper

Directions:

1. Ask students about sounds they would hear from a hungry cat, a fireworks display, and cars stuck in traffic. Tell them that their answers, which should include words such as "meow," "boom," and "honk," are all examples of onomatopoeia, the use of words that imitate sounds.

Onomatopoeia is an ancient Greek term that means "name-making," most likely because the meanings of onomatopoeic words are indeed made by sounds. Poets and other writers use onomatopoeia to bring their poems and stories to life. Write the following words on the board to provide more examples of onomatopoeia, then ask students to identify animals and objects that might be associated with these words.

bang	beep	chirp	clap	fizz	gurgle
hiss	munch	quack	rattle	roar	sizzle
slurp	snap	splash	thump	whack	zoom

2. Discuss how the shape, colour, and arrangement of letters in the Geronimo Stilton books can add drama to onomatopoeic words. For example, on page 44 of *Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House* the word "BOO!" appears in large purple capital letters, making it seem as bold as the ghost that said it. On page 78, the word "creak" is drawn out with a thin, jagged outline, conveying a feeling of tension and worry.
3. Have students flip through the pages of a Geronimo Stilton book of their choice. Ask them to find five to ten sentences with onomatopoeic words that appear in regular typeface. Then have them rewrite those sentences using pens, crayons, and/or coloured markers on paper. Encourage them to vary the shape, colour, and arrangement of the letters in the onomatopoeic words to bring out the feelings and ideas behind them (as described in the two examples above). Afterward, ask volunteers to explain why they wrote the onomatopoeic words the way they did and how it might affect a reader's understanding of those words.
4. Have volunteers read aloud their sentences, modulating their voices to reflect the actual sounds that inspired the onomatopoeic words. Then ask them to explain why they read aloud the onomatopoeic words the way they did and how it might affect a listener's perception of those words.

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Teach with Geronimo Stilton

Teaching Onomatopoeia with Geronimo Stilton

Lesson Extension:

1. Encourage students to apply onomatopoeia to their daily lives. Ask them to choose one setting or scenario from a normal school day. Have them list five to ten things in that setting that make sounds and then come up with words that imitate those sounds. (Example: chalk against a blackboard, squeak squeak; a clock in motion, tick tock; a book being dropped, plop; etc.) Then tell students to use each of their onomatopoeic words to write a few paragraphs that tell about the setting in detail.
2. Interactive: Help students apply onomatopoeia to a context outside of their normal environment. Have them close their eyes while listening to nature CDs featuring sounds from rain forests, oceans, and other natural places. (Such recordings can easily be found wherever music is sold.) Then ask students to try to identify the sources of those sounds and come up with onomatopoeic words based on them. Write their responses on a T-chart with one column labelled "source of sound" and the other "onomatopoeic word."

Assess Students:

Teacher Observation: Were students able to identify onomatopoeic words, along with the real-life sources they are based on? Did the students read aloud examples of onomatopoeia and write them in a way that conveyed their understanding of them?

Evaluate Lesson:

1. Were the students successful or frustrated in their efforts to understand onomatopoeia?
2. Did students have any difficulty applying onomatopoeic principles to their everyday world and beyond?

Assignment:

1. Have students come up with nonsense words that are based on actual sounds. For example, "biddle-eep, biddle-eep, biddle-eep" could be the sound of a mobile phone ringing. To give your class a head start, you may wish to list sources of sounds such as a car warming up, a person in boots walking on slushy snow, a bouncing ball, etc.

