

L.O. Identify the features that develop suspense.

Re-cap of last lesson - Story map - Zelda claw



Look at a writer's toolkit for creating suspense



Identify toolkit features in the model text

With your partner, and using your copy of the model text and the story map from yesterday, practise re-telling the short story *Zelda Claw and the Rain Cat*.

Once you've spent five minutes on it, let's try telling the story without the words at all.



L.O. Identify the features that develop suspense.

Can you and your partner find any ways in which the author of *Zelda Claw and the Rain Cat* has created tension?

Are there any words, phrases or types of sentences that make the reader become anxious for the MC, or make them want to read on and find out more?

What **effect** on the reader does each feature have?



Our focus for this unit will be on **creating tension**, so before we look at the underlying structure of our warning story, let's take a look at the writer's toolkit for this.

You may recognise some elements from our 'Settings' toolkit.

- Use an **unwelcoming setting** to unsettle the reader
 - **Personify** the setting to make it sound dangerous *the wind howled through the dark trees*
 - **Use pathetic fallacy** to create atmosphere (weather and/or time of day) *the moon glistened in the stillness*

- Use **powerful description** to highlight significant details (including sentences of three):

The floor creaked as he stepped inside, there was a strange metallic smell and in the gloom, he could just make out rows and rows of dusty jars.

- Contrast the longer descriptive sentences with **short sentences** to create tension and excitement

Suddenly, the door slammed shut

- Make your MC **see, hear, touch, smell or sense** something ominous

She felt a breath of air on the back of her neck.

- Suggest **something is about to happen**

From behind, the sharp crack of a twig snapping broke the silence.

- Reveal the **character's thoughts**

Surely this was the right way back, wasn't it?

- **Hide** the threat and other details from the reader - use 'empty' words

Someone was following; he was sure of it.

- **Surprise** the reader with the **unexpected** - shift time suddenly with adverbials

All at once, the path ended and he now saw what the noise was.

So this will be our Writer's toolkit for creating suspense:



- Use **an unwelcoming setting** to unsettle the reader
- Use **powerful description** to highlight significant details (including sentences of three)
- Contrast these with **short sentences** to create tension and excitement
- Make your MC **see, hear, touch, smell or sense** something ominous
- Suggest **something is about to happen**
- Reveal the **character's thoughts**
- **Hide** the threat and other details from the reader - use 'empty' words
- **Surprise** the reader with the **unexpected** - shift time suddenly with adverbials

Work with your partner to find examples of each of the tools from the Suspense Toolkit in the model text.

When you both agree on one, underline it on your copy of the story, then write the word, phrase or sentence into the corresponding box on the worksheet.

You might find more than one example for each tool.

Share our ideas on the next couple of pages

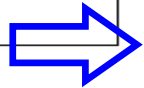
L.O. Identify features from the 'Suspense' writer's toolkit

Examples of how the author has created a feeling of suspense - 'Zelda Claw and the Rain Cell'

Use an unsettling setting - possibly it is to make it sound dangerous: use the weather and/or time of day to create atmosphere (atmospheric setting)	
Use powerful description to highlight significant details	
Contrast this with short sentences to heighten drama	
Make your MC fear, see, hear, smell or sense something sinister	
Suggest something is about to happen	
Reveal the character's thoughts	
Make the threat and other details from the reader and something	
Surprise the reader with the unexpected - use adverbials to add the time suddenly e.g. without warning	

Use an unwelcoming setting - personify it to make it sound dangerous; use the weather and/or time of day to create atmosphere (pathetic fallacy)	
Use powerful description to highlight significant details	
Contrast this with short sentences to heighten drama	
Make your MC hear, see, touch, smell or sense something ominous	

Suggest something is about to happen	
Reveal the character's thoughts	
Hide the threat and other details from the reader and use 'empty' words e.g. something	
Surprise the reader with the unexpected - use adverbials to shift the time suddenly e.g. without warning	



Go back to your 'Through the Door' piece of writing; can you find any examples of the suspense tools that you used in it? Underline any that you find.

