

Mini Book Club Sample

The book I am reading is called Hatchet by Gary Paulsen.

It's an exciting, adventure filled narrative about a 3 year old boy who has to survive in the Canadian wilderness alone after his plane crashed. (Pause & highlight only 1 sentence used to outline plot.)

The setting is the Canadian wilderness in summertime on the edges of a small lake. It has a huge effect on the character as the setting informs all the events in the story. Without a good description of this setting it would be hard to imagine how difficult or scary all the events for the boy would be. The author describes the landscape well so that I can get a good image in my head of the difficulties faced in the natural setting.

Before I started reading this book I didn't have much idea of what wildlife could be found in Canada. Now I know bears, wolves, moose and skunks are there and that they can be very scary at times! I also didn't know you could eat turtle eggs.

I think the author intended a wide range of people to enjoy his book. I think it would appeal to both boys and girls from about 10-15. In fact, since I started reading this book I heard a few year 7 classes have studied it.

The title, Hatchet, was really important. Most of the ways the boy found to live, eat and survive revolved around using his hatchet. I wasn't completely sure what a hatchet was so I looked it up in the dictionary. It's a small axe, small enough to hang off your belt.

I also really liked the sound of the word hatchet. I think it's a little like an onomatopoeia word. It has a soft tch sound in the middle that you can emphasise when reading it and make it sound like the axe is whizzing through the air and connecting with something.

A CAFÉ strategy that I think would work well would be Expand Vocabulary. There were quite a few Canadian words that I wasn't familiar with so I wrote them down in my Reader's Notebook. I used context and prior knowledge to work most of them out but some I had to look up in the dictionary. I then wrote the meaning in my RN too so I will remember them.