

Skills for Writing

Unit 2 Writing the world

Resources required:

Student Book pages 50–51
Resources 4.1 (PDF), 4.2 (WS), 4.3 (WEB), 4.4 (INT)

Assessment focuses:

Writing AF1, AF2

Reading AF4, AF6

GCSE Assessment Objective:

Writing: AO3i Write clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader

LESSON 4: Getting up close

Learning objectives:

- Understand how creatures and settings in the natural world are described in close detail
- Understand why writers choose the past or present tense

Learning outcome:

- Select descriptive verbs to include in a short voiceover script to match a film storyboard

Grammar focus:

Verbs: The choice of past or present tense verbs has an impact on the reader. For more information on verbs see **Resource 4.1 (PDF)** or see **Verbs** in Cybergrammar.

Introduction:

Teacher: Using YouTube, search for video clips of naturalists' close-up encounters with creatures such as David Attenborough's encounter with a blind baby rhino. Using evidence from the clips and the photographs in the Student Book, lead a short discussion with students about their own and others' most memorable close encounters with creatures in the wild. You could ask students what scene from nature they would most like to capture in a photograph.

As a lead-in to reading the interview with Verity White, you could ask:

- Which of these close-up encounters with nature would you most, or least, enjoy?
- Pairs: Complete Activity 1 from the Student Book. Brief feedback in groups if required.

Development:

Teacher: Using Activity 1, read the interview with Verity White, a wildlife film-maker and producer, and check students' understanding of the extract.

Whole class: Students complete Activity 1.

Teacher: Using Activity 2, read Jane Goodall's account of her close encounter with the chimpanzee she called David Graybeard. Explain that Jane Goodall wrote this account many years after the event took place. Check students' understanding of the extract by asking:

- Why has she never forgotten this incident?
- Why was it such a memorable encounter for her?

Elicit that it was unexpected; she didn't know chimps could use objects like tools; she realised that David Graybeard was as clever as a human. Explain that documentary film makers use different camera shots to make close-up encounters with creatures memorable; writers use words. Ask students which details in Jane Goodall's account are the most important and memorable. You could ask them to choose one sentence from each paragraph and explain their choice.

Whole class: Explain Activity 2; the point of storyboarding the scene is to focus on the most dramatic and interesting details that the writer has used and to recreate them in order to capture an audience's interest. Give students **Resource 4.2 (WS)**, which provides the text for annotation and storyboard frames. Open **Resource 4.3 (WEB)**, which illustrates different camera shots. You could decide which four or five you think would be best for the task and ask students to record them on **Resource 4.2 (WS)**, e.g. ECU (Extreme Close Up); OSS (Over the Shoulder Shot). If you think it will be helpful, watch again one of the short video clips used at the start of the lesson and ask students to count the number, type and length of camera shots used, discussing which ones they think are most memorable and effective.

Individuals: Using **Resource 4.2 (WS)**, storyboard the extract in three or four frames. Do not yet provide the voiceover script.

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Teacher: Using the *Writer's Workshop* task in the Student Book, clarify the use of past tense or present tense and carry out the first activity together. Discuss different effects created by changing past tense to present tense, e.g. it makes the encounter with David Graybeard sound more immediate, as though it's happening now, and more involving, as though we are experiencing it for ourselves. Clarify that you want students to add a voiceover to their storyboard and use the present tense. Use the example in the Student Book to model what is required. Stress that students can use Jane Goodall's text or invent their own.

Whole class: Students explore the difference between past and present tense verbs by completing **Resource 4.4 (INT)**.

Individuals: Write a voiceover script to match the storyboard frames.

Conclusion:

Individuals/pairs: Students read their script aloud to a partner and provide feedback to each other:

Are events clearly described?

Does the script sound like the voice of an expert on the natural world?

Homework/ActiveLearn:

Students should complete ActiveLearn exercises **Tense** to develop their understanding of the use of present and past tense and explore the effect that it creates.

Support:

- Make the storyboarding a paired or guided group activity.
- Use teacher modelling and shared composition to write the voiceover script, checking understanding of use of present tense and its consistency.
- Model oral rehearsal of sentences before moving to a written version.

Challenge:

- In documentary video clips, analyse how film shots and voiceover scripts enhance each other to make encounters with nature memorable and effective.
- Encourage students to invent their own text for the voiceover script, explaining how their choices work with the visual frames to make the sequence memorable and effective.