

Lesson Plan

Sports Stories

Book: *A'ja Wilson*

Series: WNBA Superstars

Level: Navigator

Objective

To help students practice writing narratives that use specific details to reveal a character's actions, thoughts, and feelings.

Supplies

- *A'ja Wilson* book
- Paper and pencils

Before the Activity

Read the *A'ja Wilson* book out loud, or assign it to students to read on their own.

Activity

Chapter 1 (“Game 5 on Fire”) of the book describes A’ja Wilson’s incredible play during Game 5 of a WNBA playoff series. The text uses vivid verbs and descriptive details to make readers feel as if they are at the game themselves. These details help readers imagine what the players and fans might see and feel. Discuss the following prompts as a class:

- The first paragraph ends with the sentences, “It was Game 5 of the series. The winner would move on to the Finals.” Based on this information, how do you think the players might have felt? (Sample Answers: excited to be so close to the Finals, nervous about playing an important game, afraid of losing, determined to win, etc.)
- The second paragraph includes the sentences, “In the first quarter, A’ja Wilson of the Aces battled for position on an inbound pass. She was guarded closely by two Sun players.” What do we learn about Wilson from these sentences? (Sample Answers: that she was working hard, that she was in a tight spot, etc.)
- Paragraph three gives more details about Wilson: “She crashed the boards for rebounds. And she outworked the defense to get open shots. Still, the Aces trailed by six at halftime.” Based on these details, how do you think Wilson might have felt? (Sample Answers: physically exhausted, disappointed her hard work wasn’t paying off, etc.)
- Paragraph four begins with these sentences: “The game tightened during the third quarter. The teams traded the lead throughout.” What do you think players and fans might have felt at this point? (Sample Answers: tension as the game neared the end, happy or sad as their team gained or lost the lead, etc.)

Next, have students practice using descriptive details in their own writing. Students should write a summary of an exciting moment in sports. It can be one of the other games described in the *A'ja Wilson* book, or it can be a from a different sport entirely. Whatever sport or game they choose, students should use vivid verbs and specific details to help capture the mood. Readers should feel happy, sad, nervous, or excited along with the story's characters.

Evaluation

Collect the stories at the end of class. Use the following system to give each student up to 8 points:

- 1 point for choosing and describing an exciting game or moment
- 2 points for ordering events in a way that is coherent and easy to follow
- 4 points for using vivid and descriptive language to communicate emotion
- 1 point for using good spelling and grammar throughout the story

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' writing standards, grade 4 (W 4.3).