

Lesson Plan

Dynamic Details

Book: *Naomi Osaka: Tennis Star*

Series: Biggest Names in Sports

Level: Navigator

Objective

To help students use descriptive language and dynamic verbs to making their writing more compelling.

Supplies

- *Naomi Osaka: Tennis Star* book
- Dynamic Details worksheet (attached)
- Whiteboard
- Pencils

Before the Activity

Read through the *Naomi Osaka: Tennis Star* book, or assign it to students to read on their own. Divide the class into groups of four. Print off a copy of the Dynamic Details worksheet for each group. Write the following sentence on the whiteboard: The tennis player hit the ball over the net.

Activity

Chapter 1 (“Major Stunner”) describes Naomi Osaka beating Serena Williams to win a Grand Slam title in tennis. Have students turn to page 5. Point out the techniques the author uses to make the text in this chapter exciting to read:

- explaining an internal motivation for Osaka—“And she was facing her hero, Serena Williams” (p. 5)
- using dynamic verbs to make story action-packed—“She blasted one powerful shot after the next” (p. 5) and “the crowd roared” (p. 8)
- describing the context for this particular match—that the crowd was behind Williams because she had given birth and had emergency surgery one year before (pp. 6–7)

All of these details make readers (and spectators) interested in Osaka’s victory over Williams. In fiction or nonfiction writing, sharing the backstory of characters helps readers empathize with them. Readers are more likely to continue reading about characters they care about or can identify with. At the same time, by adding specific details about what characters hear, see, feel, and smell, writers give readers the kinds of details that people notice in real life. These details help readers feel as if they are part of the scene.

Explain that students will practice adding dynamic details to improve their writing. Read the sentence on the whiteboard out loud. The sentence is informative, but it's not particularly interesting. Ask for volunteers to give suggestions for how to make the sentence more interesting, without changing the meaning of the sentence. Make changes to the sentence on the whiteboard as you receive suggestions. To prompt suggestions, have students think about the following parts of the sentence:

- The Character: Can students come up with a backstory for this character? Who is the character playing against? Why is she playing? Why is it important for her to win?
- The Action: Is there a more exciting verb students can think of than "hit"?
- The Setting: Can students think of ways to paint a clearer picture of where this action is taking place?

Next, give each group a copy of the Dynamic Details worksheet. The worksheet has a paragraph of text. In their groups, students will rewrite the story to make it more interesting. Students can change words and add details and character backstory, but they must make sure that the meaning of the paragraph does not change. At the end of the class, have each group read its story out loud. Students should also explain the choices they made to make the writing more compelling.

Evaluation

Could students retain the meaning of the story while adding dynamic details? Could students use dynamic verbs and character details to make the story more interesting? Could they explain why they changed what they changed in the story?

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' writing standards, grades 5 and 6 (W 5.3, 6.3).

