

Ideas shared for The Secret of Black Rock

Stimulus	Activity
Erin looking out to see	<p>Define the word ‘longed’ – use child friendly examples to aid understanding: “If you want something very much, and the feeling is there somewhere in the background, and it does not go away, that is longing...In the middle of winter, when it is very cold, I might long for the summer...What have you ever longed for?”</p> <p>Collate a list of synonyms (and near synonyms) for the word longed. Explore the degrees of intensity from a most passionate desire to a milder wish.</p> <p>Words might include: desired wished hoped ached yearned hungered dreamt wanted coveted</p>
Section exploring the adults frightening tales of Black Rock	<p>Discuss why the adults believe that Black Rock should be feared.</p> <p>Why would they want Erin (and the other children) to be afraid of Black Rock?</p> <p>Ask children for their thoughts as to what the warning tales might include. Collect ideas for the scary events or outcomes that Black Rock might cause.</p> <p>Model turning this into a cautionary tale, told to small children at night, perhaps around a campfire on the shore. Include plenty of informal language and story-telling phrasing to give a sense of voice. Children draft and perform their own stories in small groups.</p> <p>Atmosphere is key.</p>
Across the book	<p>Explore the use of adverbials of time and place to order and arrange events. Gather these connecting phrases and display on a working wall. Use to support deliberate sentence practice or to support retellings (stories or personal recounts).</p>

Erin falling from the boat / Erin escaping the house	<p>Use oral rehearsal to describe what is happening in the book during these points of high action. Explore the effect in terms of pace/excitement. Show children how to turn a list of verbs into verb strings. Model how to include other descriptive detail (prepositions likely to be helpful here) in order to ensure that the reader is clear on what is happening. For example: The boat swerved. Erin was thrown to the side, plunged into the icy water and disappeared beneath its dark, churning surface.</p> <p>Share good examples. Refine drafts. Save to use in later narratives.</p>
Sequence of Erin sinking in the water/meeting Black Rock	<p>Analyse the pictures with the children. Consider how this section is slower than the sequence of pictures that show Erin falling into the sea. Highlight the use of the repeated refrain of 'deeper' and the repeated image of Erin on the same page to suggest a slowing down of pace. Children can act this out/ carry out some dance work in the hall and should consider what thoughts and feelings Erin would be having. Consider using freeze frame techniques to explore vocabulary and phrasing. Could older children experiment with moments of reflection (think: life flashing before her eyes) and contrast with moments of panic and show this through varied sentence lengths.</p>
Exploring the underwater world	<p>Develop noun phrases to describe the amazing sea life that Erin encounters. Youngest children might develop these into sentences or simple guides to sea life. Older children could develop these further into setting descriptions or use in a range of non-fiction texts.</p>
Erin trying to persuade the adults to reconsider their feelings towards black rock	<p>Use a range of drama techniques (e.g. role play; hot-seating) to explore dialogue. Explore how this might help to provide character clues or advance the story. Use play scripting to develop fluent, phrased reading.</p>
Early and later pictures of Black Rock	<p>Use a Venn diagram and discussion to compare and contrast the different views of Black Rock offered in the book.</p>