



## Lesson One: Word Choice

Writers do not automatically use the first word to come into their head. Instead they will select the most appropriate for the impression they want to make or the picture they want to create. We call this selectivity. In the course of this unit, you will be involved in selecting words in order to create the most effective image.

Copy the table below into your jotter. Take a new page to do this.

Adjective	Noun		

In the column marked “noun” write the names of five animals, four real and one imaginary. Next select the most appropriate adjective you can think of to describe them.

Is your word choice effective?

Have you ever played “My auntie’s cat”? This is a simple game all about adjectives. The first person will start by saying “My auntie’s cat is an ... cat” filling in the blank space with an adjective beginning with “a”. The second person to go will repeat this, but after the first adjective they will add in an adjective starting with “b” and so it will continue round the class until someone is either unable to come up with a word or else they cannot remember one of the adjectives.





## Lesson Two

Now follow along as your teacher reads you the opening two chapters of the novel.

Verbs are doing words. Without them it would be impossible to convey any sort of action in a story, and in Roald Dahl’s books there is always plenty of action! Look again at the chart you did last day. At the top of the third column, write the word “Verb”. Now complete that column with specially selected verbs that **best** describe the movement of each animal.



In chapter two the boy’s grandmother tells him stories of the evil deeds of witches in Norway. However, if you look closely at them you will see that nothing too gruesome actually happens: there is no pain or horror.

Ranghild – vanished  
Solveg – appeared in a picture  
Birgit – became a chicken  
Harald – turned to stone  
Leif – became a porpoise

Your task is to come up with an original fate for a child caught in a witch’s spell. You will need to explain what spell the witch casts and how it affects the child’s life. It is not good enough to just say that they were turned into a worm.





## Lesson Three

### Adverbs

Adverbs can enrich a description and so word choice is a vital tool at the disposal of a writer. As a class you are going to come up with as many adjectives as you can. Your teacher will work around the class asking each of you for an adverb. These will then be written up on the board.



Which are the most effective? Why do you like them best?

Now return to your animal grid. At the top of the fourth column, write the word "adverb". Now complete it with the best and most appropriate adverbs you can think of. Each row should now have an adjective, noun, verb and adverb for each of your animals.

e.g. **hungry tiger crouching menacingly**



Are there any you would like to change? Make any alterations you want before your teacher asks the class to read them out.

Now you are going to have another game of "My Auntie's Cat" but this time you will be adding on adverbs.

The first to go will start with "My auntie's cat walks..." As before the class will add on a word starting with a, then b...

If you have time your teacher may play "Stop the Bus" with you using the headings from your grid. You can then read out the nonsense sentences you have created.



## **Lesson Four**

**Read chapter three.**



Look carefully at how Dahl describes a witch. What are her most notable features?



With a partner, make a list of the key features.

Then, working together, draw a picture of a witch without her disguises on making it into a “wanted poster”. Underneath write a paragraph about what the key features of a witch are to warn others to be on the lookout for one.

Once you have done this, your teacher may allow you to redraft it for display on the classroom wall.



## **Lesson Five**

**Read chapter four.**



This is the boy's first encounter with a witch, but as he says, “That was my first witch. But it wasn't my last.”

With a partner you are going to role-play this encounter. Take turn about being the witch and the boy.

After you have done this, you are going to think about the thoughts and feelings you would experience during such a meeting and also after the witch had left. You are going to do this in the form of a spidergram.



No, not a spider, a SPIDERGRAM. You'd better listen carefully as your teacher explains how to do it.



## **Lesson Six**

### **Writing a diary**

As a class, brainstorm some ideas about what a diary is and why people might keep one.

Have you ever kept a diary?  
How long did you manage to keep it going?



You are going to imagine that you are the boy from the book. It is late at night and you have just sat down to write your diary for this terrible day when you met your first witch. You should explain everything that happened, as well as your thoughts and feelings at the time and immediately after it.

People will often disclose things to a diary that they would never otherwise reveal. You should be totally honest as regards your thoughts and feelings.

Use the spidergram you completed last day to help.





## **Lesson Seven**

**Read chapter five.**



Answer the following questions in sentences. Remember to make your answers as full as possible.

- 1) What were the boy and his gran's plans for the summer?
- 2) Why do Norwegians use mussels for bait?
- 3) How do you eat shrimps?
- 4) Why was pneumonia dangerous for the grandmother?
- 5) Who was Mrs Spring?
- 6) What did the doctor suggest for their holiday?
- 7) Where did they go to stay?
- 8) Who were William and Mary?
- 9) What upset the chambermaid?
- 10) How did the grandmother convince Mr Stringer to let the mice stay?
- 11) Why did the boy go into the ballroom?
- 12) Who was holding a meeting in the hotel?
- 13) What trick was the boy going to teach William and Mary?
- 14) How was he going to do this?
- 15) What was the boy's "blinding ambition"?
- 16) What interrupted his training?



## **Lessons Eight & Nine**

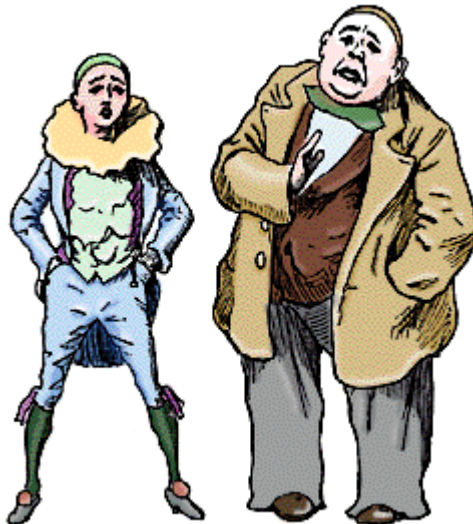
**Read chapters six and seven.**



In pairs, plan out a description of the Grand High Witch and the sort of things that she does.

Next imagine some of the bad things that she has done during her career as a witch and improvise an interview with her.

Perform this for the class.



Using these ideas, draft a celebrity interview for “Witches Weekly” with the Grand High Witch and preview the conference.

Your teacher will now take you through the rules and conventions for writing an article. Make sure that you follow them when you write your actual article.





## **Lessons Nine and Ten**

**Read chapter eight.**



Plan in a list form what the witches intend to do.



Using this information you are going to design a leaflet that can be used to warn other children about the plan, the Delayed Action Mouse Maker Formula 86 and about the witches.

You will need to consider the following points:

- Make it eye-catching
- Make the warnings clear
- Don't make the details too long

You want to create something that will keep others safe, so you want to make sure that anyone who is given your leaflet will want to read it and also that they will understand its warnings.

Make a good draft of your leaflet.

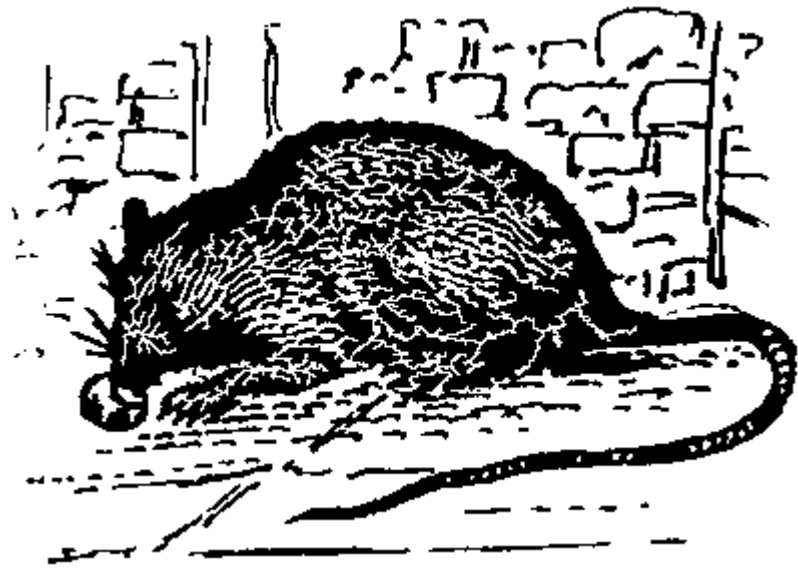


## Lesson Eleven

Read chapters nine and ten.



## Formula 86



Put your thinking cap on. You are going to draft a recipe for formula 86.

Complete your recipe using the following structure to make it appear like a chemistry experiment.

- equipment
- diagram
- method
- results (Bruno)
- conclusion (the Plan)

You may get the chance to present your recipe to the rest of the class.



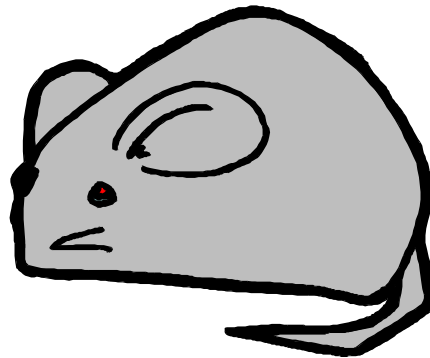
## **Lesson Twelve**

**Read chapter eleven.**



In this lesson you are going to consider how Bruno being a mouse will impact upon different characters. Working with a partner, draw up two spidergrams – one of these to show how Bruno feels about being a mouse and the other one how his parents will react and the different stages of emotion they will go through.

Using these, your teacher may let you role-play out the scene of Bruno meeting his parents.



## **Homework**

Think about how it would be to be a “supermouse” like Bruno.

Make a list of all the advantages and a list of all the disadvantages in such an identity.

NB You should have at least ten in each list.



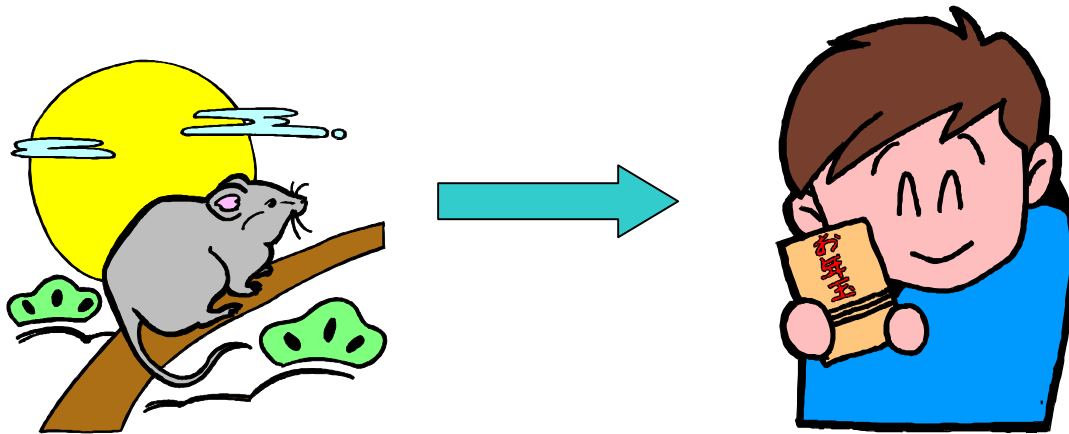
## Lesson Thirteen

Read chapters twelve and thirteen.



We've got a problem.

How is the boy going to be turned back to his human form?



Invent a recipe for turning a mouse into a boy.

Like your earlier work, you will need to have both the ingredients and the method clearly outlined.

You might like to use a poem to be chanted.

Before you start, your teacher will take you through the reasoning behind some of Dahl's ingredients. Think about this when you're making your own spell.





## Lesson Fourteen

**Read chapters fourteen and fifteen.**



Bruno and the narrator are very different characters. Copy the chart below into your jotter and complete it in as much detail as you can.

	<b>Bruno</b>	<b>Boy</b>
<b>Background</b>		
<b>Appearance</b>		
<b>Personality</b>		

How do they differ?

In what ways is one character made to look dislikeable?

Why do you think Roald Dahl does this?



## Lessons Fifteen to Seventeen

Read chapters sixteen to eighteen.



As a class look again at chapters 17-18. What are the ***key moments*** in these?

With a partner, whittle these down to the most significant eight.

Next take a double page in your jotter and copy the table below into it.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

In the large boxes draw a picture to represent each significant incident from these chapters.

Below them write a **very brief** summary of what is happening.



## Lessons Eighteen - Twenty

Read chapters nineteen and twenty.



What a shocking series of events! Can you imagine if this were real life what a newspaper story it would make: screaming headlines, lurid reporting and sensational photographs?! You can imagine it? That’s just as well, because that is your next assignment.

What do you know about newspaper articles? Brainstorm your ideas onto the board.

Unlike a lot of other exercises for English, you have to consider the layout as well as the content of your work. Be absolutely sure you understand the format of a newspaper before you start to write.

<h1 style="margin: 0;">NEWSPAPER’S NAME</h1>					
Date		Price			
<h1 style="margin: 0;">HEADLINE</h1>					
Short paragraphs written in columns					
			<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; height: 100%;"></td> <td style="width: 50%; height: 100%;"></td> </tr> </table>		



## Lesson Twenty-One

Read chapter twenty-one.



What sort of life is the mouse-boy going to have? Far too many problems for my liking, but maybe I’m just lacking in imagination.

Working with a partner, make up a list of problems that the boy may encounter in the house. Alongside these devise some original inventions that may make being a modern house mouse a little easier.

Problem	Solution





## **Lesson Twenty-Two**

**Read chapter twenty-two.**



Some people find the ending of this novel unsatisfying.

You, therefore, are going to write an extra chapter for the novel.

- How did the mouse and the grandmother get into the castle?
- Did they succeed in killing the witches?
- Did anything disastrous happen?
- Write down the final showdown between the grandmother and the witches.

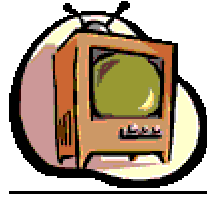


Try to keep to Dahl’s style of the unusual and inventive ideas, and use of the grotesque without the gore.



## Lesson Twenty-Three to End

Now watch the video of “The Witches”



### Review

Now you are going to write a review in which you compare the film with the book.

Working with a partner, make a list of all the differences between the two.

Next make a list of all the parts of the book that you really enjoyed.  
Copy out some of the lines from these parts and say why you like them.

Then make a list of parts of the book that you weren't too keen on. Again, copy out the lines from the novel and say why you didn't like them.

Next do the same for the video with a list of the parts you did and didn't like and reasons for this.

Finally, which did you prefer and why?



Your teacher will now help you to structure all your notes and write a review.

**Always remember to ~~wear clean underwear~~ write in sentences and paragraphs and use your very best handwriting.**