Handsome and Pretzel

Story by Rolli | illustrated by Sheree Fiala

EN3-7C | ACELT1618

Retell a fairy tale using gender-swapped characters.

Before reading the story, read the title aloud to the class. Ask students what they think the story might be about. Some students may recognise the word play on the title Hansel and Gretel, but don't give them the answer yet.

Read the story as a class. Ask students what kind of narrative it is. Ensure the class understands this is a funny retelling of the fairy tale Hansel and Gretel with elements of Rapunzel. Draw students' attention to the beginning of the story:

> Okay…
>
> A pretty long time ago…

Ask how fairy tales usually begin (Once upon a time…). Ask what elements are the same as the story from Hansel and Gretel, what some of the standout differences are and what elements have been taken from other fairy tales. (If students are unfamiliar with the story of Hansel and Gretel, they can find the story in their library or search for the story on a digital library such as Story Nory's retelling of Hansel and Gretel.) Suggested answers include:

Similar elements – two children, a building made of gingerbread and candy, a villain who had to be defeated.

Different elements – no breadcrumbs, no witch tried to eat them, lawyers saved them.

Taken from other fairy tales – wicked stepmother, long hair to climb down the tower.

Ask students to list other fairy tales. Again, use the school library or an online library like Story Nory to assist if necessary. Write students' answers on the board. Some examples include Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Aladdin, Rapunzel, Rumpelstiltskin, Cinderella, The Three Little Pigs, The Three Billy Goats Gruff.

Explain that students will be writing a retelling of these fairy tales using nonsense elements such as the lawyers in Handsome and Pretzel, a few elements from other fairy tales such as Rapunzel's long hair in Handsome and Pretzel and, most importantly, every character must

be gender swapped. This means Rapunzel could be Rupert, Jack and the Beanstalk might be Jill and the Beanstalk and so on. Explain that while the story can be nonsensical, it should still be recognisable as the fairy tale it's based off, with the same main beats happening in the plot.

Cultivating Clouds

Poem by Elena De Roo | illustrated by Matt Ottley

EN3-6B | ACELT1615

Analyse a poem by interpreting the metaphor and **evaluate** how it has influenced personal response.

Before reading the poem Cultivating Clouds, allow students to view the Emily Dickenson poem "Hope" is the thing with feathers. Read the poem aloud to the class then ask students what they think it is about. Ensure students understand the poem is about hope, but that is uses the metaphor of a bird to describe it. Have students identify which parts of the poem shows hope as a bird. Answers include – it perches in the soul, sings a tune, asks for a crumb. Have students complete the first half of the worksheet, combining ideas as a class. Encourage them to think of what the poet is really trying to say about hope. Give as many clues and hints as necessary, allowing students to become accustomed to digging deeper into the metaphor. In the personal response box, they are to evaluate whether it is an effective use of metaphor and how it makes them feel.

Helpful questions to ask for the personal response box:

-What did you visualise when you read this part of the poem?

-Did it make sense to you?

-How did it make you feel?

-Do you think this is what the poet wanted you to feel?

After they have completed the boxes, they can write a sentence or two about their personal response to the poem's metaphor in its entirety. Again, return to the above questions to assist with this final section.

(An answer sheet is included, along with example personal responses.)

Once students have completed the top half of the worksheet, read Cultivating Clouds aloud. Ask students what metaphor is being used here. When students identify that the sky is a garden, direct their attention to the bottom half of the sheet. This time, students are to individually complete the bottom half of the worksheet, using what they have learnt from the first poem.

WORKSHEET – ANALYSING METAPHOR

"Hope" is the thing with feathers – Emily Dickinson

Line from the poem	Literal meaning	Personal response
"Hope" is the thing with feathers - That perches in the soul -		
And sings the tune without the words - And never stops - at all -		
And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -		
And sore must be the storm - That could abash the little Bird		
That kept so many warm -		
I've heard it in the chillest land - And on the strangest Sea -		
Yet - never - in Extremity, It asked a crumb - of me.		

Overall response: _____

_____

Cultivating Clouds – Elena de Roo

Line from the poem	Real meaning	Personal response
The sky grows a cloud-garden full of surprises		

Nobody knows what her seed bag comprises		
It might be a climber Like cumulonimbus		
A low-spreading stratus		
Or high wispy cirrus		
The burst out and billow and wander at will Great shape-shifting hybrids which never stay still		
There aren't any labels or orderly rows For everything changes as soon as it blows		
Then quick, as her fields full of cloud-flowers grew, With a Puff! They will disappear Into the blue		

Overall response: _____

_____

WORKSHEET – ANALYSING METAPHOR (ANSWERS)

"Hope" is the thing with feathers – Emily Dickinson

Line from the poem	Real meaning	Personal response (EXAMPLES)
"Hope" is the thing with feathers - That perches in the soul -	Hope is inside us	The word "perches" makes me think of a bird, but also lets me imagine it exists as a real thing inside me
And sings the tune without the words - And never stops - at all -	It is a positive feeling that isn't necessarily specific thoughts, and never stops	This makes me feel happy, which I think the poet wanted me to feel
And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -	Hope is there in hard moments	This was hard for me to understand. Why is it sweet?
And sore must be the storm - That could abash the little Bird	Circumstances would have to be very difficult to quash hope	I didn't understand the sore storm part.
That kept so many warm -	Lots of people have hope	It's nice to imagine hope keeping people warm
I've heard it in the chillest land - And on the strangest Sea -	Hope has been with the poet through all kinds of situations	I like how the poet suggests that hope ranges across the world, but also within a person
Yet - never - in Extremity, It asked a crumb - of me.	Even in extreme circumstances, hope has never needed anything in return	I like how it connects to the bird using crumb, but also suggests it doesn't even need the smallest amount in return

Overall response **(EXAMPLE ONLY)**: I think this poem is highly effective. It uses vocabulary to connect hope to a bird and made me feel happy, even if I didn't understand all of it.

Cultivating Clouds – Elena de Roo

Line from the poem	Real meaning	Personal response (EXAMPLES)
The sky grows a cloud-garden full of surprises Nobody knows what her seed bag comprises	The sky produces different types clouds all the time	I like the idea of a garden made of clouds in the sky. I think it's whimsical.
It might be a climber Like cumulonimbus	Cumulonimbus are vertical clouds, like climbing plants such as vines	Comparing cumulonimbus to a climber helped me to imagine what it looked like
A low-spreading stratus	Stratus clouds are flat, like heather on the ground	Comparing stratus clouds to a low-spreading plant helped me visualise what they looked like
Or high wispy cirrus	Cirrus are wispy	This didn't follow the pattern as much and didn't connect to a plant, which I didn't like
The burst out and billow and wander at will Great shape-shifting hybrids which never stay still	Clouds change formations and move across the sky	Bursting out and hybrid both connect to plants as well as clouds, which gave me a lovely visualisation of what the poet was thinking
There aren't any labels or orderly rows For everything changes as soon as it blows	Unlike a garden, clouds go wherever the wind blows	This gives the sense of floating and detachment, which is a nice metaphor
Then quick, as her fields full of cloud-flowers grew, With a Puff! They will disappear Into the blue	Clouds can disperse quickly	I like fields full of cloud-flowers but disappearing into the blue loses the metaphor. Maybe imagining dandelions puffing away could've worked better?

Overall response **(EXAMPLE ONLY)**: This poem is dreamy and sweet. Although the metaphor sometimes didn't follow all the way through, I really enjoyed it because it helped me imagine clouds as billowing, bursting plants in a sky-garden.

Fallen Words

Story by Janeen Brian| Illustrated by Peter Sheehan

EN3-1A | ACELY1709

Discuss in small groups the values and drawbacks of the classroom activity from the narrative then **present** final ideas to the class.

Read the story as a class. Ask students to think about – but not share – their thoughts on what Mrs Yadim had her class do. Do students like her activity? Why or why not? Encourage them to shelve their initial reaction and think deeper. Ask what are some of the values of the activity, and what are some of the drawbacks?

Write the sentence on the board: Was Mrs Yadim's activity good or bad? Explain that students will get into small groups to discuss this before presenting their final thoughts to the rest of the class. Encourage students to think of open-ended questions to ask each other during their discussion and write some examples on the board, such as:

- Why do you feel like this?

- What do you feel should have been done differently?

- Why do you think someone else might have a different opinion to yours?

- How do your personal values affect your answers?

As a class, talk about the rules of group etiquette such as taking turns, listening respectfully, giving reasons for disagreeing and making final decisions as a group.

Students get into groups of three or four. Explain that one student speaks at a time, giving their thoughts while everyone listens. One open-ended question can be asked by each listener before the next student gives their response, and so on. Once everyone in the group has had a chance to speak, an informal discussion can begin. Students in each group must reach a consensus about their answer to the main

question before presenting to the class. Remind groups that the question is vague for a reason – they are allowed to give rounded responses that carefully consider both sides in their presentation. Each person must have something to say during the presentation.

Some examples of potential discussion points during the presentation:

- balloons are terrible for the environment, perhaps paper lanterns might have been better?

- the peace messages might be found by someone who really needed it and brighten their day

- from the teacher's point of view, the activity helps students understand more about war

- students have the opportunity to spread goodness around the community

- the activity didn't really teach the students anything and they shouldn't have wasted their time and money on it

Speckled Melodies

Poem by Anne Bell | illustrated by Anna Bron

EN3-6B | ACELA1523

Analyse word choice within the poem and **create** a new poem in the same style.

Before reading the poem, if you have a digital subscription complete the Drag the Adjectives interactive activity.

Read the poem as a class. Ask the following questions:

- What is the poem about? (baby birds)

- Why are the birds described as speckled melodies? (speckled describes their appearance, melodies alludes to the sounds they will soon make when they hatch)

- What are the adjectives (describing words)? (awkward, calloused, speckled, rare)

- What is the definition of a clutch in this instance? (the collective noun for eggs)

View the NSW Education website on collective nouns to examine other examples of collective nouns.

Explain that the poet has carefully considered each word in the poem to give a sensory description of hatching baby birds. Ask students to find examples of:

- sight (speckled/awkward nest)

- sound (melodies/hatch)

- feel (calloused sticks/take your breath away)

Students are to experiment with composing their own poem in the same style. They are to choose an animal that they will be able to describe. Some research may be necessary to find out about their chosen animal's young and the collective noun.

Students are to set out the poem as below:

Who would think

that from that ___1___ ____2____

of ___3___ ___4____

a ____5____ of ____6____ ____7____

would ___8____

and ___9____ with ___10____ ____11____ enough

to _____12_____?

Go through each of the points as follows:

1 and 2 (replacing awkward nest): Tell students to consider where their chosen baby animals would be born and an adjective to describe it. For example, kittens may be born in a crinkled blanket or a dark cubby.

3 and 4 (replacing calloused sticks): Students are to build on their first description using a touch description. The soft blanket could include fuzzy fibres, while the dark cubby might consist of warm earth.

5 (replacing clutch): Here, students must find the collective noun for their animal. In the case of kittens, it would be litter.

6 and 7 (replacing speckled melodies): Remind students that there is no place in the poem for them to specifically state the name of their animal – this is the only place for them to allude to what they've chosen. Encourage them to brainstorm. Have them write down a list of words that could describe the appearance and sound of their chosen animal. For example, striped mews or fluffy meows could describe kittens.

8 (replacing hatch): For students who have chosen an animal that does not come from an egg, suggest they could use a word that describes the animal's movements when they've young. Sample answers include tumble for kittens, totter for fawns, trot for foals. Students who wish to use a different word even if their animal comes from eggs can do so, for example, slither for snakes, waddle for ducklings.

9 (replacing sing): This does not have to be a sound word. Students can choose anything that their animal does.

10 and 11 (replacing sweetness rare): Students think of a noun and adjective that describes their word from part nine. For example:

> play with a cuteness joyful enough
>
> pounce with a determination cute enough
>
> yawn with teeth sharp enough

12 (replacing take your breath away): This is the final line. Ask students how their second-last line makes them feel. What physical reaction would they have to experiencing their description? Would their heart pound faster? Would they give a little squeal? Encourage them to not name a specific feeling, like delight or happiness, but rather their body's reaction to this feeling.

Once complete, students take it in turns to read their poem to a partner.

Strange, But (Almost) True

Play by Bill Condon | illustrated by Greg Holfeld

EN3-8D | ACELT1613

Present a hot seat where the interviewer is questioning a student pretending to be a mythical creature.

Before reading the play, brainstorm what students know about Dracula and vampire lore (for example, they drink blood, they hate garlic, they sleep in coffins). Write all comments on the board.

Read the play as a class. Ask students what was different about the Dracula in the play and the vampire lore discussed, and what the purpose was for these changes. When students have identified that it was for humorous effect, emphasise the fact that it works because the interviewer knows what the reader knows about vampires and is questioning Dracula with this common knowledge in mind.

Ask students to identify jokes associated with the other mythical creatures mentioned. Answers:

- Wolfman was a dentist

- King Kong was the teacher's pet

- The Mummy was a hypochondriac

- The ghouls were in a choir/sang about being nice

Spend time as a class brainstorming common mythical creatures. Remind students that while characters like Dracula are vampires and therefore mythical creatures, characters such as Voldemort are not mythical creatures. Some examples include mermaids, unicorns, fairies, Hydra, sea serpents, zombies, ghosts, dragons.

Explain that students will be doing a hot seat production, where they will work in pairs to take on the role of an interviewer and interviewee. In this case, the interviewee will be a commonly known mythical creature of the student's choosing.

Have students divide a page in half and write everything they know about the lore of that creature on the left side. On the other side, have them write funny alternatives. For example, if a student has identified that zombies like to moan for brains but are otherwise not particularly chatty, a funny alternative would be if the zombie was professional and very clever.

When they've completed their lists, students pair up with someone who is doing a different mythical creature to them. They are to create and present two scripted plays to the class, swapping roles as interviewer and interviewee. To assist them with interviewer questions, encourage them to look at their partner's list on what the common lore is for the mythical creature they will be interviewing. Using the zombie example, the student playing the interviewer could ask, 'Have you had any brains recently?' As a fun response, the student playing the interviewee could say, 'Actually, that's a common misconception. We much prefer rare steak and fine dining.' For further help, guide students to the original text to give them ideas on how to interview a character.

To Boldly Blow

Story by Anna Quinian | illustrated by Anna Bron

Write a letter to a speciality school persuading them to allow admittance.

After reading the story as a class, tell students to imagine they are applying to a school that specialises in their favourite subject (or subject they are best at). Ask them what subject they would love to specialise in if it could be anything. Cooking, drama, sport, music, creative writing, maths, ancient history... whatever takes their fancy. They will need to think of personal qualities and samples or anecdotes they can use to convince the school they are best for the job.

Before students begin their own writing, view the Literacy Ideas page How to Write a Great Letter and scroll down to the part that says Formal and Informal Letter Writing: What is the Difference? Go through the different types of letters and ask students what type of letter they'll be writing. When students identify theirs will be a formal letter, scroll further down to Common Features of Formal Letters and then How to Write a Formal Letter. This will give students a template to follow.

Model an example on the board, writing as Oliver Brown addressing Laredo High School (invent an address for Oliver and the school). Start with something along the lines of:

> Dear Sir/Madam,
>
> Thank you for considering my application to Laredo High School. I strongly believe I would make an excellent addition to the student cohort. I am an earnest, responsible student who is passionate about playing the flute and would deeply appreciate the opportunity to further my skills under the care of your music teachers.

Encourage students to help brainstorm points Oliver can make to prove he deserves a spot at the school. Examples include:

- I practise every day for half an hour

- I have been playing since I was seven

- These are details of some performances I have done in the past…

- The music, composers or flutists who inspire me are…

Ask students what kind of persuasive language they can use in their own writing. Remind them that this is a formal letter, so while they are encouraged to use persuasive techniques, slang is discouraged. Examples of strong persuasive words and phrases include:

- I am certain…

- I believe that I…

- Fantastic

- Wonderful

- Amazing

Students should do a rough plan before they start, writing out as many points as they can before choosing their strongest two or three.

It may be useful to assure students that as this letter is not going to a real institution, they are allowed to bend the truth to suit their needs. Encourage them to wow the reader with their submission. Ask them: What would make the principal of this speciality school say yes immediately?

Students may finish their letter with something like "A sample/video/recording of my work is included. Thank you for your consideration."

Dossier of Discovery: That's Fishy

Article by Anne Renaud | photos by Alamy

EN3-7C | ACELA1518

Create a meme using a picture of a mudskipper.

Read the article as a class. Discuss the photograph in the article provided by Alamy. Find other pictures online of mudskippers such as ones from:

Owlcation
New Scientist
BBC One
How Stuff Works

Ask students what they think of these strange-looking creatures.

Have a short classroom discussion on the definition of a meme (an image, video, text or behaviour, typically humorous, that is spread rapidly via the internet) and ask students to describe some of their favourite examples.

View Life Wire's webpage on What is a Meme? for breakdowns of meme formatting and examples. Explain that image macro memes (images with text superimposed on them) often have two lines – the one at the top of the picture is the setup, while the one at the bottom is the punchline.

Visit Know Your Meme's webpage on Impressed Mudskippers. The image of two wide-mouthed mudskippers watching a third mudskipper jumping from a hole has been used as a meme. Scroll down to find the image with the text "All the girls/the fastest kid in 5th grade". Stop there, as some of the other examples may be inappropriate for the classroom. Discuss the format of the meme, why it's humorous and what other jokes could replace the text in the image.

Explain that students will be using either this picture, which can be found at Impressed Mudskippers – Template or another picture of a mudskipper found online to make their own memes. Have them use a program such as Microsoft Paint or similar that will allow students to overlay their text onto images using an easily readable font and colour. (Note: Students may mention that there are online meme generators that will do this task for them but encourage them to practise their digital skills. Those without devices can use a printed picture of a mudskipper and coloured pen on white paper to create the captions.) Students should brainstorm their text first – have them write out at least six potential memes before deciding on their favourite. The text should be humorous, relatable, and appropriate for school.

Once created, students can either print their memes to hang around the classroom or project them onto a smartboard to present to the class.

Fishy

Story by Sharon Kretschmer | Illustrated by Craig Phillips

EN3-7C | ACELT1616

Compare and **contrast** characteristics that define different illustrators' styles.

After reading the story as a class, discuss both illustrations included and what they represent. The first illustration of Jack looking up into the sky with fish falling, is a literal interpretation of the events in the story. The second illustration of Jack walking among fish people, is a visual metaphor for how Jack was feeling as he ran from home.

Students should each have a template of a compare/contrast worksheet such as the Venn Diagram on page 22 of Jennifer Findley's PDF Paired Passage Graphic Organisers (they will need two each, but they are only filling out one at this point – it may be best to save the second sheet for later so they do not get confused). Visit Info 263's webpage on Comparing and Contrasting and have students choose two of the three listed illustrators:

Keika Yamaguchi
Jon Klassen
Sydney Hanson

Allow students to read the illustrators' bios before making their decision. Then as a class read the Comparing and Contrasting page and have students write down the similarities and differences between their two chosen authors on the Venn Diagram. (For information on how to use Venn Diagrams and some examples, visit Third Space Learning's page on What is a Venn Diagram.) Students should have a placement in their Venn Diagrams for the subheadings Characters, Background and Setting, Colour Choices and Details and Design Choices with a short piece of information describing how the illustrators' styles are similar or different.

A few sample answers include (comparing Sydney and Keika):

Similarities – both love drawing animals, drawings are detailed and cute, often use bright and pastel colours.

Differences – Keika's drawings are more realistic/Sydney's drawings are more abstract and cartoonish, Keika draws humans/Sydney does not draw humans, Sydney's backgrounds are simplistic/Keika's backgrounds and settings are very detailed.

Once students have completed their graphic organiser, visit Craig Phillips's webpage on his picture books and use the illustrations from the story Fishy to complete a second Venn Diagram, this time comparing and contrasting Craig Phillips with the third illustrator from Info 263's website that was not chosen for the first task. In the instance of the example above, because Keika and Sydney were compared for the first task, Craig Phillips would be compared with Jon Klassen.

Students complete their second Venn Diagram, this time using their own evaluations on the different styles. They need to place the same subheadings as before (Characters, Background and Setting, Colour Choices and Details and Design Choices) on the Venn Diagram with their reasons.

Life on the Edge of Sight

Article by Zoë Disher | Photos by Alamy

EN3-3A | ACELA1524

Explain how the analytical images contribute to the reader's understanding of the text then **create** an additional analytical image that might accompany the text.

After reading through the article, students complete the worksheet on Analytical Images, describing how they believe each image included helps the reader's comprehension of the text. Encourage students to consider how the images helped them personally, and what it might be like reading the article without any visual assistance.

Ask students what other analytical images might have helped them while reading the text. Explain that analytical images include figures, tables, diagrams, maps, graphs, timelines, and icons.

Possible answers include:

- a timeline of events

- a portrait of Robert Hooke

- a diagram of how van Leeuwenhoek's microscope might have worked with lighting samples in a special way

- a diagram of how any microscope works

- a visual representation of van Leeuwenhoek grinding glass

- a diagram of plaque under the microscope

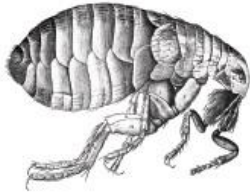- a graphic organiser (such as a mind map) showing all the ways microbiology is used today

Students select one extra image that could be included in the text and design it themselves. They may need to do some research before they start (such as finding out what plaque looks like under a microscope). Drawings should be done by hand rather than simply printing out an image. Students should also identify where in the text their analytical image is best placed for reader comprehension.

Life on the Edge of Sight Worksheet

How Analytical Images Contribute to the Text

Describe how each image assists with the reader's comprehension of the article. The

first one is done for you.

[Image One – flea]

The written description of the flea is enhanced by the accompanying image, allowing

readers to see what Hooke had drawn in his book while understanding why people in

the 1600s could've been so astonished.

[Image Two – microscope]

_____

_____

_____

[Image Three – Anton van Leeuwenhoek]

_____

_____

_____

[Image Four – animalcules]

'Animalcules' seen by van Leeuwenhoek
and drawn by a later artist

_____

_____

_____

[Image Five – skin bacteria]

_____

_____

_____

[Image Six – a fly's head]

_____

_____

_____

A Puzzling Tale: Brain Crush

Retold by Karen Jameyson | Illustrated by Michel Streich

Write and **present** a monologue from the point of view of the wife or the husband on the eve of the death sentence.

Read the story as a class. Divide the board into two sides and write Husband on one side and Wife on the other. Ask the class what each might have been thinking of on the night before the wife's death sentence. Encourage students to answer in the voice of the character. Write one example on the board before having students write one each of their own. They can either write their idea on the board or use sticky notes to stick on the board.

Sample answers for husband:

- I am supposed to be the smartest in the land. How dare she try to be smarter than me?

- I hope I have not made a mistake.

- I hate it when people laugh at me. No one should ever laugh at me!

Sample answers for wife:

- How am I going to get out of this?

- Why did I agree to marry this man?

- I know I am smarter than him. There must be a way to live through this. Think, think, think!

Once students have added their thoughts, go through a few answers, and discuss the different interpretations of each character. Explain that each student will present a monologue to a small group, either as the husband or the wife.

For an entire session on monologues, visit Beat By Beat Press's webpage on How to Write a Monologue. Otherwise, explain to the students that a monologue is a single person addressing the audience or another imaginary character, talking about their feelings. If they've chosen the wife, for example, they could pretend to be talking to the guard of the prison cell, the husband or even a bored rat. If they've chosen the husband, they may be talking to a confidant, an advisor, or a friend.

Students can pretend to be having an actual conversation, pausing as if they're listening to an imaginary question before answering it. Tell students to ensure their answers give context to the audience.

Read aloud from the following example, including vocal expression and actions as required:

"I suppose you are wondering how I got here. Or maybe you're not. You're just a rat after all. Stop sniffing my shoe – I'm not dead yet! Now... how am I going to get out of here. You see, it all started when the prince came to my doorstep a few years ago..."

Some students might imagine the wife is less determined than this – maybe she's depressed or sobbing or too furious at the beginning. Explain that the students may interpret the characters how they like, as long as it links to the text.

View the YouTube video Smalltalk for an example of a partial monologue done with changing vocal expressions and gestures, then view the YouTube video What is an ACTIVE Monologue? for students to think in more depth about their performance.

Students write up a small script and spend time practising their monologue before performing. As this will be done in a single session, they may use their script to assist during their performance. They should time themselves to make sure their monologue goes for about a minute.

Students present to groups of five or six, rotating through the group so everyone has a chance to perform. Group members can fill out a student peer review form similar to the example below:

Spoke clearly, with gestures and varying tones:

1   2   3   4   5

Kept to the time limit:

1   2   3   4   5

Matched how the character was feeling to the text:

1   2   3   4   5

Was entertaining:

1   2   3   4   5

What was done well?

_____

_____

Suggestions for next time?

_____

_____