

The Countdown

Literacy Curriculum Mapping Years 3&4: 1

Introduction

In this lesson, children will create poems based on the countdown.

Reading:

- Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Plan their writing by:

- Discussing and recording ideas

Draft and write by:

- Composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- Organising paragraphs around a theme
- In narratives, creating settings, characters and plot

Starter

Read/watch Tazz in the countdown scene in Vlog [Ready to Launch](#). [This video](#) is shorter and may be more accessible for some learners.

How does she feel about her mission?

Main Lesson

You are in a rocket about to take off. Write the ten things you are thinking about before take-off happens. They might be small things you forgot to do, things you are looking forward to or things that are happening around you on the ship.

Next, with a partner, try performing your lines as a countdown, one saying the number from 10 down to one and the other reading a line. It might sound a bit like this:

10.....The engines roar below me

9.....Smoke billows around the sides of my rocket

8.....I wish I could hug my dog tight, or he could sit beside my feet.

Continue your Countdown down to 1.

Perform your Countdown poems to your class. You could try acting these out, making a movement to go with each line.

Ideas for Inclusion:

- Use *The Emotions Scale* to consider how the astronaut is feeling at this part of the mission and during different points of the countdown.

- Use *The Widgit Symbols: Preparing for Launch* to help scaffold the countdown and prompt the ideas linked at each number.
- Using the assets provided, make a soundscape or a visual landscape. There are sounds in Space Adventures. You could also search the BBC Sound Effects and Audio Network on the LGFL website, or visit NASA for more.
- Get your students to create a small tunnel and small space (the cockpit) so the students can have a multisensory experience of take off.
- Use instruments or drum on the table or stamp on the floor to a crescendo for the countdown.
- Students can experiment with ear defenders to notice the change in sound and experience for the astronaut.

LGfL Extension ACTIVITY

- Write the poem so the rhythm speeds up like the astronaut's heartbeat might.
- Write a second poem about the countdown from another person's perspective e.g. a family member; a mission controller or a journalist.

LGfL Additional Activity:

Create an animation of the rocket launching using J2spotlight and then perform your countdown poems add this to your animation by using the microphone function.

Create a healthy breakfast for Taz. Research in Cookit to get ideas.