Wk. 08.06.20 Year 6 English 1

SHQ: What are the features of diary entries?

This week we will be starting our Victorian history topic. One particular focus is the life of children and how things changed during the 19th Century. This activity is in preparation to write a diary entry based on the experiences of ordinary young people.

If you can watch this clip, it shows you what it was like for children who lived in a 'workhouse'. This was an institution where people were sent to if they were in debt, avoiding homelessness:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01f9xyl/clips

Tasks:

- On the following page is an example of a diary entry from the point of view of a Victorian child. Read through it and see if you can identify the expected features (a key features list is included). You could make notes or highlight them on a printout.
- See if you understand the vocabulary in bold. If not use a dictionary or online version to find out.
- Decide on the parts of the entry that you think are effective. Is there anything you would do differently?
- The next task involves the creation of your own diary entry based on a job that a Victorian child might have done. In readiness for this find out about jobs like working in a mill, coalmining or service.

31st January 1874

Dear diary,

I am sat in our overcrowded **dormitory**, we are supposed to be asleep but I can't. It is too cold. It is **extremely** difficult to see the page; I am holding this diary up to the window so that I can see the light from the reflection of the moon. Today has been as **miserable** as any other day, if not worse.

The master **stormed** into our room to wake us up at 4.30am and **ordered** us outside to wash our face using the outside water pump. However, it was so cold that the water formed little **icicles** at the end of the pump. All of the boys were stood **huddled** together in a line, trying to stay close for warmth. I tried to look for my sister, Charlotte, as boys and girls are **separated** at all times. We haven't seen each other since we entered this place, but I will not give up hope.

Breakfast was water and a small piece of bread left over from last night. I can tell it was left over because it was extremely tough to bite. Soon after we were **ushered** into the **bustling** workroom, where I was ordered to unpick old rope and separate it into threads to be resold. The material is so tough and scratchy that my fingers are crimson and **blistered**. The pain was so **incredible** that I wanted to cry, but I didn't dare. If the Master catches somebody crying he beats them with the cane.

To think that we do this all day, every day, for 5d a week. It isn't much, but I send what I can home to Ma to look after the baby. She needs it more than I do.

Dinner was exactly the same tonight, too. Small piles of **stale** crusty bread were on the table tops and bowls of cold gruel were **slammed** down before us. **I spotted** some of the boys **sneakily** stuffing pieces into their pockets to eat later. We are all so hungry.

When will this end? I feel weak and tired. Sometimes I wish I could run out of the doors and escape, but the last boy who tried was beaten in front of everybody. I can still hear his cries.

I had better get some rest, I will write to you tomorrow.

Goodnight.

From

Peter

HOW TO WRITE A: DIARY

Colloquial Language

You should try to use chatty/informal language.

Follow a "Diary Style"

Start each entry with a date and "Dear Diary".

First person

Remember to use personal pronouns (in particular: I/We)

Chronological order

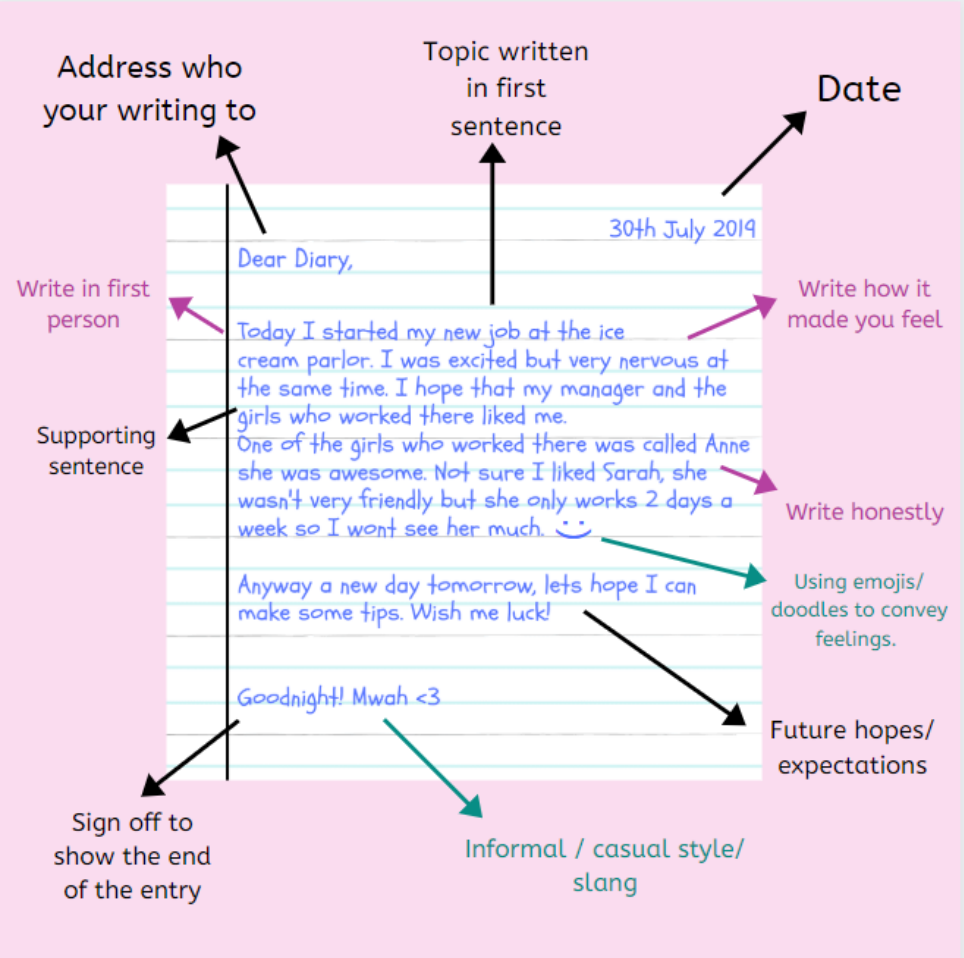
Your diary should be in time order, using adverbials.

Self-reflection

Try to include your thoughts, feelings, opinions and hopes (inside speech marks).

Past Tense

A diary is about what has already happened.

Detailed descriptions

Remember to use more than one sense, to make your description more imaginable. Similes and metaphors can also be effective.