

Central Message Through Structure

Source lesson: The End Is The Beginning

Full lesson	
TIME	35 minutes
OBJECTIVE	Work out what the book is saying by matching its ending to its beginning.
STUDENT PRODUCT	A matching sheet, then the message in your own words
FOCUS	A central message carried by a repetition, not a statement
ESSENTIAL QUESTION	Why does the book end with the same words it started with?

Materials

- The book
- Pages 5, 17, 18 and 19, found before the lesson
- One matching sheet each

Text to mark before teaching

- Passage 5 — the teacher studies it, holding the paper up to her face
- Passage 17 — she hands him the paper
- Passage 18 — Vashti holding the pad up to her face, in her teacher's pose
- Passage 19 — the last page

Lesson sequence

1 Launch · 5 min

Focus:	Four words that have been said before
Teacher direction:	Read the last page on its own, out of context: four words and a pause. Ask who is speaking and who she is speaking to. Then read the page where her teacher said nearly the same thing.
Prepared text:	Passage 19

2 Teacher model · 7 min

Teacher model:	I hold up the page where the teacher studies Vashti's paper, and then the page where Vashti studies the boy's.
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They are the same picture with a different person in it: the paper held up in front of the face, the long careful look, and then a quiet instruction to sign it. Vashti is doing to the boy exactly what was done to her, and the book never says so in words.

Prepared text:	Passage 5, Passage 18
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3 Match the two halves · 13 min

Focus:	The same four moves, twice
Teacher direction:	Using Passages 5, 17, 18 and 19, match what Vashti's teacher did at the start with what Vashti does at the end.

Expected answer:	Her teacher held up her paper and looked at it carefully without saying whether it was good, and then quietly told her to sign it. At the end Vashti hands the boy a blank sheet and asks him to show her, waits while his pencil shakes, stares at the squiggle he makes just as carefully, and then asks him to sign it. Same blank paper, same long look, same instruction. The one thing Vashti adds is the word please, and a pause before the last two words.
Student product:	A matching sheet: the teacher's move, and Vashti's
Prepared text:	Passage 5, Passage 17, Passage 18, Passage 19

4 What the book is saying · 10 min

Focus:	Say it in your own words, then prove it
Teacher direction:	Using Passages 17 and 19, write what you think this book is saying, and give the evidence.
Expected answer:	A fair answer is that anybody can start if somebody takes their first try seriously, and that the person who was helped is then the one who can help. The evidence is that the book ends by repeating its own beginning with Vashti in the teacher's place: she gives the boy the blank paper, she looks properly at what he makes rather than judging it, and she asks him to put his name on it. She never tells him he is good, which is exactly what was not said to her.
Prepared text:	Passage 17, Passage 19

Teacher guidance

Why this text works: Do not tell the class the ending mirrors the beginning; they will find it, and finding it is the lesson. Put the two pictures side by side and say nothing. Once somebody sees it, the message follows almost by itself, so spend the time on the evidence instead: insist that every claim about what the book means points at something on a page. Watch for children who say the message is that everyone can draw - it is closer than it looks, but the book is about what one person did for another, and the pictures are the argument.

Expected answer:	The book ends by doing its beginning again with the people swapped. At the start Vashti's teacher holds her paper up, looks at it carefully without saying whether it is any good, pushes it back and quietly tells her to sign it. At the end Vashti hands a boy a blank sheet, asks him to show her, waits while his pencil shakes, stares at his squiggle in the same pose her teacher was drawn in, and asks him to sign it. Nothing in the words points this out. The only thing Vashti adds is please, and a pause.
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Model: I notice that the last page has no picture of a dot on it, and no words about art at all. It is four words. Everything the book has to say is in the fact that we have heard them before, from somebody else, on page six.

Support and extension

Above: Vashti says please and her teacher did not. Explain what that one word tells you about her.

Below: Join the four pairs, then write what you think the book is saying and how you know.

Assessment

Look for:

- Says Vashti does at the end what her teacher did at the start.
- Names the blank paper as the thing both of them hand over.
- Says both of them look at the mark carefully before speaking.
- Says both of them ask for a signature.
- Gives a message and points at a page for it.

Short version	
TIME	20 minutes
OBJECTIVE	Work out what the book is saying by matching its ending to its beginning.
STUDENT PRODUCT	A matching sheet, then the message in your own words
FOCUS	A central message carried by a repetition, not a statement
ESSENTIAL QUESTION	Why does the book end with the same words it started with?

Materials

- The book
- Pages 5, 17, 18 and 19, found before the lesson
- One matching sheet each

Text to mark before teaching

- Passage 5 — the teacher studies it, holding the paper up to her face
- Passage 17 — she hands him the paper
- Passage 18 — Vashti holding the pad up to her face, in her teacher's pose
- Passage 19 — the last page

Lesson sequence

1 Launch · 3 min

Focus:	Four words that have been said before
Teacher direction:	Read the last page on its own, out of context: four words and a pause. Ask who is speaking and who she is speaking to. Then read the page where her teacher said nearly the same thing.
Prepared text:	Passage 19

2 Teacher model · 4 min

Teacher model:	I hold up the page where the teacher studies Vashti's paper, and then the page where Vashti studies the boy's. They are the same picture with a different person in it: the paper held up in front of the face, the long careful look, and then a quiet instruction to sign it. Vashti is doing to the boy exactly what was done to her, and the book never says so in words.
Prepared text:	Passage 5, Passage 18

3 Match the two halves · 7 min

Focus:	The same four moves, twice
Teacher direction:	Using Passages 5, 17, 18 and 19, match what Vashti's teacher did at the start with what Vashti does at the end.
Expected answer:	Her teacher held up her paper and looked at it carefully without saying whether it was good, and then quietly told her to sign it. At the end Vashti hands the boy a blank sheet and asks him to show her, waits while his pencil shakes, stares at

the squiggle he makes just as carefully, and then asks him to sign it. Same blank paper, same long look, same instruction. The one thing Vashti adds is the word please, and a pause before the last two words.

Student product:	A matching sheet: the teacher's move, and Vashti's
Prepared text:	Passage 5, Passage 17, Passage 18, Passage 19

4 What the book is saying · 6 min

Focus:	Say it in your own words, then prove it
Teacher direction:	Using Passages 17 and 19, write what you think this book is saying, and give the evidence.
Expected answer:	A fair answer is that anybody can start if somebody takes their first try seriously, and that the person who was helped is then the one who can help. The evidence is that the book ends by repeating its own beginning with Vashti in the teacher's place: she gives the boy the blank paper, she looks properly at what he makes rather than judging it, and she asks him to put his name on it. She never tells him he is good, which is exactly what was not said to her.
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