“Newspaper Article” Strategy-Reporting on the End of a Novel

Purpose:
- To have a creative, unique way to write about book
- To develop some technical writing skills
- To reach closure with a novel

Overview:
In this activity, the students will write newspaper articles that “report” on the ending of their book. Students will have to choose a particular aspect of the end of the book as their focus. In the process of writing the news article, students will answer who, what, when, where, why and how. They will “interview” characters involved in the plot and/or real persons who may be experts” on the chosen aspect and are able to offer insights into it. They will create a writing style appropriate for a newspaper story.

Preparation:
1. As preparation for the activity, have the students clip out and bring in several short newspaper articles that report a national or international event. Have them write down the who, what, when, where, and how of their articles.
2. Select some of these articles to be shared with the class, discussing the general characteristics of good headlines, good lead sentences/paragraphs, paragraphing, and how the writers incorporated the who, what, when, where, and how in their stories.

Directions for Writing News Articles:
1. Students will choose the subject or focus of the newspaper article they will write about. You may have to provide a few choices for some students.
2. Students will gather the facts (Step 1). Students will complete the following activities:
   - answer the who, what, when, where, and how
   - pretend to interview characters who are involved in the story or individuals who may be experts on the chosen subject.
   - be sure to write down an interviewee’s exact words if they plan to quote.
3. Students will write a lead (Step 2). Direct students to:
   - write the first sentence or paragraph of their news story.
   - be sure this first sentence or paragraph tells the basic idea of the story and grabs the attention of the reader.
4. Students will write the body of the story (Step 3). Students will
   - fill in the details about the idea presented in their first paragraph or sentence.
5. Have the students write a headline for the story (Step 4). Challenge them to
   - compose a headline that is interesting enough to catch the reader’s attention immediately.

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