Learning objective
• To be able to explain and demonstrate elements of suspense writing, including the concepts of climax and anti-climax.

Learning outcome
• To produce a piece of writing in the genre of suspense.

Book reference
• Chapter 9: Grandpa Joe takes a Gamble.

Cross-curricular link
• Literacy, Drama.

Resources
• A wrapped chocolate bar per pair or group; a bag with lots of pieces of paper inside.

Starter

• Allow the children to experience climax and anti-climax through an activity, for example:
  • Hold up a bag with lots of pieces of paper inside it, and tell the class that one of the pieces of paper is a promise of chocolate for the lucky winner. The children pass the bag around and take a piece of paper from the bag one by one. It turns out that there is no lucky piece of paper in the bag. Take the disappointed or angry reaction and explain it is an example of anti-climax.

• Everyone stands in a circle. Someone stands in the middle as Willy Wonka. The children pass around an imaginary chocolate bar. When Willy Wonka says “Stop” the person with the imaginary chocolate bar pretends to unwrap it. He or she can decide whether the chocolate bar does or doesn’t have a golden ticket inside. If it has a golden ticket inside, the person shouts “Golden ticket!” and everyone in the circle stands up and punches the air and says “Yessss!” If it does not have a golden ticket inside, the person says “No golden ticket” and everyone can fall dramatically to the floor and say “Ohhh.”
‘Have you got it?’ whispered Grandpa Joe, his eyes shining with excitement.

Charlie nodded and held out the bar of chocolate. WONKA’S NUTTY CRUNCH SURPRISE, it said on the wrapper.

‘Good!’ the old man whispered, sitting up in the bed and rubbing his hands. ‘Now – come over here and sit close by and we’ll open it together. Are you ready?’

‘Yes,’ Charlie said, ‘I’m ready.’

‘All right. You tear off the first bit.’

‘No,’ Charlie said, ‘you paid for it. You do it all.’

The old man’s fingers were trembling most terribly as they fumbled with the wrapper. ‘We don’t have a hope, really,’ he whispered, giggling a bit. ‘You do know we don’t have a hope, don’t you?’

‘Yes,’ Charlie said. ‘I know that.’

They looked at each other, and both started giggling nervously.

‘Mind you,’ said Grandpa Joe, ‘there is just that tiny chance that it might be the one, don’t you agree?’

‘Yes,’ Charlie said. ‘Of course. Why don’t you open it, Grandpa?’

‘All in good time, my boy, all in good time. Which end do you think I ought to open first?’

‘That corner. The one furthest from you. Just tear off a tiny bit, but not quite enough for us to see anything.’
‘Like that?’ said the old man.
‘Yes. Now a little bit more.’
‘You finish it,’ said Grandpa Joe. ‘I’m too nervous.’
‘No, Grandpa. You must do it yourself.’
‘Very well, then. Here goes.’ He tore off the wrapper.
They both stared at what lay underneath. It was a bar of chocolate – nothing more.
All at once, they both saw the funny side of the whole thing, and they burst into peals of laughter.

Group or independent activity

- Give each pair or group a wrapped chocolate bar, placed in the middle of the table. Without touching it, the children describe the chocolate bar using sensory language (see, hear, smell, taste, touch). After a while, one child is allowed to slowly unwrap the chocolate bar. Individuals continue to write down their feelings as the chocolate bar is unwrapped.

- The children imagine they have just bought one of Willy Wonka’s Whipple-scrumptious Fudgemallow Delights. They can then develop their writing into a short descriptive piece in which the chocolate bar either has a golden ticket within it or does not.

- The children look back over their work and check it for the success criteria: use of effective punctuation, sentence length and paragraph length to build the suspense.
Plenary

• Individuals read their pieces to the class. The class identify the pieces show examples of climax or anti-climax, and comment upon the success criteria.

Other activities

• Individuals read their pieces of writing aloud and as they read, the rest of the class act or mime the words.

• The children make a storyboard of their piece of suspense writing.

• When reading chapter 11, The Miracle, ask whether it is an example of climax and anti-climax and how this is reflected in the language; for example, the shop keeper’s overuse of exclamation marks.

• The children learn about The Rule of Three, finding examples in books, films, fairytales and nursery rhymes, and identify how the Rule of Three is used for Charlie’s finding of the golden ticket – he opens three chocolate bars before finding the lucky one.

• The children role play a news report, showing an interview between a news reporter and Charlie - or the students themselves as other golden ticket winners.