

SMART™ Lesson

Using Foreshadowing in Mystery and Suspense Literature

Foreshadowing is a literary device used by writers to hint at what may happen later in the story. This creates suspense as the reader anticipates what will come next. In mystery and suspense literature, foreshadowing is particularly effective because it keeps readers guessing and on the edge of their seat.

Examples of Foreshadowing

Some common examples of foreshadowing in literature include:

- Prophecies or predictions
- Symbolism
- Recurring themes
- Flashbacks

Exercise

Read the following excerpt from a mystery novel and answer the questions that follow:

As Sarah walked down the dark alleyway, she couldn't help but feel like she was being watched. She heard footsteps behind her and quickened her pace. She turned around but saw no one. She reached into her bag for her pepper spray, just in case.

1. What literary device is being used in this excerpt?
2. What effect does this literary device have on the reader?
3. What do you think might happen next in the story?

Answers

1. Foreshadowing
2. Foreshadowing creates a sense of anticipation and suspense in the reader, making them want to continue reading to find out what happens.
3. Answers will vary, but the foreshadowing in this excerpt suggests that something dangerous may happen to Sarah in the future.