

Lesson 10: Meet the Anchor Text: Cover Analysis

60 minutes · reading lesson

WHAT THE CLASS SHOULD LEAVE ABLE TO DO

- Read a cover for colour, image, type and symbolism
- Name the design choices that do the selling work
- Say what the cover signals about genre, mood and audience

TERMS THE CLASS MEETS

Term	What it means
Visual literacy	Reading images, layout and design the way you read words: noticing what is there and what it is doing to you.
Typography	The look of the lettering: size, weight, style and placement of words on a cover.
Symbolism	When an image stands in for an idea rather than just showing a thing.

BEFORE YOU TEACH IT

Before the Lesson

- Prepare clear images or physical copies of the anchor text covers for students (same agreed cover for everyone).
- Have the invented practice cover mock-up ready for display on screen.
- Plan for a 60-minute slot where possible; if the period is 40–50 minutes, use the short-period path below and still land a started named Portfolio sheet.

Suggested Timing (60 minutes)

- Getting Started: 5 minutes
- What to Look For: 8 minutes
- Mark It Up: 15 minutes
- Write Your Response: 24 minutes
- Think About It: 3 minutes
- What You Covered: 5 minutes

If you have 40–50 minutes

- Trim intro and concepts; shorten mark-up to labels + model compare.
- Protect Write Your Response so the anchor-text Cover Analysis Sheet is started and saved under `m1_l10_cover_analysis_<initials>` before exit.
- **Short-period exit standard (same as student page):** a started, named draft must be saved before exit; polish may finish next day.
- Reflection can be oral or home; confirm filename before exit.

Teaching Tips

- Circulate during the mark-up activity to guide label placement; do not turn practice into a second full write.
- Model noticing on the practice cover, then move to the real anchor cover for production.
- Success criterion for step 4 is one complete six-element sheet with signal sentences; mark tags are optional tighten, not a mandatory full redraft.
- Symbolism is a reading of the image, not a separate cover part on the sheet.
- Encourage paired talk for the reflection prompts.
- Protect the writing time to allow students to complete their analysis.

Common Mistakes

- Students may link blurb text instead of visuals; remind them to focus on design elements.
- Using symbolism as an element name; prompt them to name the image and say what it stands for in the signal sentence.
- Writing vague responses; encourage specific connections to genre, mood or audience.
- Filing the practice notes instead of the anchor-text sheet; only `m1_l10_cover_analysis_<initials>` is the Portfolio piece.

Differentiation

- Support: Provide sentence starters for the analysis writing.
- Extension: Invite students to redesign one element of the cover.
- Support: Allow collaboration on the mark-up task for those who need it.

RUNNING THE LESSON

Step 1: Getting Started · 5 min

Open with a quick show of hands: who has bought or borrowed a book because of the cover alone? That is the whole lesson in one question. Keep this to five minutes so the mark-up and the portfolio write get their full slots.

Have the physical anchor text (or a clear photo of its cover) ready for every student before step 4. Students working independently need a photo or scan of the same cover the class agreed. Put that shared image on screen or in the class folder so nobody is stuck without a cover.

Short-period exit standard (40–50 minutes): every student leaves with a started, named Cover Analysis Sheet saved under `m1_l10_cover_analysis_<initials>`. Polish may finish next day. Same rule on the student page: started and saved before exit, not a full polish-or-fail bar.

Step 2: What to Look For · 8 min

Before the Lesson

Have the practice cover mock-up on screen for the short walkthrough. Do not open the class anchor text cover yet; step 3 uses the provided practice cover only.

Suggested Timing (60-minute slot)

- Getting Started: 5 minutes
- What to Look For: 8 minutes
- Mark It Up: 15 minutes
- Write Your Response: 24 minutes
- Think About It: 3 minutes
- What You Covered: 5 minutes

If you have 40–50 minutes

- Getting Started: 3 minutes
- What to Look For: 5 minutes
- Mark It Up: 10 minutes (labels + quick model compare)
- Write Your Response: 18–20 minutes (core path: protect this)
- Exit / file check: 2–3 minutes; reflection optional at home

Short-period exit standard: a started, named Cover Analysis Sheet saved before exit; polish may finish next day. Match the student page wording.

Teaching Tips

Name the Harry Potter silhouette as a shared shelf memory, then point forward to the empty-boat image on the practice cover when you reach symbolism. Protect the Portfolio Build (Write Your Response) above everything else.

Visual literacy here transfers to any Vocational Specialism poster, flyer or display the student designs later in the year.

Step 3: Mark It Up · 15 min

Circulate while students place labels. The common wobble is matching the blurb to the image or calling every picture 'symbolism' without saying what it stands for. Ask *what does that tell a stranger about the book?* and let them hear their own answer. Remind them symbolism is what they say about the image, not a separate label on the cover.

In class you can run a quick pair compare after the model reveal: which element did the most work to make someone want to open it? Keep the share to two or three voices so step 4 still gets its writing time. Do not turn this step into a second full written analysis; labels, model compare and the two short prompts are enough.

Step 4: Write Your Response · 24 min

This is the piece that goes in the folder. Protect the writing time: it is the point of the lesson. Students need the physical cover or a clear shared photo in front of them. If anyone lacks the book, put the agreed class photo on screen or in the shared folder immediately so the production step does not stall.

Success criterion: one complete six-element sheet with a signal sentence on each element, plus the audience line, filed under `m1_l10_cover_analysis_<initials>`. Mark tags are an optional self-check; students fix tagged lines only. Do not require a full redraft cycle. On a 40–50 minute period, verify the started named draft before exit; polish may finish next day.

Look for sentences that say what an element **does** (signals journey, targets teen readers, promises tension) rather than only what it **is** (blue, big title, a road). Symbolism belongs in the signal sentence for the image, not as a sixth element name. If a student is stuck on a sixth element, prompt colour, spine text, age band, series badge or back-cover layout.

Optional classroom enrichment: a short placemat where each student leads on one element, then writes their own full sheet. Independent students write the full six alone.

Step 5: Think About It · 3 min

Paired talk for about two minutes, then take two or three answers from the room. No need to write on the page here. If time is tight, use only the first prompt.

Step 6: What You Covered · 5 min

Confirm every student has a named file or page for the Cover Analysis Sheet (`m1_l10_cover_analysis_<initials>`) before they leave. On a short period, a started named draft is enough; polish may finish next day. Later cover-design work and Key Assignment tasks will use the noticing banked today, so today's sheet is the brief they will design against.

MODEL ANSWERS AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Students' wording will differ. These are the points a full answer reaches, not the only correct form.

Step 4: Write Your Response

Have you named six different visual elements from the cover in front of you?

Does each sentence say what the element signals about genre, mood or audience?