



Sentry by F. Brown

Teacher: **Silvana Prete**
Class II A-a

SENTRY

Fredrick Brown

He was wet and muddy and hungry and cold and he was fifty thousand light- years from home.

A strange blue sun gave light, and gravity, twice what he was used to, made every movement difficult.

But in tens of thousands of years this part of war hadn't changed. The flyboys were fine with their sleek spaceships and their fancy weapons. When the chips are down, though, it was still the foot soldier, the infantry, that had to take the ground and hold it, foot by bloody foot. Like this damned planet of a star he's never heard of until they'd landed him there. And now it was sacred ground because the aliens were there too. *The* aliens, the only other intelligent race in the Galaxy...cruel, hideous and repulsive monsters.

Contact had been made with them near the centre of the Galaxy, after the slow, difficult colonization of a dozen thousand planets; and it had been war at sight; they'd shot without even trying to negotiate, or to make peace.

Now, planet by bitter planet, it was being fought out.

He was wet and muddy and hungry and cold, and the day was raw with a high wind that hurt his eyes. But the aliens were trying to infiltrate and every sentry post was vital.

He stayed alert, gun ready. Fifty thousand light-years from home, fighting on a strange world and wondering if he'd ever live to see home again.

And then he saw one of them crawling toward him. He drew a bead and fired. The alien made that strange horrible sound they all make, then lay still.



He shuddered at the sound and sight of the alien lying there. One ought to be able to get used to them after a while, but he'd never been able to. Such repulsive creatures they were, with only two arms and two legs, ghastly white skins and no scales.

Activity: Role play- Impossible, imaginary interviews

Students are divided in groups of 4/5, to play the roles of:

- 1. Interviewer**
- 2. Alien**
- 3. Earthling**
- 4. Text writer - subjective point of view (alien)**
- 5. Text writer – subjective point of view (earthling)**

Teacher centered class and workshop: the impossible interview with examples of famous characters, found on the web and taken from “Le interviste impossibili”, RadioRAI

Teacher centered class and workshop: the point of view and elements of narratology

Guided discussion on writing techniques

Simulation of characters' roles

Textwriting

A sample of written production: impossible interview with subjective point of view (alien).

Impossible Interview to the Alien in “Sentry”

Journalist: “Hello, it’s a pleasure to have met you, would it be possible to ask you some questions?”

Alien: “Yes, hello, ask away.”



Journalist: "I'd be curious to know how you felt when you landed on planet Earth."

Alien: "I was soaking wet and covered in mud, I was hungry and cold."

Journalist: "Are the atmospheric conditions here any different from those on your planet?"

Alien: "When I arrived, there was a foreign sun that cast a freezing blue light, and furthermore the gravity was double of what I am used to, which meant a considerable effort for me, near agony at every movement."

Journalist: "Where did first contact occur with the other race, and how did terrestrials react?"

Alien: "First contact occurred near the centre of the galaxy, and right away, the enemy, the other race, despite us not having any type of communications or knowledge, started firing without even attempting an agreement."

Journalist: "What sensations, emotions, or state of mind did you feel in those moments?"

Alien: "At that moment, my only preoccupation was managing to survive and to return home safe and sound, despite the imminent war."

Journalist: "How did you react to confront this fear of yours?"

Alien: "I reacted by taking aim and pointing at the enemy, who crawled toward me, horrible to look at: with two eyes and with smooth, scaleless skin!"

Journalist: "What conclusions can you come up with based on this adventure?"

Alien: "This adventure has made me realise how cruel and different the terrestrial race is from us, both physically and morally."

Journalist: "Thank you so much for this opportunity ."

Alien: "You're welcome, it's been a pleasure."