

Reading Critically

Collections 1: Use It Again "Don't Miss It!"

The title, the choice of font, and the use of an exclamation mark create a conversational tone and a feeling of excitement and anticipation. The title is addressed directly to the reader.

The first four sentences repeat the same idea in different words. The use of "it" creates a sense of mystery and hooks the reader.

The use of "you" suggests the writer is having a friendly conversation with the reader.

Strong adjectives and the adverb "very" convey how special the building is.

Quirky, intriguing photos stimulate readers' interest (but don't give any answers).



Don't Miss It!

by Rex Eagle

It's the most unusual building in Kawakawa – perhaps in the whole of New Zealand. No one drives through town without noticing it! Tourists stop to take photos. Some even come to Kawakawa just to see it! Can you guess what the building is?

This amazing construction was designed by the world-famous Austrian architect Friedrich Hundertwasser (Hoon-dert-vuss-a). He came to live in the Kawakawa area in the late 1970s, and he had some very unusual ideas about what buildings should look like and what they should be made of.

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The text continues the mystery by referring to the building as a "construction".

Some of the materials in the Kawakawa building are on their second life. The bricks on the floor and the bottles that make up the "windows" are all recycled. Students from the local schools helped make some of the tiles.

Friedrich Hundertwasser also designed motorway restaurants, churches, shopping malls, day care centres, schools, and boats. He designed book covers, postage stamps, and phonecards for many European countries. In 1984, Italy's president presented him with a medal for designing the world's most beautiful postage stamp. Hundertwasser even designed flags, including one proposed for New Zealand that features a koru.

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References to "second life" and to the use of recycled materials link to Hundertwasser's "very unusual ideas" in the previous paragraph and add to the special nature of the building. Photographs support the idea.

The inverted commas for "windows" indicate that they are not the usual sort of windows. This adds to the uniqueness of the mystery building.

The mention of the students' input suggests Hundertwasser was part of the local community and that people were glad to be involved in his constructions. (This idea also connects to the ideas on the next page about people using whatever materials are available.)

The long list of achievements emphasises how successful and famous Hundertwasser was.

The use of the word "even" emphasises Hundertwasser's versatility.

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Careful choice of language suggests that architecture should be enjoyable. It implies that builders who use rulers and T-squares may be boring.

References to slums and poor people are likely to evoke a sympathetic response from the reader.



Straight lines were something that Hundertwasser didn't enjoy in architecture. He thought people used too many rulers and T-squares when it came to planning buildings. He liked designing buildings, with trees growing on them, with uneven floor surfaces or with roofs of grass for animals to graze on. He believed that everyone should be able to build their houses from whatever materials they liked. He drew his ideas for this belief from the slums of the world, where the poor live in whatever shelter they can construct from whatever cast-off materials they can find.

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Most strangely of all, Friedrich Hundertwasser believed that if someone was having a building constructed for them, they should live on the site before it was begun. He also wanted future occupiers to play a part in the construction by building parts of it for themselves.

Perhaps you're still wondering what this Kawakawa building is used for. This very unusual construction is ... the Kawakawa public toilets!

This continues the idea of Hundertwasser being unique and special.

The writer addresses the reader directly again, finishing off the “conversation”. This concluding paragraph connects back to the opening paragraph, which set up the mystery.

The use of ellipsis draws out the anticipation.



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