

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

**FINAL REPORT ON THE OTLA PHASE 6 (ENGLISH) PROJECT -
FROM AN EXPLODING FOLDER TO A SINGLE RESOURCE: IMPROVING
GCSE ENGLISH RESIT STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT WITH UNSEEN TEXTS
Greater Brighton Metropolitan College**

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The programme was delivered by -



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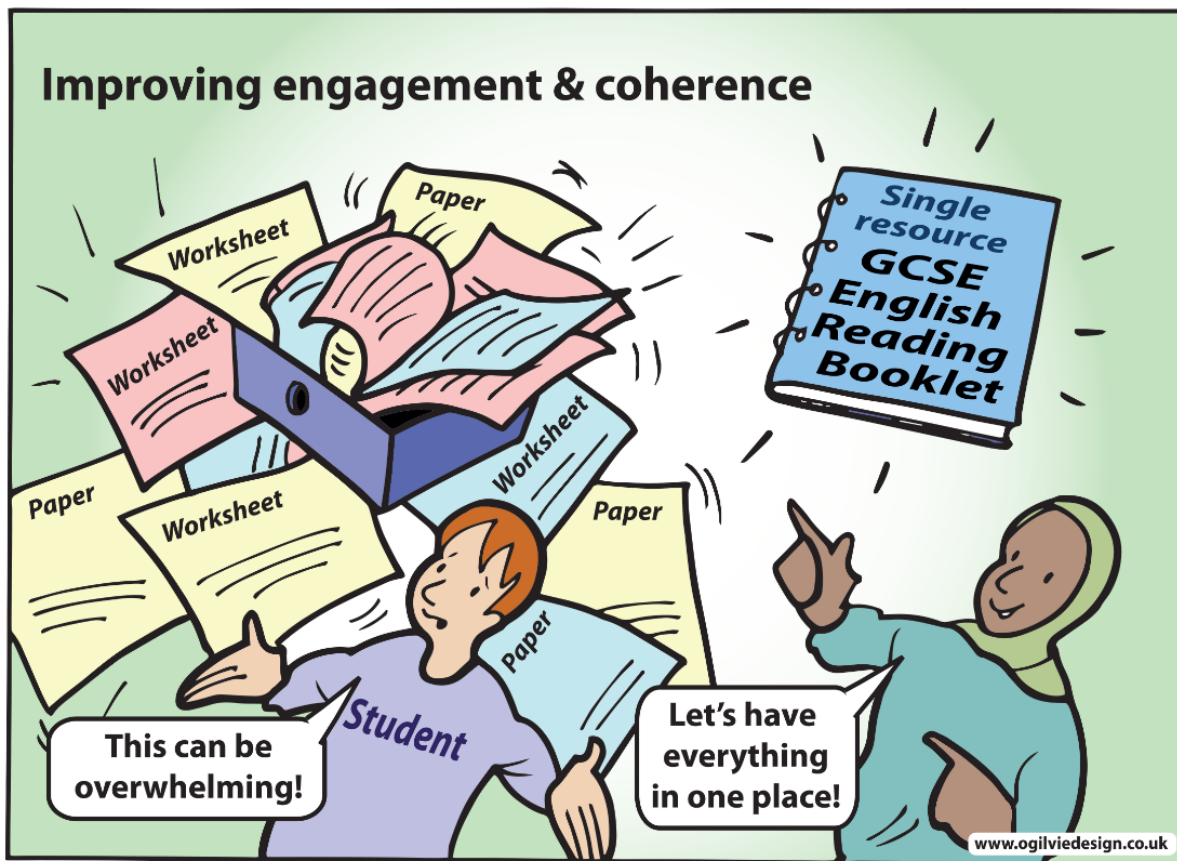


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Final report - From an exploding folder to a single resource: improving GCSE English resit students' engagement with unseen texts

Greater Brighton Metropolitan College



This project produced a 'Term 1 Reading Booklet' for GCSE English Language resit students studying across several campuses at our college. It contained a selection of extracts from a single fiction text, *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. These were interleaved with thematically connected non-fiction texts taken from the 19th and 21st century, with coloured-paper and online versions available to increase its accessibility.

Summary

The reading booklet represented a change from our previous approach, very commonly adopted in schools and colleges, where students are given a variety of unseen extracts and worksheets as individual handouts that accumulate in their folders over the year. However, it also built on our existing practice by incorporating content and formats we had found previously effective.

Staff and students who used the reading booklet were invited to feed back on it at various points in the first term. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, and this increased our confidence to proceed with creating a follow-up booklet for the second term, informed by suggestions from staff and students on how further to improve it.

Rationale

Staff expressed frustration that individual handouts, used hitherto for the GCSE English resit course, typically ended up stuffed into 'exploding folders' that were eventually binned rather than used for revision. This suggested that our students did not feel a strong sense of ownership over their work. They also reported feeling overwhelmed with paper.

The hope was that by replacing them with a single reading booklet, where materials could be refined and then presented cohesively and coherently, students would feel more on top of materials, and increasingly motivated to keep, and revise from, completed work.

A further positive by-product of using a single resource for teachers was also envisioned: less time spent photocopying 'new' materials each week, or trying to find them from previous weeks, and more time freed up to plan lesson delivery.



Figure 6a-1: An 'exploding folder' from the previous year

The presentation of materials for the reading booklet was informed by relevant educational research, particularly the work of Doug Lemov et al (2016) that shows how breaking longer extracts into 'bite-sized' chunks with questions that encourage close scrutiny of them, and require only short bursts of writing, can help build learner confidence and stamina, particularly important for the first stage of the resit course.

The booklet was laid out with clear headings indicating the focus of the particular section, and the part of the exam it related to. Then, typically, a table of 'useful words and phrases' with definitions would be given that related to that focus. An extract laid out in a similar way to an unseen exam text would be given, and for certain extracts the text would then be broken into chunks chronologically.

Individual questions might be tied to these shorter extracts with space to write directly underneath. Sentence starters might be offered, and prompts given to encourage effective approaches for writing in the exam. Extension tasks were also included to encourage broader thinking about the text and to stretch students who worked more quickly.

A total of six extracts were chosen from the beginning, middle and ending of *The Woman in Black*, and presented chronologically. Extracts that showcased particular structural or linguistic features were selected: for example, the opening of Chapter 2, where London fog is dramatically personified. Time was reserved, usually about 15 minutes, to then read the whole chapter from the book at the end of the lesson.

The twelve chapters were read over the first term, and longer chapters were read across the two weekly lessons. The hope was that this would provide a more immersive reading experience for students, in turn contributing to their overall engagement with the lessons.

In order to avoid narrowing the focus too much by exclusively concentrating on one fiction text we interleaved *The Woman in Black* extracts with thematically connected non-fiction extracts. For example, the previously mentioned extract about London fog was followed by two non-fiction texts: one Victorian extract which described a scene in London when there was dense fog, and another text, written within the last decade, focusing on the issue of air pollution in London. Two other non-fiction extracts relating to the topic of ghosts were included later on in the booklet, once the supernatural theme of the novel had been more fully established.

At the back of the booklet we included two feedback sheets relating to the reading assessments done just before and just after using the booklet. This meant that progress could be tracked and connected to the relevant work that had been completed in the interim between assessment points.

Approach

We worked collaboratively to agree the content of the booklet, and then one teacher was responsible for finalising the resource. Booklets were distributed to teams working across two campuses on four different sites before the start of term, and typically used for about a quarter of overall lesson delivery.

Across the term teachers were encouraged to share feedback and ideas of how they were using the booklet via a Padlet page. Their feedback was then taken and recorded more fully mid-term and at the end of term in a departmental meeting.

Students' views on the booklet were also gathered prior to half-term across classes via a lesson activity that elicited responses about how they felt 'overall' about the Reading Booklet, what they identified as positives, and what they felt were negatives. These thoughts were captured on post-its and were then analysed by the project lead who identified key themes emerging from the responses.

Late in term 1, just after the booklet had been completed, students from several classes were invited to give more detailed responses in relation to the key general themes identified through the earlier feedback. Their ideas were captured on paper-tablecloths and the activity was facilitated by GCSE English teachers from other classes, to encourage more forthcoming responses.

Two students were identified as case studies and interviewed in depth at the end of term 1 about their individual experiences of using the booklet. One student was new

to college, and the other was a returning learner, who was taking the resit for a *third* time with us. Examples and extracts of the work the two students produced were also taken as 'souvenirs' of how the booklets had been used.

Ideas generated through this range of feedback activities then informed planning of the booklet for term 2, included more space for teacher comments and feedback, more exam practice questions and writing frames, and the use of shaded pages to signal more clearly to students whether pages related to Paper 1 or Paper 2 of their GCSE exam.

Professional learning: Evidence of changes in teaching, learning and assessment practices

Teachers have consistently reported that having the booklet as a 'go to' resource has been extremely helpful in terms of organisational efficiency, tracking learner progress and providing students with a much more coherent revision resource than the individual worksheets it replaced. This has been corroborated by students: 'having everything in one place', clear layout, the ability to 'see' progress and review work done, or know what work had been missed, were frequently cited as key benefits of the resource.

We built activities into the lesson early on to elicit learner feedback on the reading booklet. Opening up a conversation with students at this stage provided a chance for them to influence decisions made about content and materials for the following term. Consequently, we remodelled the reading booklet to reflect their suggestions, visibly demonstrating that their views and comments are valued and have an immediate impact.

We also widened the focus of our second booklet to include extracts from a range of fiction texts, to more closely mirror the exam scenario as the end-point assessment loomed closer. These extracts were chosen from short stories that we also planned to read in their entirety within lessons, to maintain our focus on providing extended reading opportunities to build stamina and deeper engagement.

Evidence of improved collaboration and changes in organisational practices

The reading booklet has freed up time in the first term for teachers to focus on the delivery of lessons because they are no longer gathering texts and creating worksheets week-to-week. Because students have had a single resource 'carried with them', anecdotal evidence suggests it has increased the sense of coherence and continuity for those who have moved classes or had various cover teachers across the term.

In terms of accessibility, there have been some clear benefits of using the reading booklet. Online versions, and coloured copies, have ensured students have had the key reading material for the term in an accessible format that can be reviewed before and after lessons. Additional Learning Support staff, working with students outside of class, have also reported that this has been of benefit, and our Learning

Support department have created a new 'ClaroRead friendly' version of the booklet to further improve its accessibility.

An online version of the reading booklet is due to be shared on the Excellence Gateway, and it is hoped in the future that this will stimulate further conversations and collaborations with teaching staff across the sector who may adapt and/or pilot the materials in other contexts.

Evidence of improvement in learners' achievements, retention and progression

Students have spent time working from the booklet in one of their two GCSE English lessons each week, providing a consistent focal point that many students have said has helped them feel more 'in control' of their learning for the reading element of the course.

Only 7% of 130 students studying on the 16-19 programme surveyed in the first term reported a negative response to the reading booklet. The other 93% said that overall, it had either helped them feel more organised (37%), or helped with learning (32%), been interesting and enjoyable to use (15%), or simply been 'alright' (9%). Given the low motivation levels that can characterise learners in this context, this positive reaction has been pleasing.

More detailed discussion in the focus groups at the end of term revealed that often students who had criticisms of the booklet were mainly critical of the *content* of the booklet, rather than the use of it to replace individual handouts. Some said they found only analysing fiction extracts from the same text being read in class (*The Woman in Black*) constraining, for example, but they felt overall that the booklet format was helpful.

Both of the students interviewed in more depth reported that having texts, questions, space for answers, terms, definitions and sentence starters 'all in one place' was less overwhelming and had helped improve their motivation to revise at home.

They also both described how the breaking down of exam-style questions into more manageable chunks had improved their confidence in terms of reading analysis skills. Learner A demonstrated much fuller, more detailed responses towards the later pages in her booklet in contrast to earlier pages, which had gaps and shorter answers. Her annotations on the text were purposeful by the end, whereas at the start she had doodled on certain extracts.

ASSESSMENT

The end of term assessment for Learner A also reflected her increased confidence. She related how she had felt able to write far more in her writing assessment than she ever had before in an English exam or assessment. Her response to the language question, which was one the first booklet had focused on in particular, was a well-developed answer that contained some detailed analysis.

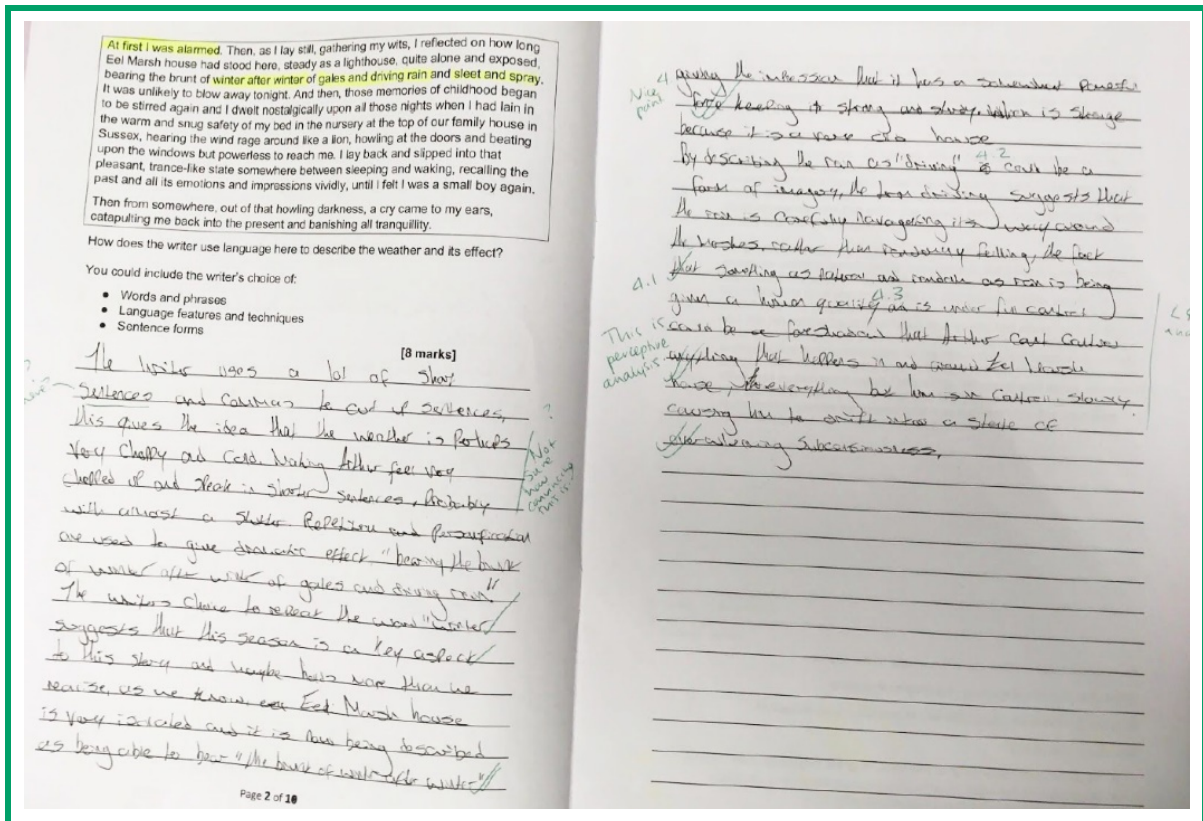


Figure 6a-2: Learner A - assessment in exam conditions

Learner B's initial assessment (which Learner A did not complete) was not developed, in contrast to the writing she produced when she started working from the booklet.

She later spoke about how she felt "daunted" by a "blank page" when faced with exam questions, and how the layout of the booklet, where it was "broken down" helped her to understand how to approach exam-style questions with more confidence.

Learner B took the GCSE exam for the fourth time in November 2019, and she achieved a Grade 5. Before she got her result, she spoke about how having something tangible to 'own' and revise from was beneficial in preparing for the exam, and also how the scaffolded approach of chunking the texts had helped her understand how to approach more in-depth reading analysis that had increased her confidence prior to the exam.

Fog was outdoors, hanging over the river, creeping in and out of alleyways and passages, swirling thickly between the bare trees of all the parks and gardens of the city, and indoors, too, seething through cracks and crannies like sour breath, gaining a sly entrance at every opening of a door. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog, a fog that choked and blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across roads, men and women took their lives in their hands, stumbling along the pavements, they clutched at railings and at one another, for guidance.

2) How does the writer use language to create a negative atmosphere here? Bring short quotes in to your answer, and language terms from Page 6. You could begin: "The writer creates a negative atmosphere by..."



The writer creates a negative atmosphere by using ~~the~~ personification "a fog that choked and blinded" which ~~shows~~ shows the reader how ~~evil~~ ^{evil} the fog is as ^{how} it's harming the people of London. ~~From~~ From the beginning the fog is painted as an ~~evil~~ evil and controlling character. ~~The fog is also shown as controlling as if it~~ because if it wasn't for the fog making people blindly walking ^{and} hoping they're going the right way, they would be free to go about their day.

Figure 6a-3: Learner B – booklet work

Learner B's feedback and result challenge a perception from some teachers that the booklet activities might not suitably prepare students for the exam and might not be stretching more able learners. However, the experiences of both these learners do back up feedback from some teachers who have reported that this scaffolded approach has been beneficial for learners who have low *confidence*, rather than low ability. Learning from this project

Having analysed our data we have come to the following conclusions:

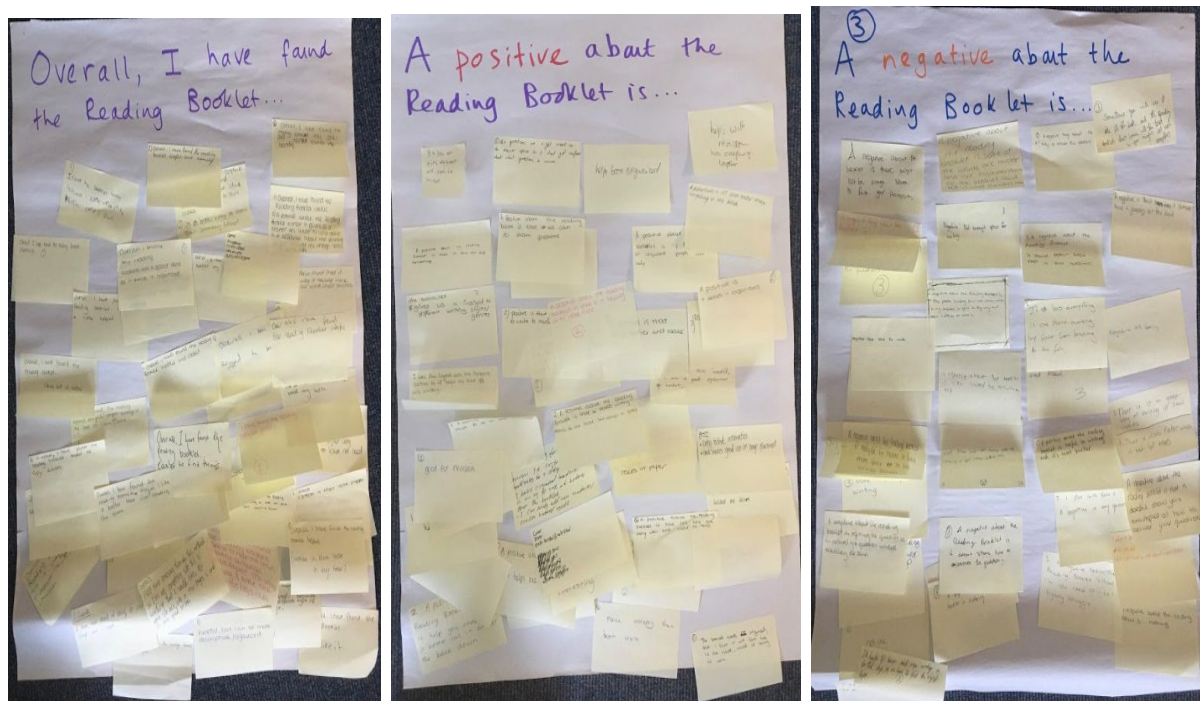
- When we were devising and piloting the booklet, there was an unusually high level of staff absence or changeover. This constrained opportunities to collaborate over materials for inclusion in the booklet and to share how it was being used. In the future, we would want to have more collaborative planning meetings, peer observations, and regular contact between staff focused on sharing experiences of using such a resource. We hope this will increase a sense of shared responsibility and endeavour for improving and refining the resource.

- However, the staff absences also highlighted that a potential benefit of such a resource is to provide a useful 'backbone' to lessons being covered by staff with little time to plan or gather their own materials.
- We have already had discussions as a team about how a booklet for the writing focus of the exam could be beneficial. We think there is scope for developing such a booklet that could include useful resources for this element of the course such as terms, definitions, frames, questions and marking codes.
- Teachers have reported that the pre-defined format of the reading booklet can be constraining, and the tricky question of how to balance respect for teacher autonomy and a need to differentiate resources for different contexts with the benefits of this resource, highlighted in this report, requires further interrogation beyond the life of this project. Perhaps in future smaller 'cells', teachers could devise their own versions of a booklet to increase a sense of ownership of the materials for all staff.

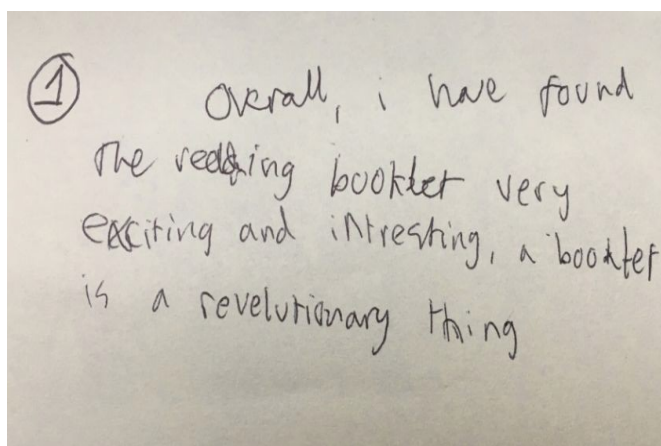
It was also a challenge to elicit feedback from staff working on geographically remote campuses and, although a Padlet page was set up, it was underutilised. It is likely that increasing a sense of 'ownership' over materials used in the booklet for all staff using it would further encourage 'buy in' to activities focused on sharing and reflection.

Appendix 1 - Initial Student Feedback report (mid-term)

Comments from post-it notes were gathered.



Examples of initial feedback gathered at the mid-point of using the booklet



A particularly positive comment from a learner about the booklet!

The results were summarised and recorded in tables (see below). Then comments to do with how students felt 'overall' about the booklet were categorised using the following codes:

A: all in one place/ convenient/ easy to use/ helps track progress/ organised/ saves time / clear layout = 48 (37%)

B: helps with learning/skills/helpful / = 41 (32%)

C: enjoyable/ good / interesting = 20 (15%)

D: alright (11) / different (1) = 12(9%)

E: negative = 9 (7%)

130 total

Overall, I have found the Reading Booklet...

Very good/ better because don't have separate sheets of paper/ all in one place A	9
It helps you with overall English skills B	2
Alright/ OK D	11
Easy to work from / use A	13
Helpful / useful B	35
Organised/ less messy A	7
Very interesting /enjoyable C	8
Really handy/ helpful/ useful A	14
Clear layout A	4
Shouldn't switch so quickly from one subject to the other E	1
Good C	12
Makes learning more efficient and productive A	1
Easy to find previous work A	1
Straightforward A	2
Boring / too much writing / long E	4
Complicating E	1
Works well for learning as a class and going over answers B	1
Helped me improve my writing B	2
Easy to learn / revise B	5
Helps to track progress A	1
Helps me concentrate B	1
A bit stressful E	1
Different D	1
Don't like it E	1
Difficult E	1

A positive about the Reading Booklet is...	
The Woman in Black Book backs it up	1
It's easy to use	8
Layout is neat/ clear / tidy	12
Very mobile	1
Easy to keep everything in order / organised	15
It gives you exam style questions that prepares you for the exam	9
It is helpful / useful	35
Gives you everything you need / everything together / makes me feel organised	27
It's clear/ understandable / self explanatory	8
Lots of short and long questions to help	1
We won't lose it	1
Resourceful	1
(Very) easy to understand	10
Very clear and organised	4
Helps with vocabulary	6
Helps you learn better structure	3
Comes in different colours for people with learning difficulties	3
You don't lose track because everything is in order and so easy to find your work	8
Words and the definitions are useful	2
Font size good	2
Rather have it than paper and instructions on the board	1
Using sentence starters	2
Easy to catch up on work	1
Helps with highlighting key points	1
Helps you build up your writing	2
Good questions that make me think	1
Separates writing	1
Helps me to feel comfortable and confident	1

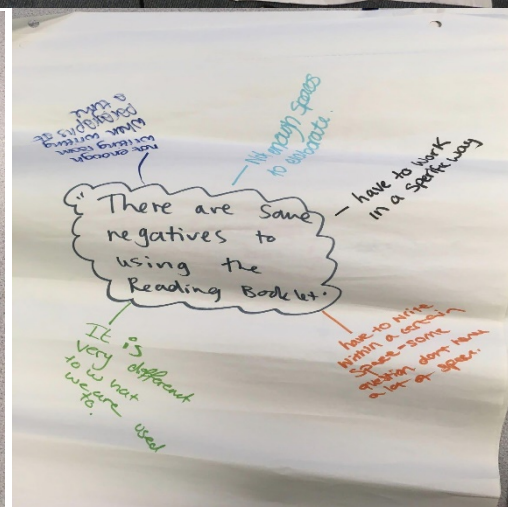
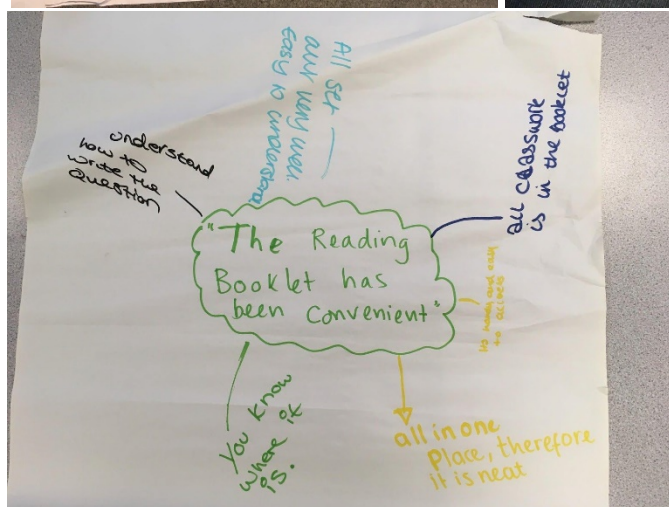
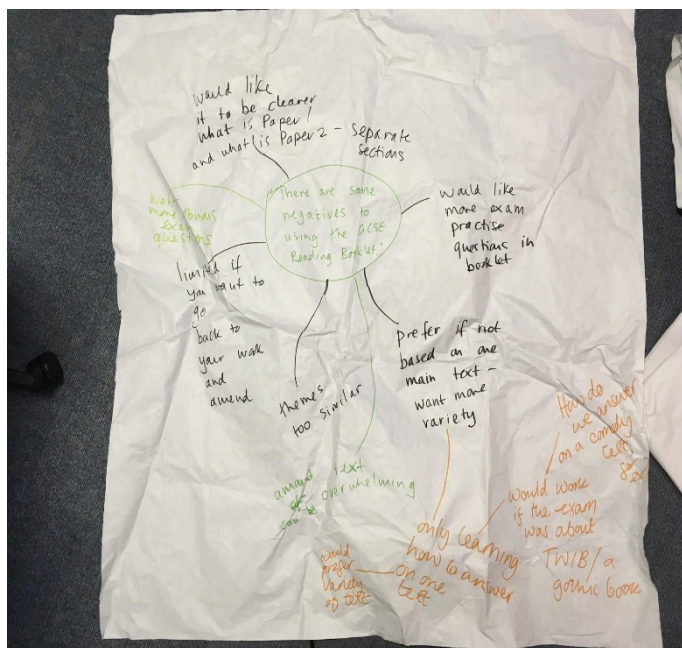
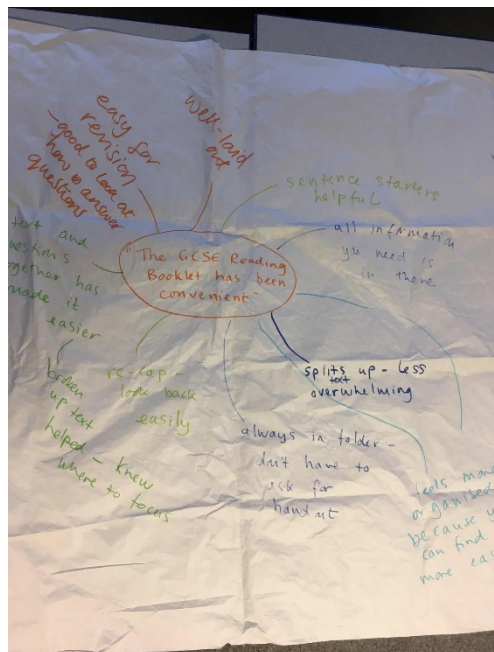
Helps me refine and understand writing techniques	1
Good way of learning in small chunks	5
Interesting	4
Really helped me learn	1
Gives insight into different writing styles and genres	1
Questions/texts are right next to answer space so I don't get confused about what questions to answer	2
Helps us read more	1
Easier than writing in the book	1
Can see what we are doing in the lesson	1

A negative about the Reading Booklet is...	
Should include a variety of questions (not just same style of questions)	1
Sometimes it doesn't get marked	1
Doesn't have a hard outer cover so pages can be damaged	1
Too big/ long	10
No faults	9
Sometimes I don't understand it	1
Very linear and not much room for adding things / less freedom	3
If it goes missing all your work is gone	5
I don't really like it / not sure about it	3
It's more information about the story/synopsis	1
Hard at points	6
Not really helping me	2
Can be boring	4
English is boring	1
Mixing non-fiction with fiction / too many text switches	3
Lots of information in a small space	4
Haven't done a lot of work in it	2
Not very organised	2

Complicating / not very clear	4
Not enough space to write	11
Should have more info. About Woman in Black that we are reading	1
Displayed poorly	1
No advice for reading levels	1
Childish	1
Not suitable for left handers	1
Skip pages in lessons	1
Bland / plain	4
Prefer working on exam papers	1
No contents page / glossary	2
Small images	1
Should have more colour	3
Too easy / limited (1 of 4 said could do more group work)	4
Hard to know which pages we'll be working on	1
Need separate boxes for teachers' notes and comments to help improve work	1
Doesn't show how to answer the question/ no examples	2
Not familiar with it/ used to it	2
Plastic binding gets in the way of writing	2
Uses up a lot of paper (environmental)	1
More sentence starters wanted	1
Include more definitions	1

Appendix 2 - Focus Group Feedback (end of term)

A total of four groups took part in this activity. Here ideas were discussed with a few different teachers facilitating the activity in different classrooms. Ideas were recorded in spidergrams, that were then given back to the project lead. Some pictures of the spidergrams are included below.



Appendix 3 - Case Studies

Context

The aim of this project was to replace individual handouts with a single resource that would provide students with a more cohesive and coherent record of learning. It was hoped this would motivate students to revise using the booklet, and also that the layout of the booklet, where texts were typically broken up with questions relating to 'bite-sized' chunks would increase learner confidence and proficiency in their textual analysis of unseen texts.

Evidence of learner A and B's progress can be seen from the attached:

- a) A brief description of the learners
- b) Learner A: Initial attempts at writing contrasted against later attempts
- c) Learner B: Initial attempts at writing contrasted against later attempts
- d) Notes from audio recordings made from interviews with the learners when they evaluated their experiences of using the booklets
- e) The supporting instructors' observations of the learners' progress through this experiment

a) A brief description of the learners

Learner A

Learner A is 16 years old. She is studying on the Level 1 Art and Design course. Last year she was at a local school. She sat her GCSEs at the end of the academic year and got a Grade 3 in GCSE English Language, and a Grade 1 in GCSE English Literature. She has a history of mental health difficulties, and has received mentoring support at the college to help cope with this. For exams, she is entitled to sit the exam in a small room.

Learner B

Learner B is 18 years old. She is studying Photography on the Level 3 course. She is in her third year at college. For the previous two years she has done the GCSE English Language resit and got a Grade 3 on both occasions. She was entered for the November resit in 2019, making it her fourth attempt at the exam. She has just passed with a Grade 5. She has a diagnosis of dyslexia. For exams, she is entitled to use a word-processor and she has extra time. She also has visual stress and prefers blue or mauve paper for reading.

b) Learner A: Initial attempts at writing contrasted against later attempts

Doodles from an earlier page in the booklet: These can be contrasted against a later page:

Q2

This non-fiction extract is taken from the Victorian newspaper *Illustrated Police News*, 1897.



The Plumstead Ghost

1 In October 1897, many people saw a 'ghost' flitting about near St James's Church and school, Plumstead. Sensitive little girls had fainted when the white spectre approached them; some were still in bed, said the *Daily News*, suffering from nervous exhaustion. A **fine schoolmaster had been frightened out of his wits** when the 'Plumstead Ghost' suddenly grabbed hold of him from behind and shouted 'See-hah!' at the top of its voice. An old couple visiting the churchyard received a similar shock when the ghost hailed them from a tree, making use of the same uncouth outcry.

When another schoolmaster was taking an evening walk, he heard rustling in the hedges nearby, and a shout of "See-hah!" He had brought with him a large Newfoundland dog, which he set on the spectre. Since the master distinctly heard the ghost give a yelp when the dog's fangs made contact with its buttocks, he became convinced that the Plumstead Ghost was flesh and blood. He spoke to both masters and schoolboys, asking them not to be fearful, but to teach the ghost a hard lesson if they came across it.

15 The rowdy schoolboys decided to do just that. One evening, after scouts had reported that the ghost was at large, a troop of schoolboys, a hundred strong, stormed the churchyard. Shouting and yelping, they pelted the ghost with stones, but without scoring any hits on the ascending spectre. Instead, their missiles broke some valuable stained glass. Pursued by the Newfoundland dog, the ghost was seen to disappear into the hedges.

20 The schoolboys had been so rowdy that the police arrested two of the ringleaders and brought them to Woolwich, but after the masters had explained the extraordinary circumstances of their riot, they were both discharged. The evening after, the Plumstead Ghost was seen in the grounds of Mr. J.R. Jelly. Arrayed in white attire, and wearing some kind of grotesque mask, the spectre was sitting in a tree, shouting its usual "See-hah!" to frighten some female domestics. Mr. Jelly was not at all amused; he sent for the police and the ghost was arrested. It turned out that the spectre's white garb had been torn, and his buttocks badly bruised, from his two encounters with the fierce Newfoundland dog. He turned out to be a local engineer. He was placed under restraint in an asylum, and the Plumstead Ghost was laid to rest.

Chapter 9: In the Nursery

These two extracts are taken from Chapter 9 of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The Extract 1 is from the opening of the chapter, when the narrator, Arthur Kipps, wakes up in his hotel in Cryford Griffin, ready to prepare for his visit to the home of Mrs Drablow, Eel Marsh House. Extract 2 describes a noise that disturbs him and the dog Spider whilst staying in Eel Marsh house that night.

Extract 1

The fine clear weather still held, there was sunshine and blue sky again, when I drew my curtains. I had slept lightly and restlessly, troubled by snatches of peculiar, disconnected dreams. Perhaps I had eaten and drunk too well and richly with Mr Daily. But my mood was unchanged, I was determined and optimistic, as I dressed and breakfasted, and then began to make preparations for my stay at Eel Marsh House. The little dog Spider had, somewhat to my surprise, slept motionlessly at the foot of my bed. I had taken to her, though I knew little in the way of dogs. She was spirited, lively and alert and yet completely biddable, the expression in her bright eyes, fringed a little by shaggy hair that formed itself somewhat comically into the shape of beetling eyebrows, seemed to me highly intelligent. I thought I was going to be very glad of her.

Extract 2

But, at my feet, the dog Spider began to whine, a thin, pitiful, frightened moan, and to back away from the door a little and press against my legs. My throat felt constricted and dry and I had begun to shiver. There was something in that room and I could not get to it, nor would I dare to, if I were able. I told myself it was a rat or a trapped bird, fallen down the chimney into the hearth and unable to get out again. But the sound was not that of some small, panic-stricken creature. Bump Bump. Pause. Bump bump. Pause. Bump bump. Bump bump. Bump bump. Bump bump. I think that I might have stood there for some time.

One of Learner A's first entries in the Reading Booklet is below (left). She has missed two questions, and written brief notes for the third. This contrasts with later entries, where every question is attempted- see below (right):

It was nine-thirty on Christmas Eve. As I crossed the long entrance hall of Monk's Piece on my way from the dining room, where we had just enjoyed the first of the happy, festive meals, toward the drawing room and the fire around which my family were now assembled, I paused and then, as I often do in the course of an evening, went to the front door, opened it and stepped outside.

1) What does the writer focus your attention on in this opening paragraph? Use words to do with structure in your answer [see page 2].

2) What is one thing you might infer about the narrator from the opening paragraph? You could use the words 'infer' and 'narrator' in your answer.

I have always liked to take a breath of the evening, to smell the air, whether it is sweetly scented and balmy with the flowers of midsummer, pungent with the bonfire and leaf-mould of autumn, or crackling cold from frost and snow. I like to look about me at the sky above my head, whether there are moon and stars or utter blackness, and into the darkness ahead of me; I like to listen for the cries of nocturnal creatures and the moaning rise and fall of the wind, or the pattering of rain in the orchard trees. I enjoy the rush of air toward me up the hill from the flat pastures of the river valley.

3) In this paragraph, how does the writer use language to 'hook' the reader into the story? You could use the term 'sensory description' in your answer.

The writer hooks the reader by describing the scene in great detail, typically using sensory description

1) List some of the strange (ghostly) occurrences mentioned in the article. Use direct quotes.

- "I was being pushed downwards the door by an invisible force"
- "Clashes of knives spontaneously burrowing into flesh"
- "WPC Cooper Heaps saw a chest move"
- "I experienced legs pieces flying across the road"

2) Do you think the writer of this article thinks the Enfield Poltergeist is real? Use quotes to support your answer.

I think the writer is unsure, as they said "But it was real" "What was going on?" They are quick to say that it was real but as the events are so dramatic and strange they have very little understanding of what happened and what didn't. As she is extremely doubtful on what witnesses say, perhaps they could own explanation.

3) Give examples of the following techniques in the extract. Use quotes to support your answer.

- Fact: The events happened in Enfield, North London
- Opinion (from a witness): "I was being pushed downwards the door by an invisible force"
- Rhetorical question: "What was going on?"
- Emotive language: "The family was in a bad state"
- Statistic: There were less than 30 witnesses
- Triple: "I involved myself in further being being thought out and then I was in a position to see the house"

4) Choose one technique above and explain its possible effect on the reader. Use quotes to support your answer.

The use of emotive language is possibly used to get a reaction from the reader, to make them feel the book for the family who would make the reader more likely to believe the story.

Great work Good level of detail

And this final entry in her booklet shows how much more detailed her responses have become. She has also added to her answer, in a different coloured pen, following class discussion.

How does Susan Hill use language to create this mood? Again, bring in examples of different words / phrases and comment on the effect.

The writer uses a simile to bring in a mysterious feel
 "The fact that Arthur's throat felt constricted" this suggests that something
 is happening and that feeling is then
 used to describe the recorder and Arthur, "recorder
 also used" "my throat felt constricted" and my and I began
 "this" this further suggests a mysterious, sinister mood
 it is an uncomfortable feeling, by repeating this part we
 get ourselves into the uncomfortable state that
 is. The fact that Arthur's throat felt constricted
 he is feeling worried and shocked, the light, restor
 in his throat spreads through his whole body as the cold

Summative assessment:

Learner A was away for the first week and missed the initial reading assessment. However, her early writing in the booklet revealed that she often lacked confidence to write. She reported that in previous English exams she had often written very little, or missed questions. At the end of Term 1 she completed a Reading Paper 1 assessment in exam conditions. She demonstrated that she could write a fuller answer, and an example from her assessment is below:

At first I was alarmed. Then, as I lay still, gathering my wits, I reflected on how long Eel Marsh house had stood here, steady as a lighthouse, quite alone and exposed, bearing the brunt of winter after winter of gales and driving rain and sleet and spray. It was unlikely to blow away tonight. And then, those memories of childhood began to be stirred again and I dwelt nostalgically upon all those nights when I had lain in the warm and snug safety of my bed in the nursery at the top of our family house in Sussex, hearing the wind rage around like a lion, howling at the doors and beating upon the windows but powerless to reach me. I lay back and slipped into that pleasant, trance-like state somewhere between sleeping and waking, recalling the past and all its emotions and impressions vividly, until I felt I was a small boy again.

Then from somewhere, out of that howling darkness, a cry came to my ears, catapulting me back into the present and banishing all tranquillity.

How does the writer use language here to describe the weather and its effect?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- Words and phrases
- Language features and techniques
- Sentence forms

[8 marks]

The writer uses a lot of short sentences and clauses to cut up sentences, this gives the idea that the weather is perhaps very chilly and cold, making Arthur feel very chilled and weak in shorter sentences, probably with almost a stutter. Repetition and personification are used to give dramatic effect "bearing the brunt of winter after winter of gales and driving rain". The writer chose to repeat the word "winter" suggests that this season is a key aspect to this story and maybe this was the time we realise, as we know even Eel Marsh house is very isolated and it is now being described as being able to bear "the brunt of winter after winter".

Page 2 of 10

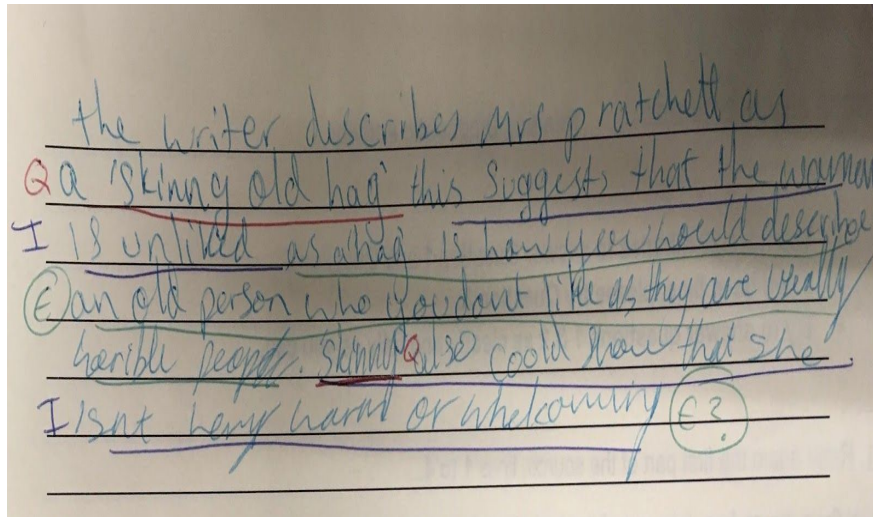
4.1. giving the impression that it has a somewhat sinister mood
 by keeping it strong and steady, when is strange because it is a very old house
 By describing the rain as "driving" it can be a form of imagery, the term driving suggests that the rain is carefully navigating its way toward the houses, rather than randomly falling, the fact that something as natural and random as rain is being given a human quality as it is under full control
 This is a foreshadowing that Arthur can't control anything that happens in and around Eel Marsh house, everything but he is in control slowly causing him to shift into a state of subconsciousness.

Nice point
 This is a perceptible analysis

L9

c) Learner B: Initial attempts at writing contrasted against later attempts


Learner B did not complete the initial assessment for writing. This was her answer to the Paper Question 2 response she was asked to complete:



It can be seen that her response is not very developed. She reported that she found it much easier to write in the booklet because the text was 'broken up', and she was less daunted to write than when facing an empty page. This was reflected in her booklet work. Extracts are below:


Fog was outdoors, hanging over the river, creeping in and out of alleyways and passages, swirling thickly between the bare trees of all the parks and gardens of the city, and indoors, too, seething through cracks and crannies like sour breath, gaining a sly entrance at every opening of a door. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog, a fog that choked and blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across roads, men and women took their lives in their hands, stumbling along the pavements, they clutched at railings and at one another, for guidance.

2) How does the writer use language to create a negative atmosphere here? Bring short quotes in to your answer, and language terms from Page 6. You could begin: "The writer creates a negative atmosphere by..."



The writer creates a negative atmosphere by using ~~the~~ personification "a fog that choked and blinded" which ~~shows~~ shows the reader how ~~the~~ fog is ^{how} harming the people of London. From the beginning the fog is painted as an ~~evil~~ ^{evil} and controlling character. ~~The fog is also shown as controlling as if it~~ because if it wasn't for the fog making people blindly walking ^{and} hoping they're going the right way they would be free to go about their day.

What mood do you think is created in Extract 1?

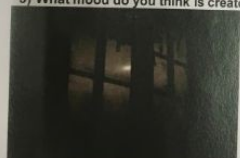


I think the mood of this section is rather optimistic.

2) How does Susan Hill use language to create this mood? Bring in examples of a few different words / phrases and comment on the effect.

She makes the ~~extract~~ extract feel ~~more~~ optimistic by using light imagery "bright eyes" which comes across as hopeful as the dogs eyes are "bright" showing the wonder she has and less knowing to the terror to come. She also uses / stop 3 to ingrain the idea of optimism of the pair through the dog who was "spirited, lively and alert."

3) What mood do you think is created in Extract 2?



The mood of this extract is very tense.

4) How does Susan Hill use language to create this mood? Again, bring in examples of a few different words / phrases and comment on the effect.

Hill creates this mood ~~by~~ using a range of techniques such as fragmented sentences "Pause" which really breaks the flow of reading. ~~which~~ she also uses repetition of the word "bump" showing how continuously the noise is which builds the suspense.

d) Notes from audio recordings made from interviews with the learners when they evaluated their experiences of using the booklets

Interview notes: Learner A

Q: How were materials presented to you at school last year?

A: **Individual handouts**

Q: I was wondering if you could talk about the idea of convenience, because one of the reasons we made this booklet was to make it more convenient for students.

A: **Yeah, because everything is in one place and because it's in one book it's easier to get through it**

Q: How do you mean it's easier to get through it?

A: **Because when it's individual sheets you have to look for different parts whereas with this it's all together. Before things could get all separated.**

Q: Were there any other things that struck you about it being quite handy?

A: **Yeah, because you have a lot of information all in one place**

Q: What kind of information do you think is useful?

A: **Like the parts with the phrases and the definitions. Normally you'd get one handout just for that but because it's got everything all together it's really neat. You're not wasting space in your folder.**

Q: I was wondering if you could talk about your learning and the reading aspects of it, and whether you've got any thoughts on that to do with the booklet?

A: **I think it helps a lot more. Where you read it, and you write in between. So you read it, and then you write, and then you read more and then you write more. Whereas at school, I don't know if this was like everywhere, we would do the reading and then have a separate sheet to write on. Whereas when here you read and write at the same time so it helps you to get more depth and give more information.**

Q: So do you think it's helped you to write more detailed answers because the text has been broken up?

A: **Yeah, because I can really focus on parts of the text and look at certain parts of it and take more from it.**

Q: Do you think there are any other benefits for learning of having your work like this? I mean, I'm now going to say that you can take this with you (gestures to booklet), and I wonder how that would feel in contrast to me saying, right that's your work for Term 1 (hands her a pile of worksheets from a previous student folder)- because that's kind of the difference...



Example of an 'exploding folder' used the year before.

A: ***It looks so much less. I would be more motivated to do it. Because with these it's like one sheet, and because it's a sheet I'd think, oh I won't do the next one then. But with this [booklet] I'd think, 'Oh I might as well do the answer then', because it's like all with each other.***

Q: I noticed when I had a quick browse through your booklet you'd completed pages differently, and I was interested to ask you about more. I notice here you have written full answers, answered all the questions and annotated the text, in the last few weeks of work you did. But I noticed earlier on that there were some weeks, like maybe this week where you'd done more doodling and left gaps, and I wondered if you could tell me about that? I'm quite interested- why does it look different?

A: ***It's because when I first start something I won't know so much about it so I won't write as much..***

Q: So is it to do with the type of text? So, on this week the text was different, it was a non-fiction.

A: ***Yes, and it was old, but it was hard to pick things out. In this text it was more hidden - you had to infer how someone felt, whereas with this one you had to just pick something out. The other one you had to look for something.***

Q: Let's go back a bit further. I notice here you didn't do these questions. Can you remember why?

A: ***I think it was because I didn't really understand what they meant. I'd read the text and I wouldn't be able to see those things in the text.***

Q: Looking at those questions now do you think you'd be able to have a go at them?

A: ***Probably yeah.***

Q: Just looking at these bits at the end [of the booklet], do you think we are looking at something to do with confidence here?

A: ***Yeah, I've got more used to writing, and how to pick things out, and language techniques and so I know what to look for and what different things mean.***

Q: So it may be interesting now to see if you might be able to answer these questions from earlier on now.

A: ***Yeah.***

Q: Just looking at your reading assessment you did at the end of term - I gave you a really high mark and you were talking about language in a really focused, really precise way, so maybe this confidence you built helped with that, but I also noticed you didn't attempt some questions. And I wondered what changes you thought could be made to the booklet to improve it? Anything we could do to improve your confidence in all areas?

A: ***I think it's because if this gets lost then everything gets lost whereas before it would just be individual handouts.***

Q: Yes, I am mindful of that, which is why we've kept the booklet in your folder. But now I'm giving it to you of course you could lose it. Do you think you'd be less likely to lose this than an individual handout?

A: ***Yes, with an individual handout I would put it under my desk or something whereas with this I would put it in a draw so it wouldn't get damaged.***

Q: Do you think you'd be more likely to revise from it?

A: ***Yes because with this I've got the terms, and all the questions and about taking quotes from the text. It's just good to look back on it and search things up.***

Q: Is there anything else you think could be improved, any negatives?

A: ***Where there are like big bits of text then to have a brief conclusion of it..***

Q: Do you mean a summary?

A: ***Yeah a brief summary, rather than having to look back at it multiple times, just to have the key points to remember.***

Q: I suppose we could also have a box at the end so students could have a box to write in so they could practice summarising themselves. We have put the summaries at the top just because it more closely reflects the question layout in the exam, and we might be concerned students would get used to that because I think students might expect that in the exam.

A: ***I think only for long texts with a lot of information so we don't have to read the texts all again.***

Q: I think that's also something interesting for me to think about in the way I teach.. Maybe encouraging you to highlight key points more.

A: ***Yes so students have to really think about what the key points are.***

Interview notes: Learner B

Q: Last year you had your materials as separate handouts whereas this year we've got the booklet. I just wondered what your thoughts were as a returning learner about the difference?

B: ***I thought it was a lot better because we obviously had everything there and then if you missed a lesson you weren't going to miss the information because you could look back on it.***

Q: Yes because I suppose before if you missed a lesson you wouldn't necessarily get the handouts for it?

B: ***Yeah.***

Q: What about working from the booklet in the lessons. I was wondering what your thoughts were on that?


B: ***I quite liked it because you could see how the whole lesson was planned out really. It was also quite nice the way we laid it out. I kind of knew how I should be writing it.***

Q: Could you say a bit more on that?

B: ***It really breaks it down into little sections so you know what you're meant to be doing. It gives a nice format to it.***

Q: I suppose in the exam you get an extract of about a page and a half and then a question on it. This is a little different to that. So you are saying you found it quite helpful?

B: ***Yeah, because it kind of broke everything down so you could know how you should be thinking of it in the exam***



I have always liked to take a breath of the evening, to smell the air, whether it is sweetly scented and balmy with the flowers of midsummer, pungent with the bonfires and leaf-mould of autumn, or crackling cold from frost and snow. I like to look about me at the sky above my head, whether there are moon and stars or utter blackness and into the darkness ahead of me; I like to listen for the cries of nocturnal creatures and the moaning rise and fall of the wind, or the pattering of rain in the orchard trees, I enjoy the rush of air toward me up the hill from the flat pastures of the river valley.

In this paragraph, how does the writer use language to 'hook' the reader into the story? You could use the term 'sensory description' in your answer.

The writer uses sensory description to hook the reader in, ~~the~~ ~~the~~ for example "I enjoy the

Handwritten annotations: 'smell' above 'smell the air', 'feel' above 'crackling cold', 'see' above 'look', 'sound' above 'cries of nocturnal creatures'.

An example of a 'bite sized' extract and question from the Reading Booklet on mauve paper, to suit Learner B who has visual stress.

Q: I suppose some people could argue that breaking it down like that doesn't reflect what you do in the exam and they might suggest it would have been better to put in exam style questions in this first booklet. What do you think about that?

B: ***I think that could possibly be useful as well but because we are still learning how to answer the questions if you're just giving us questions you're just throwing us in the deep end and not knowing, still by the end of it not knowing how to really lay it out..***

Q: You did the resit [in November]. I wondered if you had any thoughts on how these materials could have been adapted or used for resit students, because you were in a slightly different position to most other students [who will do it in June]

B: ***I still found it quite useful because it kept certain things fresh in my memory, but it's only covering this one bit, so it wouldn't cover everything I'd need to learn in this one booklet, but I think that would be quite hard to put together I'd imagine..***

Q: Yes and I think for us the difficulty is that the majority of students aren't doing the resit in November so that might be a bit overwhelming for them. So do you think the extra sessions if you're doing the resit works?

B: ***Yeah, I think that is probably the best way.***

Q: You have some exam arrangements don't you, because you have dyslexia. And quite a lot of our students have dyslexia. I wonder if you had any comments coming from the perspective of someone who has dyslexia?

B: ***Yeah I think you're guaranteed to have the coloured paper. And it's also quite nice the size of font and everything. It's really clear and it gives enough space and it's just nice to work through.***

Q: And I suppose last year you may have had a bit more variation [students folder from last year is referred to]. What about revision. Could you talk about that, do you think you'd do any?

B: ***Yeah, I think this is a lot nicer. You can see when you did what whereas last year you get mixed up between handouts and it's quite hard to follow what is with what lesson.***

Q: And the fact that your folder is still here suggests you didn't think 'I need to take that off and revise from it!' Why might you have been put off revising from it?

B: ***Well because there are quite a lot of papers in it and a lot of them are probably from the first five minutes of the lesson, warming you into it, a quick beginner, which you wouldn't really need to look back on it. Whereas with the booklet you know it's all there and there is no un-relevant information.***

Q: Final thought is that in the exam you type, and there was an online version of the booklet, but I notice in the lesson you wrote in it..

B: *I quite liked writing in it because of the way it's laid out - like it's not a blank page so I found it a bit easier to write it out. Because that's one of the reasons I have a computer in an exam really is because when I see a blank page it's sort of daunting but because I see it all there [in booklet] and how much I should be writing where it's nice to handwrite it..*

Q: If I said for next term you had a choice of going to individual handouts or a booklet what would you prefer.

B: *I think I'd definitely want a booklet again. It's just nice having it all there and not having to sort through a whole load of papers at the end when I'm trying to revise.*

Q: Well good news, there is a booklet, I'll give it to you next lesson!

B: *Yay!*

d) The GCSE English teacher's observations of the learners' progress through this experiment

Learner A

For the first few weeks of the course Learner A would frequently 'disengage' during the lesson. She demonstrated this by becoming very withdrawn, barely speaking, doodling in her book and refusing to take part in activities. She was resistant to help from the Learning Support Assistant (LSA), and at times I was at a loss to know how to support her. She would have a better lesson, where she would participate more, but for the first half of term for almost half of the lessons she would turn up but not participate, and on one occasion she had to leave because she was feeling so low.

However, as the weeks progressed, I noticed she was beginning to disengage less and less frequently. After half term there were very few instances when she 'switched off', and this would not be for long periods like before. She appeared to be more relaxed, confident and productive. She is now consistently focused for the majority of the lessons, and has excellent attendance and punctuality.

Learner B

Learner B was entering my class for her third time at being a resit student at the college. I was immediately impressed by her cheerful and resilient attitude considering this circumstance.

She displayed a mature attitude to learning and was always engaged and hard-working in the sessions.

In her initial assessment I noticed her response was not very developed, and she appeared to lack confidence. However, in subsequent lessons when we worked from the booklet I was impressed by the quality of her work and rather surprised that she had been unsuccessful in her attempts to achieve a Grade 4 in the past 4 exams she had sat. She attended a couple of extra revision sessions prior to the November resit, but, apart from this, her only input was coming to the two GCSE English lessons each week.

She sat the exam in November, but she continued to come to lessons up until the results came out in January 2020. We were all delighted to discover that she got a Grade 5 in her most recent exam.

Appendix 4 - Staff feedback

All staff feedback gathered from the project can be found here: https://en-gb.padlet.com/c_collins2/xt744o9j4016sl2t

nb This is a snapshot taken at the end of the project. The original may or may not still be available here https://en-gb.padlet.com/anna_mollison/readingbooklet and may have been updated since this snapshot was taken.

Appendix 5 - 'Reading Booklet for Term 1'

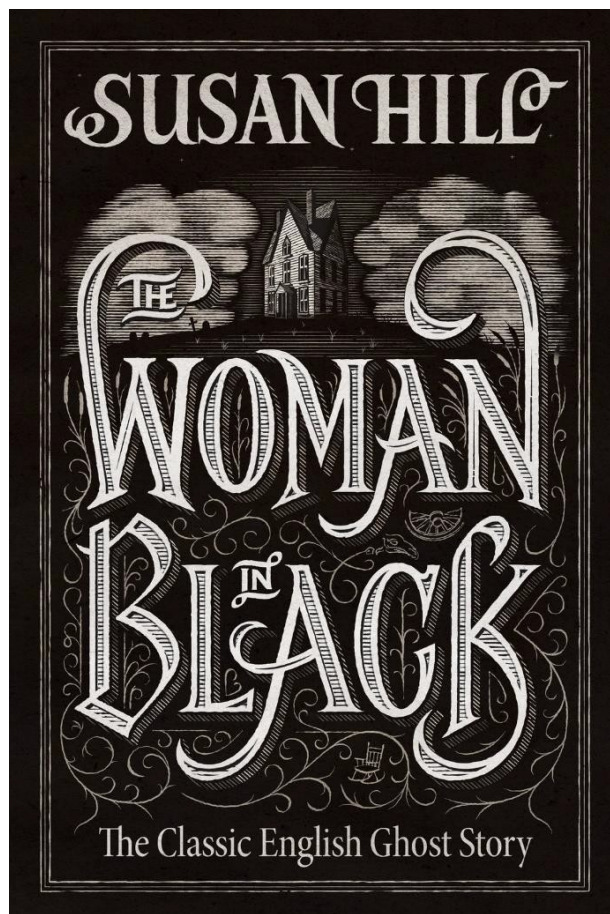


GCSE English Language 2019-20

Term 1 Reading Booklet

Name _____

Teacher _____



Writing about Structure: useful words and phrases

Word/phrase	Meaning
Establishes	To set up or put in place (e.g. a setting or situation).
First person narrator	A character who tells the story using 'I'.
Focuses on	The centre of interest, e.g. in a paragraph.
Hook	A way of 'pulling in' the reader, e.g. by painting a very detailed picture for them so they can become immersed, or by not telling them something, etc.
Infer	When the reader 'reads between the lines' to get meaning, or draws a conclusion, when something is not directly stated.
Mood	The overall feeling or atmosphere an author creates in their writing.
Setting	A place where something takes place.
Situation	A set of circumstances.
Zooms in on	When there is a 'close up' detailed description of something or someone.

Structure (openings) in fiction (Paper 1, Q3)

Chapter 1: *Christmas Eve*

This extract is from the beginning of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. It is the early 20th century and Arthur lives a pleasant, safe family life in a pleasant, safe village and in the warm, busy cottage called Monk's Piece.

1 It was nine-thirty on Christmas Eve.
As I crossed the long entrance hall
of Monk's Piece on my way from the
dining room, where we had just
5 enjoyed the first of the happy, festive
meals, toward the drawing room and
the fire around which my family were
now assembled, I paused and then,
as I often do in the course of an
10 evening, went to the front door, opened it and stepped outside.



I have always liked to take a breath of the evening, to smell the air, whether it is
sweetly scented and balmy with the flowers of midsummer, pungent with the
bonfires and leaf-mould of autumn, or crackling cold from frost and snow. I like to
look about me at the sky above my head, whether there are moon and stars or
15 utter blackness, and into the darkness ahead of me; I like to listen for the cries of
nocturnal creatures and the moaning rise and fall of the wind, or the pattering of
rain in the orchard trees, I enjoy the rush of air toward me up the hill from the flat
pastures of the river valley.

Tonight, I smelled at once, and with a lightening heart, that there had been a
20 change in the weather. All the previous week, we had had rain, chilling rain and a
mist that lay low about the house and over the countryside. From the windows,
the view stretched no farther than a yard or two down the garden. It was wretched
weather, never seeming to come fully light, and raw, too. There had been no
pleasure in walking, the visibility was too poor for any shooting and the dogs were
25 permanently morose and muddy. Inside the house, the lamps were lit throughout
the day and the walls of larder, outhouse and cellar oozed damp and smelled
sour, the fires sputtered and smoked, burning dismally low.

It was nine-thirty on Christmas Eve. As I crossed the long entrance hall of Monk's Piece on my way from the dining room, where we had just enjoyed the first of the happy, festive meals, toward the drawing room and the fire around which my family were now assembled, I paused and then, as I often do in the course of an evening, went to the front door, opened it and stepped outside.

1) What does the writer focus your attention on in this opening paragraph? Use words to do with structure in your answer [see page2].

2) What is one thing you might *infer* about the narrator from the opening paragraph? You could use the words 'infer' and 'narrator' in your answer.

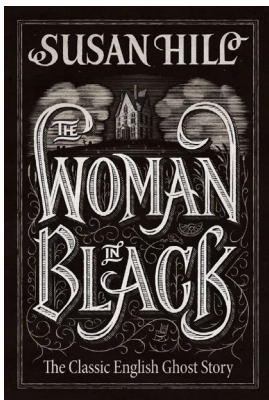


I have always liked to take a breath of the evening, to smell the air, whether it is sweetly scented and balmy with the flowers of midsummer, pungent with the bonfires and leaf-mould of autumn, or crackling cold from frost and snow. I like to look about me at the sky above my head, whether there are moon and stars or utter blackness, and into the darkness ahead of me; I like to listen for the cries of nocturnal creatures and the moaning rise and fall of the wind, or the pattering of rain in the orchard trees, I enjoy the rush of air toward me up the hill from the flat pastures of the river valley.

3) In this paragraph, how does the writer use language to 'hook' the reader into the story? You could use the term 'sensory description' in your answer.

Extension:

Having read the first three paragraphs, what do you predict will happen in the story? Consider: the title, the main character and possible themes.



Writing about Language: useful words and phrases

Word/phrase	Meaning
Colour connotation	Associations we might have with different colours. <i>E.g. Red might be associated with anger/love/blood, etc.</i>
Exaggeration	Overstating something to get across a point or idea. <i>E.g. The walk was never-ending.</i>
Infer	When the reader 'reads between the lines' to get meaning, or draws a conclusion, when something is not directly stated.
Personification	When something non-human is given human characteristics. <i>E.g. The cruel wind whipped the helpless land.</i>
Powerful adjectives	Adjectives describe nouns (things/people). Some adjectives are more 'powerful' than others. <i>E.g. 'A <u>majestic</u> wave', rather than 'A <u>big</u> wave'.</i>
Powerful verbs	Verbs are 'doing' words. Some verbs are more 'powerful' than others. <i>E.g. She <u>dazzled</u> in her dress, rather than 'She <u>wore</u> a dress.'</i>
Sensory description	Description that uses at least one of the five senses: touch, sound, sight, smell or taste.



Language techniques in fiction (Paper, 1 Q2)

Chapter 2: *A London Particular*

This extract is from the opening of Chapter 2 of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The narrator remembers back to the day in London when his involvement with the case of Mrs Drablow first began.

1 It was a Monday afternoon in November and already growing dark, not because of
the lateness of the hour- it was barely three o'clock- but because of the fog, the
thickest of London peasoupers, which had hemmed us in on all sides since dawn - if,
indeed, there had been a dawn, for the fog had scarcely allowed any daylight to
5 penetrate the foul gloom of the atmosphere.

Fog was outdoors, hanging over the river, creeping in and out of alleyways and
passages, swirling thickly between the bare trees of all the parks and gardens of the
city, and indoors, too, seething through cracks and crannies like sour breath, gaining a
sly entrance at every opening of a door. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog,
10 a fog that choked and blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across
roads, men and women took their lives in their hands, stumbling along the pavements,
they clutched at railings and at one another, for guidance.

Sounds were deadened, shapes blurred. It was a fog that had come three days
before, and did not seem inclined to go away and it had, I suppose, the quality of all
15 such fogs- it was menacing and sinister, disguising the familiar world and confusing
the people in it, as they were confused by having their eyes covered and being turned
about, in a game of Blind Man's Buff.

It was, in all, miserable weather and lowering to the spirits in the dreariest month of
the year. It would be easy to look back and to believe that all that day I had had a
20 sense of foreboding about my journey to come, that some sixth sense, some
telepathic intuition that may lie dormant and submerged in most men, had stirred and
become alert within me. But I was, in those days of my youth, a sturdy,
commonsensical fellow, and I felt no uneasiness or apprehension whatsoever. Any
depression of my usual blithe spirits was solely on account of the fog, and of
25 November, and that same dreariness was shared by every citizen of London.

1) In the first paragraph, what is meant by a "London peasouper"?

Fog was outdoors, hanging over the river, creeping in and out of alleyways and passages, swirling thickly between the bare trees of all the parks and gardens of the city, and indoors, too, seething through cracks and crannies like sour breath, gaining a sly entrance at every opening of a door. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog, a fog that choked and blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across roads, men and women took their lives in their hands, stumbling along the pavements, they clutched at railings and at one another, for guidance.

2) How does the writer use language to create a negative atmosphere here? Bring short quotes in to your answer, and language terms from Page 6. You could begin: "The writer creates a negative atmosphere by..."



Sounds were deadened, shapes blurred. It was a fog that had come three days before, and did not seem inclined to go away and it had, I suppose, the quality of all such fogs- it was menacing and sinister, disguising the familiar world and confusing the people in it, as they were confused by having their eyes covered and being turned about, in a game of Blind Man's Buff.

3) How does the writer use language to describe the fog? Use language terms from page 6. You could begin: "The writer uses personification to make the fog seem..."

Extension:

The Woman in Black is set in the early twentieth century.

Having read the opening to Chapter 2, what do you think life in London would have been like at this time?



Non-fiction from different eras: identifying key points, views and language techniques

(Paper 2, Q2 Q3 and Q4)

This is a non-fiction extract from 1849. It was published in the *Illustrated London News – Picturesque Sketches of London, Past and Present* by Thomas Miller and describes the scene in London when there is dense fog.

A London Fog

- 1 Although a real Londoner looks upon a dense December fog as a common occurrence, and lights up his premises with as little ceremony as he would do at the close of the day, yet, to one unused to such a scene, there is something startling in the appearance of a vast city wrapt¹ in a kind of darkness which seems neither to belong to the day nor
- 5 the night, at the mid-noon hour, while the gas is burning in the windows of long miles of streets.

10



The greatest marvel, after all, is that so few accidents happen in this dim, unnatural light, in the midst of which business seems to go on as usual, and would do, we believe, were the whole of London buried in midnight darkness at noonday, which would only be looked upon as a further deepening of the overhanging gloom.

- 15 The number of lighted torches which are carried and waved at the corners and crossings of the streets add greatly to the wild and picturesque effect of the scene as they flash redly upon the countenances of the passengers, and, in the distance, have the effect of a city enveloped in a dense mass of smoke, through which the smouldering names endeavour in vain to penetrate.
- 20 During a heavy fog many accidents occur on the river, through barges running foul of each other, or vessels coming athwart² the bridges – for there is no seeing the opening arch from the rock-like buttress, as the whole river looks like one huge bed of dense stagnant smoke, through which no human eye can penetrate. If you lean over the balustrades³ of the bridge, you cannot see the vessel which may at that moment be
- 25 passing beneath, so heavy is the cloudy curtain which covers the water.

¹ wrapt – old fashioned spelling of 'wrapped'

² athwart – across

³ balustrades - railings

10

1) Using details from the text, circle three statements about London fog that are TRUE.

- A. Fog is common in December.
- B. Fog is caused by a sudden drop in temperature.
- C. Torches light up the streets of London.
- D. Many accidents occur in foggy weather along the river.
- E. Boats are clearly visible in the fog.
- F. The human eye can penetrate fog.

Although a real Londoner looks upon a dense December fog as a common occurrence, and lights up his premises with as little ceremony as he would do at the close of the day, yet, to one unused to such a scene, there is something startling in the appearance of a vast city wrapt⁴ in a kind of darkness which seems neither to belong to the day nor the night, at the mid-noon hour, while the gas is burning in the windows of long miles of streets.

2) What seems to be Thomas Miller's attitude to the fog in London in this paragraph? How is this different from "a real Londoner"? You could begin: "Miller seems to think.."

The greatest marvel, after all, is that so few accidents happen in this dim, unnatural light, in the midst of which business seems to go on as usual, and would do, we believe, were the whole of London buried in midnight darkness at noonday, which would only be looked upon as a further deepening of the overhanging gloom.

3) What point do you think Thomas Miller is making about businesses in London in this paragraph?

⁴ wrapt – old fashioned spelling of 'wrapped'

These two extracts are from the beginning and ending of a newspaper article published in 2017. It was written by Christine Corton and considers the issue of air pollution in modern day London.

Opening:

Have we learned the lessons from the history of London fogs?

Writers and artists were inspired by the pea-soupers but smog cost thousands of lives

Christine Corton – Sun 29 Jan 2017

1



Dense fog in London bringing air pollution to the capital's streets.

Londoners are being warned not to breathe too deeply when they go outside. A toxic fog is hanging over the streets, threatening the health and wellbeing of the capital. It is small consolation to know that this has been the state of the city's air for more than 200 years.

5 London is in a natural basin surrounded by hills and its air generally holds moisture because of the river running through it, so it has always had a natural fog problem.

Ending:

Will the toxic fog Londoners are now experiencing be seen as anything other than what it really is – a dangerous, poisonous nuisance? It is much harder to

10 romanticise now than the pea-soupers of the past. Nowadays, too, cleaner technology is available with electric cars as well as less polluting fuels for industry.

In Victorian times it was our love for home fires that politicians were reluctant to

15



A policeman uses a flare to guide traffic during a heavy smog in London in 1952 that claimed 1200 lives.

upset; today it is our love for cars and other private means of transport. It took many decades to act on the knowledge that pea-soupers cost lives. How many decades will it take in our own time?

12

1) Using details from the text, circle three statements about the article that are TRUE.

- A. Toxic fog in London is a recent problem.
- B. London's air holds moisture due to the rivers running through the city.
- C. Cleaner technology is available today.
- D. Toxic fog is harmless to Londoners.
- E. In Victorian times, home fires contributed to fog and pollution.
- F. Nowadays, global warming causes fog and pollution.

Londoners are being warned not to breathe too deeply when they go outside. A toxic fog is hanging over the streets, threatening the health and wellbeing of the capital. It is small consolation to know that this has been the state of the city's air for more than 200 years.

2) Select a quote from the paragraph above and explain what you think it suggests about Christine Corton's view of London's air quality.

3) Give examples of the following techniques* in the extract:

Direct address

Rhetorical question

Emotive language

Statistic

Triple

*Definitions are on Page 20

Extension:

Choose one technique above and explain its possible effect on the reader:

Responding to a view on a fiction text (Paper 1, Q4)

Chapter 4: *The Funeral of Mrs Drablow*

This extract is taken from pages 44-45 of Chapter 4 of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The narrator, Arthur Kipps, is reflecting on his encounters with two local men: Mr Daily, a local from the town Crythin Gifford, who he had just met on the train and who had given him a lift, and the landlord of the local pub that he had arrived at: the Gifford Arms. Both men had seemed disturbed when the narrator, Arthur Kipps, had told them he was the solicitor of the recently deceased Mrs Drablow, but had not said why.



1 For I must confess I had the Londoner's sense of **superiority** in those days, the half-formed belief that countrymen, and particularly those who inhabited the remoter corners of our island, were more **superstitious**, more **gullible**, more **slow-witted**, unsophisticated and **primitive**, than we **cosmopolitans**. Doubtless, in such a place as
5 this, with its eerie marshes, sudden fogs, moaning winds and lonely houses, any poor woman might be looked at askance; once upon a time, after all, she would have been branded as a witch and local legends and tales were still abroad and some extravagant folklore still believed in.

It was true that neither Mr Daily nor the landlord of the inn seemed anything but sturdy
10 men of good commonsense, just as I had to admit that neither of them had done more than fall silent and look at me hard and a little oddly, when the subject of Mrs Drablow had arisen. Nonetheless, I had been left in no doubt that there was some significance in what had been left *unsaid*.

1) List other words that come to mind when you read the following:

superiority

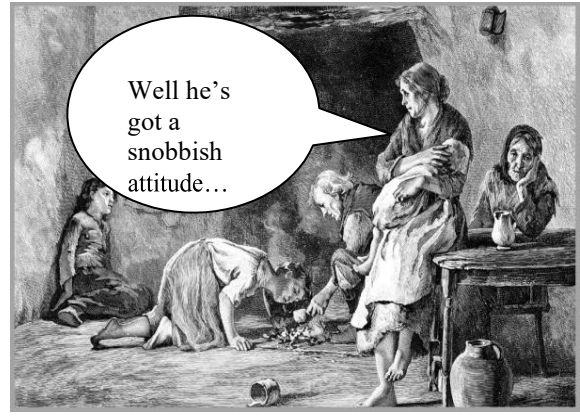
superstitious

gullible

slow-witted

primitive

cosmopolitan



A student said: "This part of the text shows that Arthur Kipps has a snobbish attitude to those that live in the countryside." To what extent do you agree? Write your answer using the frame below:

I agree that _____

This is shown when Arthur Kipps _____

A key word/phrase that stands out in this quote is _____

because it suggests _____

This snobbish attitude is further shown when _____

which also suggests _____

[Remember there are extra pages for writing at the back of this booklet if you run out of space.]

Analysing language closely in fiction texts (Paper 1, Q2 and Q4)

Chapter 4: *The Funeral of Mrs Drablow*

This extract is taken from pages 53-54 of Chapter 4 of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The narrator describes a mysterious woman he sees at the back of the church at the funeral.

1 However, towards the end of it, and on hearing some slight rustle behind me, I half-
turned, discreetly, and caught a glimpse of another mourner, a woman, who must have
slipped into the church after we of the funeral party had taken our places and who stood
several rows behind and quite alone, very erect and still, and not holding a prayer book.
5 She was dressed in deepest black, in the style of full mourning that had rather gone out
of fashion except, I imagined, in court circles on the most formal of occasions. Indeed, it
had clearly been dug out of some old trunk or wardrobe, for its blackness was a little
rusty looking. A bonnet-type hat covered her head and shaded her face, but, although I
did not stare, even the swift glance I took of the woman showed me enough to
10 recognise that she was suffering from some terrible wasting disease, for not only was
she extremely pale, even more than a contrast with the blackness of her garments could
account for, but the skin and, it seemed, only the thinnest layer of flesh was tautly
stretched and strained across her bones, so that it gleamed with a curious, blue-white
sheen, and her eyes seemed sunken back into her head. Her hands that rested on the
15 pew before her were in a similar state, as though she had been a victim of starvation.
Though not any medical expert, I had heard of certain conditions which caused such
terrible wasting, such ravages of the flesh, and knew they were generally regarded as
incurable, and it seemed poignant that a woman, who was perhaps only a short time
away from her own death, should drag herself to the funeral of another. Nor did she look
20 old. The effect of the illness made her age hard to guess, but she was quite possibly no
more than thirty. Before I turned back, I vowed to speak to her and see if I could be of
any assistance after the funeral was over, but just as we were making ready to move
away, following the parson and the coffin out of the church, I heard the slight rustle of
clothing once more and realized that the unknown woman had already slipped quickly
25 away, and gone out to the waiting, open grave, though to stand some yards back, beside
another headstone, that was overgrown with moss and upon which she leaned slightly.
Her appearance, even in the limpid sunshine and comparative warmth and brightness
outdoors, was so pathetically wasted, so pale and gaunt with disease, that it would not
have been a kindness to gaze upon her; for there was still some faint trace on
30 her features, some lingering hint, of a not inconsiderable former beauty, which must
make her feel her present condition all the more keenly, as would the victim of smallpox,
or some dreadful disfigurement of burning.

1) Light/dark imagery is used in this extract. Highlight as many examples as you can find in the extract on the previous page.



2) Considering how colour / light / dark imagery is used in this extract, what is your first impression of the woman? You could begin: "My first impression of the woman is.."

3) Write down five words or phrases from the extract that could be linked to the theme of death.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Extension:

Do you think this woman is real, or is Arthur just imagining her? Bring in evidence from the text to support your opinion.

Identifying key points and making comparisons between non-fiction texts (Paper 2, Q2)

This non-fiction extract is taken from the Victorian newspaper *Illustrated Police News*, 1897.

The Plumstead Ghost

1 In October 1897, many people saw a 'ghost' flitting about near St James's Church and school, Plumstead. Sensitive little girls had fainted when the white spectre approached them; some were still in bed, said the *Daily News*, suffering from nervous exhaustion. A timid schoolmaster had been frightened out of his wits when the 'Plumstead Ghost'

5 suddenly grabbed hold of him from behind and shouted 'Boo-hah!' at the top of its voice. An old couple visiting the churchyard received a similar shock when the ghost hailed them from a tree, making use of the same uncouth outcry.

When another schoolmaster was taking an evening walk, he heard rustling in the hedges nearby, and a shout of "Boo-hah!" He had brought with him a large Newfoundland dog, which he

10 set on the spectre. Since the master distinctly heard the ghost give a yelp when the dog's fangs made contact with its buttocks, he became convinced that the Plumstead Ghost was flesh and blood. He spoke to both masters and schoolboys,



asking them not to be fearful, but to teach the ghost a hard lesson if they came across it.

15 The rowdy schoolboys decided to do just that. One evening, after scouts had reported that the ghost was at large, a troop of schoolboys, a hundred strong, stormed the churchyard. Shouting and yahoing, they pelted the ghost with stones, but without scoring any hits on the absconding spectre. Instead, their missiles broke some valuable stained glass. Pursued by the Newfoundland dog, the ghost was seen to disappear into

20 the hedges.

The schoolboys had been so rowdy that the police arrested two of the ringleaders and brought them to Woolwich, but after the masters had explained the extraordinary circumstances of their riot, they were both discharged. The evening after, the Plumstead Ghost was seen in the grounds of Mr. JR Jolly. Arrayed in white attire, and wearing some kind of grotesque mask, the spectre was sitting in a tree, shouting its usual "Boo-hah!" to

25 frighten some female domestics. Mr. Jolly was not at all amused: he sent for the police and the ghost was arrested. It turned out that the spectre's white garb had been torn, and his buttocks badly bruised, from his two encounters with the fierce Newfoundland dog. He turned out to be a local engineer. He was placed under restraint in an asylum, and the

30 Plumstead Ghost was laid to rest.

1) List some of the strange (ghostly) occurrences mentioned in the article. Use direct quotes.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2) Find quotes about how each person/group listed reacted to the Plumpstead ghost:

- Sensitive little girls _____
- Timid schoolmaster _____
- Other schoolmaster _____
- Rowdy schoolboys _____
- Mr. Jolly _____

3) Now select one of these quotes, and make an inference. You could begin: I infer that [name of person/group] felt...

Extension:

Do you think people nowadays would react in a similar way? If such a story were published today, where would you expect to find it and why?

Writing about non-fiction texts: useful words and phrases

Word/phrase	Meaning
Direct address	When the writer speaks to the reader using 'you'/ 'we'/ 'us'
Alliteration	When two or more words close together begin with the same sound. E.g. "See it; Say it; Sorted"
Fact	Something that can be proven to be real or true.
Opinion	A view or judgement about something that can be argued 'for or against'.
Rhetorical question	A question designed to make the reader think, which doesn't need an answer.
Repetition	When a short phrase or word is used over and over again to emphasise a point.
Emotive language	Language that is designed to stir up strong or powerful emotions in the reader. E.g. His life has been wrecked by the heartless politicians.
Statistic	A number-based fact that is taken from research. E.g. a percentage or fraction.
Triple	A group of three words used for effect. E.g. "Brave, bold and free".

This newspaper article was published in the *Daily Mail* on 4th May, 2015 – written by Zoe Brennan.

What IS the truth about the Enfield Poltergeist? Amazing story of 11-year-old London girl who 'levitated' above her bed

1 The rasping male voice sent a chill through the room. Hauntingly, it delivered a message from beyond the grave, describing in graphic detail the moment of death
'Just before I died, I went blind, and then I had an 'aemorrhage and I fell asleep and I died in the chair in the corner downstairs.'

5 The eerie voice – which can still be heard on audio tapes today – is purportedly that of Bill Wilkins. The recording was made in Enfield, North London, in the Seventies, several years after his death.



10

Most horrifying of all, however, was that the voice was coming from the body of an 11-year-old girl, Janet Hodgson. She appeared to be possessed. It could have been a scene from the film *The Exorcist* – but it was real.

What was going on? This was the case of the Enfield Poltergeist, which held the nation spellbound 30 years ago, puzzling policemen, psychics, experts in the occult and hardened reporters alike.

15 It involved levitation, furniture being moved through the air, and flying objects swirling towards witnesses. There were cold breezes, physical assaults, graffiti, water appearing on the floor, and even claims of matches spontaneously bursting into flame. A police woman even signed an affidavit that she had seen a chair move. There were more than 30 witnesses to the strange incidents. Most inexplicably, the young girl at the centre of the
20 events seemingly acted as the mouthpiece for Bill Wilkins, a foul-mouthed, grumpy old man who had died in the house many years before. His son contacted investigators to confirm the details of his story.

The events unfolded for more than a year behind the door of an ordinary-looking semi-detached council house, on a suburban street filled with similar houses, and left those they
25 touched permanently scarred. Naturally, many questioned whether it was all a hoax – but no explanation other than the paranormal has ever been convincingly put forward.

It was the evening of August 30, 1977, and Mrs Hodgson was keen to get her children into bed. She heard Janet complaining from upstairs that her and her brothers' beds were wobbling.

- 30 Mrs Hodgson told her daughter to stop mucking around. The following evening, however, there was an altogether more bizarre disturbance.

Mrs Hodgson heard a crash from upstairs. Cross, she went to tell her children to settle down.

- Entering their bedroom, with Janet's Starsky & Hutch posters on the wall, Mrs Hodgson
35 saw the chest of drawers move. She pushed it back, but found that it was being propelled towards the door by an invisible force. It seemed as if some supernatural presence was trying to trap the family in the room with the heavy oak chest.

The Hodgsons called the police, who proved to be similarly mystified. WPC Carolyn Heeps saw a chair move.

- 40 She said at the time: 'A large armchair moved, unassisted, 4 ft across the floor.'
She inspected the chair for hidden wires, but could find no explanation for what she had seen.

Eventually, the officers left, telling the family that the incidents were not a police matter, as they couldn't find anyone breaking the law.

- 45 Next, the Hodgsons contacted the Press. Daily Mirror photographer Graham Morris, who visited the house, says: 'It was chaos, things started flying around, people were screaming.'

- Some of the events were captured on camera, and the images are disturbing. One shows Janet's elfin form apparently being thrown across the room. In others, her face is distorted
50 in pain.

The author Will Storr spoke to Grosse, who has since died, when researching his own book *Will Storr vs The Supernatural*, which also features the case. Grosse told him: 'As soon as I got there, I realised that the case was real because the family was in a bad state. Everybody was in chaos.'

- 55 'When I first got there, nothing happened for a while. Then I experienced Lego pieces flying across the room, and marbles, and the extraordinary thing was, when you picked them up they were hot.'

1) List some of the strange (ghostly) occurrences mentioned in the article. Use direct quotes.



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2) Do you think the writer of this article thinks the Enfield Poltergeist is real? Use quotes to support your answer.

3) Give examples of the following techniques in the extract:

Fact

Opinion (from a witness)

Rhetorical question

Emotive language

Statistic

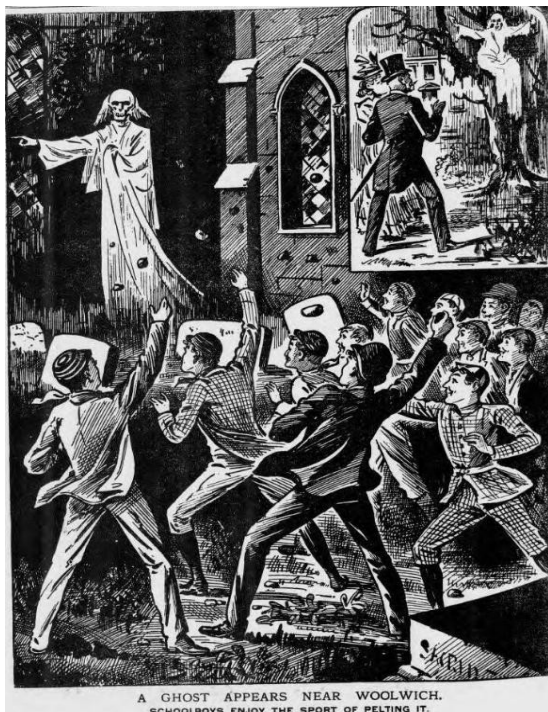
Triple

4) Choose one technique above and explain its possible effect on the reader:

Comparing non-fiction texts: useful words and phrases

Similarities	Differences
Similarly	However
Also	In contrast
As well	But
In the same way	Whereas

Source A: Plumstead Ghost



Source B: Enfield Hauntings



Analysing language closely in fiction texts (Paper 1, Q2 and Q4)

Chapter 6: *The Sound of a Pony and Trap*

This extract is taken from pages 92-93, Chapter 6 of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The narrator, Arthur Kipps, has returned to the home of Mrs Drablow, Eel Marsh House. He is trying to settle himself after his distressing experience out on the marshes by drinking some brandy in the drawing room, when he begins to nod off...

- 1 A bell was ringing, ringing, through my ears, inside my head, its clangour sounded at once very close and oddly distant, it seemed to sway, and I to sway with it. I was trying to struggle out of some darkness which was not fixed but shifting about, as the ground seemed to be
- 5 shifting beneath my feet, so that I was terrified of slipping and falling down, down, of being sucked into a horrible echoing maelstrom. The bell went on ringing. I came awake in bewilderment, to see
- 10 the moon, huge as a pumpkin beyond the tall windows, in a clear black sky.



My head was thick, my mouth furred and dry, my limbs stiff. I had slept, perhaps for minutes, perhaps for some hours, I had lost my sense of time. I struggled upright and then I realized that the bell I heard was not part of the confusion of my fitful nightmare but a real bell sounding through the house. Someone was at the front door.

- 1) Write down an example of repetition in the above extract.

- 2) What effect might the repetition have on the reader?

- 3) Write down an example of a powerful adjective in the above extract.

4) What effect might the powerful adjective have on the reader?

5) Write down an example of sensory description in the above extract.

6) What effect might the sensory description have on the reader?

Extension:

How does Susan Hill use language to describe Arthur's mental state in this moment? You could write about a technique, give an example of it and explain clearly its effect on the reader.

Analysing language closely in fiction texts (Paper 1, Q2 and Q4)

Chapter 9: In the Nursery

These two extracts are taken from Chapter 9 of *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill. The Extract 1 is from the opening of the chapter, when the narrator, Arthur Kipps, wakes up in his hotel in Cryford Griffin, ready to prepare for his visit to the home of Mrs Drablow, Eel Marsh House. Extract 2 describes a noise that disturbs him and the dog Spider whilst staying in Eel Marsh house that night.

Extract 1

1 The fine clear weather still held, there was sunshine and blue sky again, when I
drew my curtains. I had slept lightly and restlessly, troubled by snatches of
peculiar, disconnected dreams. Perhaps I had eaten and drunk too well and richly
with Mr Daily. But my mood was unchanged, I was determined and optimistic, as I
5 dressed and breakfasted, and then began to make preparations for my stay at Eel
Marsh House. The little dog Spider had, somewhat to my surprise, slept
motionlessly at the foot of my bed. I had taken to her, though I knew little in the
way of dogs. She was spirited, lively and alert and yet completely biddable, the
expression in her bright eyes, fringed a little by shaggy hair that formed itself
10 somewhat comically into the shape of beetling eyebrows, seemed to me highly
intelligent. I thought I was going to be very glad of her.

Extract 2

1 But, at my feet, the dog Spider began to whine, a thin, pitiful, frightened moan,
and to back away from the door a little and press against my legs. My throat felt
constricted and dry and I had begun to shiver. There was something in that room
and I could not get to it, nor would I dare to, if I were able. I told myself it was a
rat or a trapped bird, fallen down the chimney into the hearth and unable to get
5 out again. But the sound was not that of some small, panic-stricken creature.
Bump Bump. Pause. Bump bump. Pause. Bump bump. Bumb bump. Bump bump.

I think that I might have stood there, in bewilderment and terror, all night, or else
taken to my heels, with the dog, and run out of the house altogether, had I not
heard another, faint sound. It came from behind me, not directly behind but from
10 the front of the house. I turned away from the locked door and went back, shakily,
groping along the wall to my bedroom, guided by the slant of moonlight that
reached out into the darkness of the corridor. The dog was half a pace ahead of
me.

1) What mood do you think is created in Extract 1?



2) How does Susan Hill use language to create this mood? Aim to include at least one of following techniques: pathetic fallacy, light imagery or powerful adjectives.

3) What mood do you think is created in Extract 2?



4) How does Susan Hill use language to create this mood? Aim to include at least one of following techniques: sensory description, repetition, powerful adjectives or sentence structure.

READING SKILLS	Not yet	Sometimes	Yes
Quote I use relevant quotes to back up my points.			
Methods I can identify techniques used by writers e.g. metaphor / contrast / repetition/sensory description.			

READING SKILLS	Limited explanation	Some explanation	Full, clear explanation	Perceptive, sophisticated
Infer I can make inferences by 'reading between the lines' and drawing conclusions.				
Zoom in I can explain what key words or phrases might make the reader think or feel.				
Effect I can comment on the effect of certain methods/ techniques used by writers e.g. metaphor / contrast / repetition/ sensory description.				

READING SKILLS	Your examples in booklet? [page numbers]	Evidence in assessment?		
		Not yet	Sometimes	Yes
<p>Quote I use relevant quotes to back up my points.</p>				
<p>Methods I can identify techniques used by writers e.g. metaphor / contrast / repetition/ sensory description.</p>				

READING SKILLS	Your examples in booklet? (tick if highlighted)	Evidence in assessment?			
		limited	some	Full /clear	perceptive
<p>Infer I can make inferences by 'reading between the lines' and drawing conclusions.</p>					
<p>Zoom in I can explain what key words or phrases might make the reader think or feel.</p>					
<p>Effect I can comment on the effect of certain methods/ techniques used by writers e.g. metaphor / contrast / repetition/ sensory description.</p>					

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