Year 8 English
Distance Learning Quiz and Learn Booklet
Summer 2

Name:

Form:
Over the next four weeks of completing this booklet, you will be creating your own detective story. Each week/lesson will help with a different aspect of your story 😊

**Week 1 – Contexts and Settings (Sherlock Holmes)**

*The Police in Victorian London*

**Before the police**

Before 1829, there was no proper police force in England. If someone wanted to investigate a crime or find a criminal, they would have to do it themselves or pay someone to do it for them. If there was a big problem with crime, then the army could be called up to help.

By 1829, this system just wasn’t working, particularly in London. London was such a big place and so many crimes were being committed, that people realised there needed to be a better way of investigating and preventing crime.

**The Metropolitan Police – the first proper police force**

In 1829, a politician called Sir Robert Peel came up with the idea of the Metropolitan Police, which would be a police force for London. The Metropolitan Police would be made up of paid police officers who would work together and follow rules about how they could investigate crime.

People were worried that the police would act like the army. To help make people feel better about the new police force, their uniform was deliberately made in blue, rather than red which was then an army colour. Police officers were only armed with a wooden truncheon.

**London and the Police Force grow and grow**

Over time, the Metropolitan Police became bigger and more important. They were set up in 1829, not long before Oliver Twist was written. At this time, the Metropolitan Police had just 1,000 officers. By 1885 they had grown to have 13,000 officers. The police were still stretched though, as over the same period of time, the population of London had exploded from around 1.5 million to over 5 million.

**Crime in Victorian London**

Even though London now had a police force, people could still get away with crime. In 1888, people from across London were horrified by the Whitechapel murders, when eleven women were killed gruesomely in east London from 1888 to 1891. The police investigated this crime, but despite all their efforts, the killer – known as Jack the Ripper – was never caught, and the murder cases remain unsolved to this day.
Forensics

Unlike today, the police of Victorian London did not have access to the type of criminal forensic investigative techniques we are used to. Instead they had to rely on simple clues, circumstantial evidence, and their experience to solve a crime.

Life in Victorian London

British people in the 19th century were often aware that they were living in a revolutionary age. They were excited by their world. Britannia 'ruled the waves' and they were surrounded by change.

The **Industrial Revolution** brought factories, mines and machinery. Towns grew rapidly and with them came slums as well as elegant city centres. Steam trains and the Royal Mail made communication easier. There were massive advances in **medicine** and public health. Political and social reforms changed people’s lives and at a personal level, there were lots of little developments from umbrellas to bicycles.

The Victorian age was a time of confidence. The Victorians thought that, even if their society was not yet perfect, they were just about to achieve perfection. They believed in self-help, and emphasised strict morals.

By 1851, British society had become divided into social classes:

- The aristocracy were powerful and wealthy.
- The middle-class, who ran the businesses, were ambitious and growing in wealth.
- The poor - in the villages, in the towns and working as servants in the homes of the rich – were very poor.

Your quality of life during the Victorian times depended on where you were 'classed' in society, like in the picture above.

- Wealthy Victorians enjoyed a good and easy life
Poor Victorians had a rough and hard life, often ending up in the workhouse or early death.

Below is a table showing you some of the differences between rich and poor people:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Poor</th>
<th>The Wealthy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>had few luxuries.</td>
<td>usually well fed, clean and well clothed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ate food they could afford to buy</td>
<td>didn’t need to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worked long hours</td>
<td>lived in big houses with servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lived in damp, filthy conditions.</td>
<td>went on holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many children died of disease.</td>
<td>children had expensive toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>children went to school</td>
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</tbody>
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Task 1 – Create a mindmap on the next page of what you have learnt about life in Victorian London.
Life in Victorian London
Victorian London is the setting for Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes stories that we studied last year.

**Understanding Setting**

The setting of a text is the place and time used within the text. This may be:

- **real** or **fictional** (made-up)
- a specific **geographical location** - such as a named city or country
- a type of place or event - like a school or a wedding

Setting is a crucial part of how a text achieves its effect. It can echo the themes of the narrative. For example, *Of Mice and Men* opens in a place called Soledad, which means loneliness – a key theme of the book.

The time of day or year when a text is set also adds to its effect. For example, a school at night is a very different place to a school during the day. A ghost story would probably work better at night.

Wider historical context is important too. A text that is set during a war might suggest that the story is big and important. Or perhaps the story is a small-scale human one, contrasting with the backdrop of war. This could suggest the importance of love or friendship, even when world events are huge and destructive.

**Task 2 – Answer the following question in the box below:**

Why does Victorian London make a good and effective setting for a story?  
(You may want to think about London’s size, how busy it is, where it is in the country etc.)
Task 3 – Think of a setting for your own detective story. In the boxes below, draw 3 settings you could use for a story. Then decide on your favourite that you will use.

Examples: London, Birmingham, a train, a forest, a boat, a desert island.

Idea 1: 

Idea 2: 

Idea 3: 

Aspire. Expect. Achieve. Together
My favourite setting is ______ because ____________________________________

Complete the week 1 quiz:

1. How were crimes investigated before the police force in Victorian London?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

2. When were the Metropolitan Police Force invented?

1850
1829
1980

3. What happened to the Metropolitan Police over time?

A. the force got larger and larger because population increased
B. the force got smaller because there was less crime

4. Why could people still get away with crime in Victorian London even though there was a police force?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

5. What caused London’s population to increase so rapidly?
A. Poor housing
B. The industrial revolution

6. What were the three classes in the Victorian era?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

7. Why was life different for rich and poor people in Victorian London?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

8. What is the setting of a story?

___________________________________________________________________________

9. Which of these locations would make a good setting for a horror story?
A. a beach
B. the woods
C. a circus
D. a park

10. Which of these locations would make a good setting for a science fiction story?
A. a lab
B. a garden
C. a teenage bedroom
THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

I had called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, one day in the autumn of last year and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced, elderly gentleman with fiery red hair. With an apology for my intrusion, I was about to withdraw when Holmes pulled me abruptly into the room and closed the door behind me.

“You could not possibly have come at a better time, my dear Watson,” he said cordially.

“I was afraid that you were engaged.”

“So I am. Very much so.”

“Then I can wait in the next room.”

“Not at all. This gentleman, Mr. Wilson, has been my partner and helper in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours also.”

The stout gentleman half rose from his chair and gave a bob of greeting, with a quick little questioning glance from his small fat-encircled eyes.
“Try the settee,” said Holmes, relapsing into his armchair and putting his fingertips together, as was his custom when in judicial moods. “I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love of all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of everyday life. You have shown your relish for it by the enthusiasm which has prompted you to chronicle, and, if you will excuse my saying so, somewhat to embellish so many of my own little adventures.”

“Your cases have indeed been of the greatest interest to me,” I observed.

“You will remember that I remarked the other day, just before we went into the very simple problem presented by Miss Mary Sutherland, that for strange effects and extraordinary combinations we must go to life itself, which is always far more daring than any effort of the imagination.”

“A proposition which I took the liberty of doubting.”

“You did, Doctor, but none the less you must come round to my view, for otherwise I shall keep on piling fact upon fact on you until your reason breaks down under them and acknowledges me to be right. Now, Mr. Jabez Wilson here has been good enough to call upon me this morning, and to begin a narrative which promises to be one of the most singular which I have listened to for some time. You have heard me remark that the strangest and most unique things are very often connected not with the larger but with the smaller crimes, and occasionally, indeed, where there is room for doubt whether any positive crime has been committed. As far as I have heard, it is impossible for me to say whether the present case is an instance of crime or not, but the course of events is certainly among the most singular that I have ever listened to. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would have the great kindness to recommence your narrative. I ask you not merely because my friend Dr. Watson has not heard the opening part but also because the peculiar nature of the story makes me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips. As a rule, when I have heard some slight indication of the course of events, I am able to guide myself by the thousands of other similar cases which occur to my memory. In the present instance I am forced to admit that the facts are, to the best of my belief, unique.”

The portly client puffed out his chest with an appearance of some little pride and pulled a dirty and wrinkled newspaper from the inside pocket of his greatcoat. As he glanced down the advertisement column, with his head thrust forward and the paper flattened out upon his knee, I took a good look at the man and endeavoured, after the fashion of my companion, to read the indications which might be presented by his dress or appearance.

Aspire. Expect. Achieve. Together
I did not gain very much, however, by my inspection. Our visitor bore every mark of being an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous, and slow. He wore rather baggy grey shepherd’s check trousers, a not over-clean black frock-coat, unbuttoned in the front, and a drab waistcoat with a heavy brassy Albert chain, and a square pierced bit of metal dangling down as an ornament. A frayed top-hat and a faded brown overcoat with a wrinkled velvet collar lay upon a chair beside him. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head, and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features.

Sherlock Holmes’ quick eye took in my occupation, and he shook his head with a smile as he noticed my questioning glances. “Beyond the obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labour, that he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else.”

Mr. Jabez Wilson started up in his chair, with his forefinger upon the paper, but his eyes upon my companion.

“How, in the name of good-fortune, did you know all that, Mr. Holmes?” he asked. “How did you know, for example, that I did manual labour. It’s as true as gospel, for I began as a ship’s carpenter.”

“Your hands, my dear sir. Your right hand is quite a size larger than your left. You have worked with it, and the muscles are more developed.”

“Well, the snuff, then, and the Freemasonry?”

“I won’t insult your intelligence by telling you how I read that, especially as, rather against the strict rules of your order, you use an arc-and-compass breastpin.”

“Oh, of course, I forgot that. But the writing?”

“What else can be indicated by that right cuff so very shiny for five inches, and the left one with the smooth patch near the elbow where you rest it upon the desk?”

“Well, but China?”
“The fish that you have tattooed immediately above your right wrist could only have been done in China. I have made a small study of tattoo marks and have even contributed to the literature of the subject. That trick of staining the fishes’ scales of a delicate pink is quite peculiar to China. When, in addition, I see a Chinese coin hanging from your watch-chain, the matter becomes even more simple.”

Mr. Jabez Wilson laughed heavily. “Well, I never!” said he. “I thought at first that you had done something clever, but I see that there was nothing in it after all.”

“I begin to think, Watson,” said Holmes, “that I make a mistake in explaining. ‘Omne ignotum pro magnifico,’ you know, and my poor little reputation, such as it is, will suffer shipwreck if I am so candid. Can you not find the advertisement, Mr. Wilson?”

“Yes, I have got it now,” he answered with his thick red finger planted halfway down the column. “Here it is. This is what began it all. You just read it for yourself, sir.”

I took the paper from him and read as follows:

“TO THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE: On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., there is now another vacancy open which entitles a member of the League to a salary of £ 4 a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind and above the age of twenty-one years, are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at eleven o’clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope’s Court, Fleet Street.”

“What on earth does this mean?” I ejaculated after I had twice read over the extraordinary announcement.

Holmes chuckled and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when in high spirits. “It is a little off the beaten track, isn’t it?” said he. “And now, Mr. Wilson, off you go at scratch and tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will first make a note, Doctor, of the paper and the date.”

“It is The Morning Chronicle of April 27, 1890. Just two months ago.”

“Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson?”
“Well, it is just as I have been telling you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes,” said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead; “I have a small pawnbroker’s business at Coburg Square, near the City. It’s not a very large affair, and of late years it has not done more than just give me a living. I used to be able to keep two assistants, but now I only keep one; and I would have a job to pay him but that he is willing to come for half wages so as to learn the business.”

“What is the name of this obliging youth?” asked Sherlock Holmes.

“His name is Vincent Spaulding, and he’s not such a youth, either. It’s hard to say his age. I should not wish a smarter assistant, Mr. Holmes; and I know very well that he could better himself and earn twice what I am able to give him. But, after all, if he is satisfied, why should I put ideas in his head?”

“Why, indeed? You seem most fortunate in having an employé who comes under the full market price. It is not a common experience among employers in this age. I don’t know that your assistant is not as remarkable as your advertisement.”

“Oh, he has his faults, too,” said Mr. Wilson. “Never was such a fellow for photography. Snapping away with a camera when he ought to be improving his mind, and then diving down into the cellar like a rabbit into its hole to develop his pictures. That is his main fault, but on the whole he’s a good worker. There’s no vice in him.”

“He is still with you, I presume?”

“Yes, sir. He and a girl of fourteen, who does a bit of simple cooking and keeps the place clean—that’s all I have in the house, for I am a widower and never had any family. We live very quietly, sir, the three of us; and we keep a roof over our heads and pay our debts, if we do nothing more.

“The first thing that put us out was that advertisement. Spaulding, he came down into the office just this day eight weeks, with this very paper in his hand, and he says:

‘‘I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a red-headed man.’

‘‘Why that?’ I asks.
“‘Why,’ says he, ‘here’s another vacancy on the League of the Red-headed Men. It’s worth quite a little fortune to any man who gets it, and I understand that there are more vacancies than there are men, so that the trustees are at their wits’ end what to do with the money. If my hair would only change colour, here’s a nice little crib all ready for me to step into.’

“‘Why, what is it, then?’ I asked. You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very stay-at-home man, and as my business came to me instead of my having to go to it, I was often weeks on end without putting my foot over the door-mat. In that way I didn’t know much of what was going on outside, and I was always glad of a bit of news.

“‘Have you never heard of the League of the Red-headed Men?’ he asked with his eyes open.

“‘Never.’

“‘Why, I wonder at that, for you are eligible yourself for one of the vacancies.’

“‘And what are they worth?’ I asked.

“‘Oh, merely a couple of hundred a year, but the work is slight, and it need not interfere very much with one’s other occupations.’

“Well, you can easily think that that made me prick up my ears, for the business has not been over good for some years, and an extra couple of hundred would have been very handy.

“‘Tell me all about it,’ said I.

“‘Well,’ said he, showing me the advertisement, ‘you can see for yourself that the League has a vacancy, and there is the address where you should apply for particulars. As far as I can make out, the League was founded by an American millionaire, Ezekiah Hopkins, who was very peculiar in his ways. He was himself red-headed, and he had a great sympathy for all red-headed men; so, when he died, it was found that he had left his enormous fortune in the hands of trustees, with instructions to apply the interest to the providing of easy berths to men whose hair is of that colour. From all I hear it is splendid pay and very little to do.’

“‘But,’ said I, ‘there would be millions of red-headed men who would apply.’
“‘Not so many as you might think,’ he answered. ‘You see it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men. This American had started from London when he was young, and he wanted to do the old town a good turn. Then, again, I have heard it is no use your applying if your hair is light red, or dark red, or anything but real bright, blazing, fiery red. Now, if you cared to apply, Mr. Wilson, you would just walk in; but perhaps it would hardly be worth your while to put yourself out of the way for the sake of a few hundred pounds.’

“Now, it is a fact, gentlemen, as you may see for yourselves, that my hair is of a very full and rich tint, so that it seemed to me that if there was to be any competition in the matter I stood as good a chance as any man that I had ever met. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much about it that I thought he might prove useful, so I just ordered him to put up the shutters for the day and to come right away with me. He was very willing to have a holiday, so we shut the business up and started off for the address that was given us in the advertisement.

“I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west every man who had a shade of red in his hair had tramped into the city to answer the advertisement. Fleet Street was choked with red-headed folk, and Pope’s Court looked like a coster’s orange barrow. I should not have thought there were so many in the whole country as were brought together by that single advertisement. Every shade of colour they were—straw, lemon, orange, brick, Irish-setter, liver, clay; but, as Spaulding said, there were not many who had the real vivid flame-coloured tint. When I saw how many were waiting, I would have given it up in despair; but Spaulding would not hear of it. How he did it I could not imagine, but he pushed and pulled and butted until he got me through the crowd, and right up to the steps which led to the office. There was a double stream upon the stair, some going up in hope, and some coming back dejected; but we wedged in as well as we could and soon found ourselves in the office.”

“Your experience has been a most entertaining one,” remarked Holmes as his client paused and refreshed his memory with a huge pinch of snuff. “Pray continue your very interesting statement.”

“There was nothing in the office but a couple of wooden chairs and a deal table, behind which sat a small man with a head that was even redder than mine. He said a few words to each candidate as he came up, and then he always managed to find some fault in them which would disqualify them. Getting a vacancy did not seem to be such a very easy matter, after all. However, when our turn came the little man was much more favourable to me than to any of the others, and he closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us.
“‘This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,’ said my assistant, ‘and he is willing to fill a vacancy in the League.’

“‘And he is admirably suited for it,’ the other answered. ‘He has every requirement. I cannot recall when I have seen anything so fine.’ He took a step backward, cocked his head on one side, and gazed at my hair until I felt quite bashful. Then suddenly he plunged forward, wrung my hand, and congratulated me warmly on my success.

“‘It would be injustice to hesitate,’ said he. ‘You will, however, I am sure, excuse me for taking an obvious precaution.’ With that he seized my hair in both his hands, and tugged until I yelled with the pain. ‘There is water in your eyes,’ said he as he released me. ‘I perceive that all is as it should be. But we have to be careful, for we have twice been deceived by wigs and once by paint. I could tell you tales of cobbler’s wax which would disgust you with human nature.’ He stepped over to the window and shouted through it at the top of his voice that the vacancy was filled. A groan of disappointment came up from below, and the folk all trooped away in different directions until there was not a red-head to be seen except my own and that of the manager.

“‘My name,’ said he, ‘is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. Are you a married man, Mr. Wilson? Have you a family?’

“I answered that I had not.

“His face fell immediately.

“‘Dear me!’ he said gravely, ‘that is very serious indeed! I am sorry to hear you say that. The fund was, of course, for the propagation and spread of the red-heads as well as for their maintenance. It is exceedingly unfortunate that you should be a bachelor.’

“My face lengthened at this, Mr. Holmes, for I thought that I was not to have the vacancy after all; but after thinking it over for a few minutes he said that it would be all right.

“‘In the case of another,’ said he, ‘the objection might be fatal, but we must stretch a point in favour of a man with such a head of hair as yours. When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?’
“‘Well, it is a little awkward, for I have a business already,’ said I.

“‘Oh, never mind about that, Mr. Wilson!’ said Vincent Spaulding. ‘I should be able to look after that for you.’

“‘What would be the hours?’ I asked.

“‘Ten to two.’

“Now a pawnbroker’s business is mostly done of an evening, Mr. Holmes, especially Thursday and Friday evening, which is just before pay-day; so it would suit me very well to earn a little in the mornings. Besides, I knew that my assistant was a good man, and that he would see to anything that turned up.

“‘That would suit me very well,’ said I. ‘And the pay?’

“‘Is £ 4 a week.’

“‘And the work?’

“‘Is purely nominal.’

“‘What do you call purely nominal?’

“‘Well, you have to be in the office, or at least in the building, the whole time. If you leave, you forfeit your whole position forever. The will is very clear upon that point. You don’t comply with the conditions if you budge from the office during that time.’

“‘It’s only four hours a day, and I should not think of leaving,’ said I.

“‘No excuse will avail,’ said Mr. Duncan Ross; ‘neither sickness nor business nor anything else. There you must stay, or you lose your billet.’

“‘And the work?’
“‘Is to copy out the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blotting-paper, but we provide this table and chair. Will you be ready to-morrow?’

“‘Certainly,’ I answered.

“‘Then, good-by, Mr. Jabez Wilson, and let me congratulate you once more on the important position which you have been fortunate enough to gain.’ He bowed me out of the room and I went home with my assistant, hardly knowing what to say or do, I was so pleased at my own good fortune.

“Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again; for I had quite persuaded myself that the whole affair must be some great hoax or fraud, though what its object might be I could not imagine. It seemed altogether past belief that anyone could make such a will, or that they would pay such a sum for doing anything so simple as copying out the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up, but by bedtime I had reasoned myself out of the whole thing. However, in the morning I determined to have a look at it anyhow, so I bought a penny bottle of ink, and with a quill-pen, and seven sheets of foolscap paper, I started off for Pope’s Court.

“Well, to my surprise and delight, everything was as right as possible. The table was set out ready for me, and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and then he left me; but he would drop in from time to time to see that all was right with me. At two o’clock he bade me good-day, complimented me upon the amount that I had written, and locked the door of the office after me.

“This went on day after day, Mr. Holmes, and on Saturday the manager came in and planked down four golden sovereigns for my week’s work. It was the same next week, and the same the week after. Every morning I was there at ten, and every afternoon I left at two. By degrees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and then, after a time, he did not come in at all. Still, of course, I never dared to leave the room for an instant, for I was not sure when he might come, and the billet was such a good one, and suited me so well, that I would not risk the loss of it.

“Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots and Archery and Armour and Architecture and Attica, and hoped with diligence that I might get on to the B’s before very long. It cost me something in foolscap, and I had pretty
nearly filled a shelf with my writings. And then suddenly the whole business came to an end.”

“To an end?”

“Yes, sir. And no later than this morning. I went to my work as usual at ten o’clock, but the door was shut and locked, with a little square of cardboard hammered on to the middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself.”

He held up a piece of white cardboard about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:

“THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE IS DISSOLVED. October 9, 1890.”

Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed this curt announcement and the rueful face behind it, until the comical side of the affair so completely overtopped every other consideration that we both burst out into a roar of laughter.

“I cannot see that there is anything very funny,” cried our client, flushing up to the roots of his flaming head. “If you can do nothing better than laugh at me, I can go elsewhere.”

“No, no,” cried Holmes, shoving him back into the chair from which he had half risen. “I really wouldn’t miss your case for the world. It is most refreshingly unusual. But there is, if you will excuse my saying so, something just a little funny about it. Pray what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?”

“I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. Then I called at the offices round, but none of them seemed to know anything about it. Finally, I went to the landlord, who is an accountant living on the ground floor, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Red-headed League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was. He answered that the name was new to him.

“‘Well,’ said I, ‘the gentleman at No. 4.’

“‘What, the red-headed man?’
“‘Yes.’

“‘Oh,’ said he, ‘his name was William Morris. He was a solicitor and was using my room as a temporary convenience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yesterday.’

“‘Where could I find him?’

“‘Oh, at his new offices. He did tell me the address. Yes, 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul’s.’

“I started off, Mr. Holmes, but when I got to that address it was a manufactory of artificial knee-caps, and no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris or Mr. Duncan Ross.”

“And what did you do then?” asked Holmes.

“I went home to Saxe-Coburg Square, and I took the advice of my assistant. But he could not help me in any way. He could only say that if I waited I should hear by post. But that was not quite good enough, Mr. Holmes. I did not wish to lose such a place without a struggle, so, as I had heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk who were in need of it, I came right away to you.”

“And you did very wisely,” said Holmes. “Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, and I shall be happy to look into it. From what you have told me I think that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first sight appear.”

“Grave enough!” said Mr. Jabez Wilson. “Why, I have lost four pound a week.”

“As far as you are personally concerned,” remarked Holmes, “I do not see that you have any grievance against this extraordinary league. On the contrary, you are, as I understand, richer by some £ 30, to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter A. You have lost nothing by them.”

“No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and what their object was in playing this prank—if it was a prank—upon me. It was a pretty expensive joke for them, for it cost them two and thirty pounds.”
“We shall endeavour to clear up these points for you. And, first, one or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement—how long had he been with you?”

“About a month then.”

“How did he come?”

“In answer to an advertisement.”

“Was he the only applicant?”

“No, I had a dozen.”

“Why did you pick him?”

“Because he was handy and would come cheap.”

“At half wages, in fact.”

“Yes.”

“What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?”

“Small, stout-built, very quick in his ways, no hair on his face, though he’s not short of thirty. Has a white splash of acid upon his forehead.”

Holmes sat up in his chair in considerable excitement. “I thought as much,” said he. “Have you ever observed that his ears are pierced for earrings?”

“Yes, sir. He told me that a gipsy had done it for him when he was a lad.”

“Hum!” said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. “He is still with you?”

“Oh, yes, sir; I have only just left him.”
“And has your business been attended to in your absence?”

“Nothing to complain of, sir. There’s never very much to do of a morning.”

“That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall be happy to give you an opinion upon the subject in the course of a day or two. To-day is Saturday, and I hope that by Monday we may come to a conclusion.”

“Well, Watson,” said Holmes when our visitor had left us, “what do you make of it all?”

“I make nothing of it,” I answered frankly. “It is a most mysterious business.”

“As a rule,” said Holmes, “the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace, featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter.”

“What are you going to do, then?” I asked.

“To smoke,” he answered. “It is quite a three pipe problem, and I beg that you won’t speak to me for fifty minutes.” He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawk-like nose, and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the gesture of a man who has made up his mind and put his pipe down upon the mantelpiece.

“Sarasate plays at the St. James’s Hall this afternoon,” he remarked. “What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?”

“I have nothing to do to-day. My practice is never very absorbing.”

“Then put on your hat and come. I am going through the City first, and we can have some lunch on the way. I observe that there is a good deal of German music on the programme, which is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective, and I want to introspect. Come along!”
We travelled by the Underground as far as Aldersgate; and a short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. It was a poky, little, shabby-genteel place, where four lines of dingy two-storied brick houses looked out into a small railed-in enclosure, where a lawn of weedy grass and a few clumps of faded laurel bushes made a hard fight against a smoke-laden and uncongenial atmosphere. Three gilt balls and a brown board with “JABEZ WILSON” in white letters, upon a corner house, announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it with his head on one side and looked it all over, with his eyes shining brightly between puckered lids. Then he walked slowly up the street, and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawnbroker’s, and, having thumped vigorously upon the pavement with his stick two or three times, he went up to the door and knocked. It was instantly opened by a bright-looking, clean-shaven young fellow, who asked him to step in.

“Thank you,” said Holmes, “I only wished to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand.”

“Third right, fourth left,” answered the assistant promptly, closing the door.

“Smart fellow, that,” observed Holmes as we walked away. “He is, in my judgment, the fourth smartest man in London, and for daring I am not sure that he has not a claim to be third. I have known something of him before.”

“Evidently,” said I, “Mr. Wilson’s assistant counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Red-headed League. I am sure that you inquired your way merely in order that you might see him.”

“Not him.”

“What then?”

“The knees of his trousers.”

“And what did you see?”

“What I expected to see.”

“Why did you beat the pavement?”
“My dear doctor, this is a time for observation, not for talk. We are spies in an enemy’s country. We know something of Saxe-Coburg Square. Let us now explore the parts which lie behind it.”

The road in which we found ourselves as we turned round the corner from the retired Saxe-Coburg Square presented as great a contrast to it as the front of a picture does to the back. It was one of the main arteries which conveyed the traffic of the City to the north and west. The roadway was blocked with the immense stream of commerce flowing in a double tide inward and outward, while the footpaths were black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians. It was difficult to realise as we looked at the line of fine shops and stately business premises that they really abutted on the other side upon the faded and stagnant square which we had just quitted.

“Let me see,” said Holmes, standing at the corner and glancing along the line, “I should like just to remember the order of the houses here. It is a hobby of mine to have an exact knowledge of London. There is Mortimer’s, the tobacconist, the little newspaper shop, the Coburg branch of the City and Suburban Bank, the Vegetarian Restaurant, and McFarlane’s carriage-building depot. That carries us right on to the other block. And now, Doctor, we’ve done our work, so it’s time we had some play. A sandwich and a cup of coffee, and then off to violin-land, where all is sweetness and delicacy and harmony, and there are no red-headed clients to vex us with their conundrums.”

My friend was an enthusiastic musician, being himself not only a very capable performer but a composer of no ordinary merit. All the afternoon he sat in the stalls wrapped in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long, thin fingers in time to the music, while his gently smiling face and his languid, dreamy eyes were as unlike those of Holmes the sleuth-hound, Holmes the relentless, keen-witted, ready-handed criminal agent, as it was possible to conceive. In his singular character the dual nature alternately asserted itself, and his extreme exactness and astuteness represented, as I have often thought, the reaction against the poetic and contemplative mood which occasionally predominated in him. The swing of his nature took him from extreme languor to devouring energy; and, as I knew well, he was never so truly formidable as when, for days on end, he had been lounging in his armchair amid his improvisations and his black-letter editions. Then it was that the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant reasoning power would rise to the level of intuition, until those who were unacquainted with his methods would look askance at him as on a man whose knowledge was not that of other mortals. When I saw him that afternoon so enwrapped in the music at St. James’s Hall I felt that an evil time might be coming upon those whom he had set himself to hunt down.
“You want to go home, no doubt, Doctor,” he remarked as we emerged.

“Yes, it would be as well.”

“And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious.”

“Why serious?”

“A considerable crime is in contemplation. I have every reason to believe that we shall be in time to stop it. But to-day being Saturday rather complicates matters. I shall want your help to-night.”

“At what time?”

“Ten will be early enough.”

“I shall be at Baker Street at ten.”

“Very well. And, I say, Doctor, there may be some little danger, so kindly put your army revolver in your pocket.” He waved his hand, turned on his heel, and disappeared in an instant among the crowd.

I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbours, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened but what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused and grotesque. As I drove home to my house in Kensington I thought over it all, from the extraordinary story of the red-headed copier of the Encyclopædia down to the visit to Saxe-Coburg Square, and the ominous words with which he had parted from me. What was this nocturnal expedition, and why should I go armed? Where were we going, and what were we to do? I had the hint from Holmes that this smooth-faced pawnbroker’s assistant was a formidable man—a man who might play a deep game. I tried to puzzle it out, but gave it up in despair and set the matter aside until night should bring an explanation.

It was a quarter-past nine when I started from home and made my way across the Park, and so through Oxford Street to Baker Street. Two hansoms were standing at
the door, and as I entered the passage I heard the sound of voices from above. On entering his room, I found Holmes in animated conversation with two men, one of whom I recognised as Peter Jones, the official police agent, while the other was a long, thin, sad-faced man, with a very shiny hat and oppressively respectable frock-coat.

“Ha! Our party is complete,” said Holmes, buttoning up his pea-jacket and taking his heavy hunting crop from the rack. “Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones, of Scotland Yard? Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is to be our companion in to-night’s adventure.”

“We’re hunting in couples again, Doctor, you see,” said Jones in his consequential way. “Our friend here is a wonderful man for starting a chase. All he wants is an old dog to help him to do the running down.”

“I hope a wild goose may not prove to be the end of our chase,” observed Mr. Merryweather gloomily.

“You may place considerable confidence in Mr. Holmes, sir,” said the police agent loftily. “He has his own little methods, which are, if he won’t mind my saying so, just a little too theoretical and fantastic, but he has the makings of a detective in him. It is not too much to say that once or twice, as in that business of the Sholto murder and the Agra treasure, he has been more nearly correct than the official force.”

“Oh, if you say so, Mr. Jones, it is all right,” said the stranger with deference. “Still, I confess that I miss my rubber. It is the first Saturday night for seven-and-twenty years that I have not had my rubber.”

“I think you will find,” said Sherlock Holmes, “that you will play for a higher stake to-night than you have ever done yet, and that the play will be more exciting. For you, Mr. Merryweather, the stake will be some £ 30,000; and for you, Jones, it will be the man upon whom you wish to lay your hands.”

“John Clay, the murderer, thief, smasher, and forger. He’s a young man, Mr. Merryweather, but he is at the head of his profession, and I would rather have my bracelets on him than on any criminal in London. He’s a remarkable man, is young John Clay. His grandfather was a royal duke, and he himself has been to Eton and Oxford. His brain is as cunning as his fingers, and though we meet signs of him at every turn, we never know where to find the man himself. He’ll crack a crib in Scotland one week, and be raising money to build an orphanage in Cornwall the next. I’ve been on his track for years and have never set eyes on him yet.”
“I hope that I may have the pleasure of introducing you to-night. I’ve had one or two little turns also with Mr. John Clay, and I agree with you that he is at the head of his profession. It is past ten, however, and quite time that we started. If you two will take the first hansom, Watson and I will follow in the second.”

Sherlock Holmes was not very communicative during the long drive and lay back in the cab humming the tunes which he had heard in the afternoon. We rattled through an endless labyrinth of gas-lit streets until we emerged into Farrington Street.

“We are close there now,” my friend remarked. “This fellow Merryweather is a bank director, and personally interested in the matter. I thought it as well to have Jones with us also. He is not a bad fellow, though an absolute imbecile in his profession. He has one positive virtue. He is as brave as a bulldog and as tenacious as a lobster if he gets his claws upon anyone. Here we are, and they are waiting for us.”

We had reached the same crowded thoroughfare in which we had found ourselves in the morning. Our cabs were dismissed, and, following the guidance of Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage and through a side door, which he opened for us. Within there was a small corridor, which ended in a very massive iron gate. This also was opened, and led down a flight of winding stone steps, which terminated at another formidable gate. Mr. Merryweather stopped to light a lantern, and then conducted us down a dark, earth-smelling passage, and so, after opening a third door, into a huge vault or cellar, which was piled all round with crates and massive boxes.

“You are not very vulnerable from above,” Holmes remarked as he held up the lantern and gazed about him.

“Nor from below,” said Mr. Merryweather, striking his stick upon the flags which lined the floor. “Why, dear me, it sounds quite hollow!” he remarked, looking up in surprise.

“I must really ask you to be a little more quiet!” said Holmes severely. “You have already imperilled the whole success of our expedition. Might I beg that you would have the goodness to sit down upon one of those boxes, and not to interfere?”

The solemn Mr. Merryweather perched himself upon a crate, with a very injured expression upon his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees upon the floor and, with the lantern and a magnifying lens, began to examine minutely the cracks between
the stones. A few seconds sufficed to satisfy him, for he sprang to his feet again and put his glass in his pocket.

“We have at least an hour before us,” he remarked, “for they can hardly take any steps until the good pawnbroker is safely in bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for the sooner they do their work the longer time they will have for their escape. We are at present, Doctor—as no doubt you have divined—in the cellar of the City branch of one of the principal London banks. Mr. Merryweather is the chairman of directors, and he will explain to you that there are reasons why the more daring criminals of London should take a considerable interest in this cellar at present.”

“It is our French gold,” whispered the director. “We have had several warnings that an attempt might be made upon it.”

“Your French gold?”

“Yes. We had occasion some months ago to strengthen our resources and borrowed for that purpose 30,000 napoleons from the Bank of France. It has become known that we have never had occasion to unpack the money, and that it is still lying in our cellar. The crate upon which I sit contains 2,000 napoleons packed between layers of lead foil. Our reserve of bullion is much larger at present than is usually kept in a single branch office, and the directors have had misgivings upon the subject.”

“Which were very well justified,” observed Holmes. “And now it is time that we arranged our little plans. I expect that within an hour matters will come to a head. In the meantime Mr. Merryweather, we must put the screen over that dark lantern.”

“And sit in the dark?”

“I am afraid so. I had brought a pack of cards in my pocket, and I thought that, as we were a partie carrée, you might have your rubber after all. But I see that the enemy’s preparations have gone so far that we cannot risk the presence of a light. And, first of all, we must choose our positions. These are daring men, and though we shall take them at a disadvantage, they may do us some harm unless we are careful. I shall stand behind this crate, and do you conceal yourselves behind those. Then, when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly. If they fire, Watson, have no compunction about shooting them down.”
I placed my revolver, cocked, upon the top of the wooden case behind which I crouched. Holmes shot the slide across the front of his lantern and left us in pitch darkness—such an absolute darkness as I have never before experienced. The smell of hot metal remained to assure us that the light was still there, ready to flash out at a moment’s notice. To me, with my nerves worked up to a pitch of expectancy, there was something depressing and subduing in the sudden gloom, and in the cold dank air of the vault.

“They have but one retreat,” whispered Holmes. “That is back through the house into Saxe-Coburg Square. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones?”

“I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door.”

“Well, then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait.”

What a time it seemed! From comparing notes afterwards it was but an hour and a quarter, yet it appeared to me that the night must have almost gone, and the dawn be breaking above us. My limbs were weary and stiff, for I feared to change my position; yet my nerves were worked up to the highest pitch of tension, and my hearing was so acute that I could not only hear the gentle breathing of my companions, but I could distinguish the deeper, heavier in-breath of the bulky Jones from the thin, sighing note of the bank director. From my position I could look over the case in the direction of the floor. Suddenly my eyes caught the glint of a light.

At first it was but a lurid spark upon the stone pavement. Then it lengthened out until it became a yellow line, and then, without any warning or sound, a gash seemed to open and a hand appeared, a white, almost womanly hand, which felt about in the centre of the little area of light. For a minute or more the hand, with its writhing fingers, protruded out of the floor. Then it was withdrawn as suddenly as it appeared, and all was dark again save the single lurid spark which marked a chink between the stones.

Its disappearance, however, was but momentary. With a rending, tearing sound, one of the broad, white stones turned over upon its side and left a square, gaping hole, through which streamed the light of a lantern. Over the edge there peeped a clean-cut, boyish face, which looked keenly about it, and then, with a hand on either side of the aperture, drew itself shoulder-high and waist-high, until one knee rested upon the edge. In another instant he stood at the side of the hole and was hauling after him a companion, lithe and small like himself, with a pale face and a shock of very red hair.
“It’s all clear,” he whispered. “Have you the chisel and the bags? Great Scott! Jump, Archie, jump, and I’ll swing for it!”

Sherlock Holmes had sprung out and seized the intruder by the collar. The other dived down the hole, and I heard the sound of rending cloth as Jones clutched at his skirts. The light flashed upon the barrel of a revolver, but Holmes’ hunting crop came down on the man’s wrist, and the pistol clinked upon the stone floor.

“It’s no use, John Clay,” said Holmes blandly. “You have no chance at all.”

“So I see,” the other answered with the utmost coolness. “I fancy that my pal is all right, though I see you have got his coat-tails.”

“There are three men waiting for him at the door,” said Holmes.

“Oh, indeed! You seem to have done the thing very completely. I must compliment you.”

“And I you,” Holmes answered. “Your red-headed idea was very new and effective.”

“You’ll see your pal again presently,” said Jones. “He’s quicker at climbing down holes than I am. Just hold out while I fix the derbies.”

“I beg that you will not touch me with your filthy hands,” remarked our prisoner as the handcuffs clattered upon his wrists. “You may not be aware that I have royal blood in my veins. Have the goodness, also, when you address me always to say ‘sir’ and ‘please.’”

“All right,” said Jones with a stare and a snigger. “Well, would you please, sir, march upstairs, where we can get a cab to carry your Highness to the police-station?”

“That is better,” said John Clay serenely. He made a sweeping bow to the three of us and walked quietly off in the custody of the detective.

“Really, Mr. Holmes,” said Mr. Merryweather as we followed them from the cellar, “I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt
that you have detected and defeated in the most complete manner one of the most
determined attempts at bank robbery that have ever come within my experience.”

“I have had one or two little scores of my own to settle with Mr. John Clay,” said
Holmes. “I have been at some small expense over this matter, which I shall expect
the bank to refund, but beyond that I am amply repaid by having had an experience
which is in many ways unique, and by hearing the very remarkable narrative of the
Red-headed League.”

“You see, Watson,” he explained in the early hours of the morning as we sat over
a glass of whisky and soda in Baker Street, “it was perfectly obvious from the first
that the only possible object of this rather fantastic business of the advertisement of
the League, and the copying of the Encyclopædia, must be to get this not over-bright
pawnbroker out of the way for a number of hours every day. It was a curious way of
managing it, but, really, it would be difficult to suggest a better. The method was no
doubt suggested to Clay’s ingenious mind by the colour of his accomplice’s hair.
The £ 4 a week was a lure which must draw him, and what was it to them, who were
playing for thousands? They put in the advertisement, one rogue has the temporary
office, the other rogue incites the man to apply for it, and together they manage to
secure his absence every morning in the week. From the time that I heard of the
assistant having come for half wages, it was obvious to me that he had some strong
motive for securing the situation.”

“But how could you guess what the motive was?”

“Had there been women in the house, I should have suspected a mere vulgar
intrigue. That, however, was out of the question. The man’s business was a small
one, and there was nothing in his house which could account for such elaborate
preparations, and such an expenditure as they were at. It must, then, be something
out of the house. What could it be? I thought of the assistant’s fondness for
photography, and his trick of vanishing into the c
ellar. The cellar! There was the end
of this tangled clue. Then I made inquiries as to this mysterious assistant and found
that I had to deal with one of the coolest and most daring criminals in London. He
was doing something in the cellar—something which took many hours a day for
months on end. What could it be, once more? I could think of nothing save that he
was running a tunnel to some other building.

“So far I had got when we went to visit the scene of action. I surprised you by
beating upon the pavement with my stick. I was ascertaining whether the cellar
stretched out in front or behind. It was not in front. Then I rang the bell, and, as I
hoped, the assistant answered it. We have had some skirmishes, but we had never
set eyes upon each other before. I hardly looked at his face. His knees were what I
wished to see. You must yourself have remarked how worn, wrinkled, and stained they were. They spoke of those hours of burrowing. The only remaining point was what they were burrowing for. I walked round the corner, saw the City and Suburban Bank abutted on our friend’s premises, and felt that I had solved my problem. When you drove home after the concert I called upon Scotland Yard and upon the chairman of the bank directors, with the result that you have seen.”

“And how could you tell that they would make their attempt to-night?” I asked.

“Well, when they closed their League offices that was a sign that they cared no longer about Mr. Jabez Wilson’s presence—in other words, that they had completed their tunnel. But it was essential that they should use it soon, as it might be discovered, or the bullion might be removed. Saturday would suit them better than any other day, as it would give them two days for their escape. For all these reasons I expected them to come to-night.”

“You reasoned it out beautifully,” I exclaimed in unfeigned admiration. “It is so long a chain, and yet every link rings true.”

“It saved me from ennui,” he answered, yawning. “Alas! I already feel it closing in upon me. My life is spent in one long effort to escape from the commonplaces of existence. These little problems help me to do so.”

“And you are a benefactor of the race,” said I.

He shrugged his shoulders. “Well, perhaps, after all, it is of some little use,” he remarked. “‘L’homme c’est rien—l’œuvre c’est tout,’ as Gustave Flaubert wrote to George Sand.”
Task 2 - create a storyboard on the story you read. Choose the key events and use the template on the next page.
**Features of a detective story**

Arthur Conan Doyle did not invent the detective story, but built on conventions already established by Edgar Allan Poe in his story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*. Conan Doyle said that 'the problem and its solution must form the theme' of a detective story.

Conventions of this form include:

- a rational and intelligent detective
- a companion for the detective (usually less intelligent than the detective)
- a mystery – sometimes involving murder
- clues to the solution which the reader can enjoy as a puzzle
- build-up of tension
- a satisfactory resolution in which the mystery is solved

Task 4 - Look back at the two Sherlock Holmes stories you read earlier.

Which features of a detective story can you find? **Challenge – include quotations from the text**

What similar features are there in the two texts?

When you write your own detective story, which features will you make sure to include?
Complete the week 2 quiz:

1. Which of these is NOT a feature of a detective story?
   A. a mystery
   B. build up of tension
   C. a romantic love interest

2. Which of these is NOT a feature of a detective story?
   A. a rational and intelligent detective
   B. a companion
   C. a jump scare

3. Which of these is NOT a feature of a detective story?
   A. clues to the solution
   B. an alien
   C. a satisfactory resolution where the mystery is solved

4. Find a quote in the story you read that shows a rational and intelligent detective
   ________________________________________________________________

5. Find a quote in the story you read that shows a companion for the detective
   ________________________________________________________________

6. Find a quotation in the story that you read that shows a mystery
   ________________________________________________________________

7. Find a quotation in the story you read that shows clues to the solution
   ________________________________________________________________

8. Who is the narrator of the Holmes stories?
   ________________________________________________________________

9. How do the Sherlock Holmes stories always begin?
   A. with Holmes investigating a case
   B. With Doctor Watson talking to Holmes

10. What mystery will you include in your own detective story?
Sherlock Holmes is one of the most recognizable figures in all of world literature. Most people think of Holmes as a force of pure reasoning, an almost superhuman mind capable of solving any puzzle. Although Doyle’s stories do portray him this way, they also complicate his character, as is clear in “The Red-Headed League.” Here readers see multiple sides of Holmes: he moves from quiet contemplation to frantic activity, virtually asleep one moment and practically pushing Watson out the door in hot pursuit of clues the next. Watson comments that Holmes has a “dual nature,” and readers see evidence of this throughout the story, as when Holmes transitions instantly from fervently investigating the clues at Wilson’s house to lounging the day away in a concert hall. Holmes veers wildly from one extreme to the next, making him far more eccentric than first-time readers might expect.

Although these extremes of behavior might suggest that Holmes is not a realistic, well-rounded character, close readers of the story will notice that he is also capable of more complicated emotions. Holmes displays warm friendship for his “dear Watson” but usually rebuffs his friend’s attempts to find out what he is thinking. Even more troubling is the question of Holmes’s motives in solving cases. While Holmes does hand criminals over to the police, serving justice is not his primary concern. Instead, Holmes is primarily interested in the case as an intellectual challenge, a puzzle to be solved. At the end of the “The Red-Headed League,” for example, Holmes suggests that his reward came from hearing an interesting case and settling a private score with John Clay, not from keeping the public safe by putting a known criminal behind bars. Even in the story’s final moments, Doyle further complicates readers’ image of Holmes, who responds indifferently to Watson’s praise and says that he pursued the case solely to escape the boredom of everyday life. Holmes is therefore a character readers easily recognize as superhuman, but also one who is just as human as everyone else.
Doctor Watson

Even though he’s the narrator of the story, Watson plays a surprisingly limited role. In fact, he does not help solve the case or even contribute to the action of the story in any way. That is not to say, however, that Watson is irrelevant. In fact, Watson is just as much the center of the story’s form as Sherlock Holmes is the center of the story’s plot. Watson shapes the story for readers, who see and understand only what Watson himself experiences. Watson’s good nature, eagerness, and warm feelings for Holmes enliven the story and transform it from a mere recounting of a crime and its solution into a rich study of human behavior.

Doyle transforms the story from a straightforward mystery into a complex study by putting readers directly into Watson’s shoes. Although far from dull, Watson is like most readers in that he simply isn’t as observant as Holmes. The fact that he is so average and genial also makes him instantly accessible to readers. Readers don’t always understand Holmes’s reasoning, but they admire him all the more because of Watson’s warm descriptions of him. Watson also tries to redeem Holmes for readers by suggesting that he is a benefactor of humanity, even though Holmes himself admits that he solves cases merely for his own recreation.

Why do characters stand the test of time? – transcript of a video by Antony Horowitz

As a storyteller one of the greatest, most enjoyable challenges, is creating an unforgettable character whom readers want to follow again and again. Some of these characters become so familiar to us, they seem to have existed forever, like James Bond, Robin Hood, Superman or the world’s most famous detective Sherlock Holmes.
Holmes has been everywhere, in films, on TV and of course in book. Holmes and his loyal companion, Dr John Watson, first appeared way back in 1887, born from the imagination of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. But a real person did provide the inspiration for Doyle’s famous creation. And to discover who that was, and how that worked, let’s join Andrew Marr, carrying out his own elementary investigation.

Andrew Marr: ‘The first great sleuth in detective fiction is Sherlock Holmes. That much at least is elementary. ‘Other fictional detectives had come before. But it was Holmes with his prodigious intellect, his quirks and eccentricities that captured the public imagination, ‘and spawned an army of imitators.

So what makes Sherlock Holmes so irresistible? I think we read a Sherlock Holmes story because we want to stand with his friend Watson and watch the great man as he solves the mystery. When we do this we are actually recreating Dr Arthur Conan Doyle’s own experience as a student. when he observed Joseph Bell, his mentor at Edinburgh University, display his powers of reasoning. Bell would amaze his students by looking at a patient and simply using his acute powers of observation and deduction, revealing the underlying story of who they were.

By picking up on these tiny details Bell wasn't simply showing off, though he was certainly doing that. He was creating the method that would be used by Holmes himself. Small, apparently insignificant details which when woven together, told the true story of a human life. Thanks to Bell’s methods, Holmes had the super human ability to extract information from anyone. ‘And there was something omniscient about him. In the modern Victorian city, the detective could go everywhere, speak to everybody. From the top of society down to street level. As Holmes says himself, being a professional voyeur is a lot of fun.

Task 1 – What characteristics does Sherlock Holmes have that make him an interesting main character?
What characteristics does Doctor Watson have that make him an interesting sidekick to Holmes?

Villains

Every story needs a great villain because without them, the hero can’t shine. They’re the force of reckoning that keeps the action moving and the reader engaged. He pokes and prods at the main character, forcing them to stretch, grow and change.

Stories, after all, are about change.

For change to happen, there needs to be conflict and the villain provides that. For our hero to be heroic, they have to be challenged. Someone (or something) needs to be actively working against them, throwing obstacles in their path and making them work for their objects of desire. What’s more, it’s by watching the hero face incredible odds that the reader develops empathy.

Aspire. Expect. Achieve. Together
Task 2 – What villains has Holmes had to face in his detective stories? How does Holmes deal with villains?

What characteristics does an interesting villain need?

Creating your own characters.

Use the next page to design your own main character, sidekick and villain for your story. Your main character must be a detective.
Complete the week 3 quiz:

1. What are some of Holmes' most recognizable factors
   A. pure reasoning
   B. superhuman mind
   C. his moustache

2. What does it mean to be 'dual-natured'?

3. How is Holmes dual-natured?

4. What is Holmes most interested in when on a case?
   A. Handing the bad guys over to the police
   B. solving the puzzle of the mystery

5. How are Doctor Watson and the reader similar?

6. How is Doctor Watson different to Holmes?

7. Why is it important to have a villain in a story?

8. What two things does a villain character bring to a story?
   A. change
   B. conflict
   C. fear

9. Who is the villain in the story you read?

10. What will the name of your detective, sidekick and villain be in your own story?
Week 4 – Writing your detective story

A short story needs to be compelling to read and to be this it needs to be given an effective structure. Like all texts, stories also have their own basic 'recipe' called 'genre conventions'. Here is a typical story structure that will help you to keep your own story moving through different stages in a compelling way – and help make sure you don’t accidentally ramble on!

Opening

This part of your story must work to engage your reader, beginning to absorb them into your 'story-world'. You should aim to hook the reader into the story with the 'plot hook'. Whether you choose to start the story by giving the end away just like Shakespeare did in his play Romeo and Juliet; or you start in the middle of lots of action; or even with very little action at all, you will definitely need to start in a way that hooks your reader – and do so pretty quickly.

Example

Task 1 - Can you find the ‘plot hook’ below?

It was a brilliant summer’s day smack in the middle of the school holidays. It was my birthday, too. I was ten. You can imagine I was feeling that life couldn’t get much better than this: warm weather, holidays, a bar of chocolate all to myself, a bunch of texts from my mates to answer, and being driven with mum and dad to Twycross Zoo. They knew just how much I loved animals and the chimps there were always my favourites. What could possibly go wrong? That day any thoughts of problems weren’t even a distant cloud on the horizon of my sunny mind.

Plot hook ________________________________

The ‘plot hook’ in this example is ‘What could possibly go wrong?’.

Setting

Establish the time and place, as well as the general situation. This can also be used to help develop a suitable mood or atmosphere. It can sometimes help to use a familiar place that your reader can relate to in some way. At this stage, you need to 'set up' the story and begin to introduce the main character(s).

Fiction trigger (or inciting incident)

Use your narrator to tell of an incident or event that the reader feels will spark a chain of events. This helps make the reader feel that the story has really started. From this point, life cannot be quite the same for your main character.
(that is your protagonist). There is a problem that has to be faced and overcome.

The fiction trigger can be an event that really starts the story. It will develop from the 'plot hook'. If the story is about a day out at the zoo, then maybe an animal has escaped. If is about a robbery, it might be the event that makes a character consider carrying out a robbery; and if it is about an accident, it will be the event that causes it to happen.

**Keeping up the momentum (plot development or rising action)**

This section builds the tension – keeps the reader absorbed and guessing where it all will lead.

This is where you will move the story forward and will use lots of techniques to keep the reader guessing, 'What will happen next?!

**Climax**

The problem reaches a head, with suspense creating lots of tension for the reader– showing the reader the possible result of what has come before.

This is not the end of your story – not quite. It will be the key event but your protagonist will, somehow, overcome it and all will be well.

**Conclusion (the resolution)**

This must leave your reader with a sense of satisfaction, or it could be a twist in the tale leaving questions that linger in the mind.

This is the ending of your story – where all loose ends are tied up to the satisfaction of the reader. A good story will cause the reader to go, 'Hmm – I liked that' or even 'Wow'

By following this story structure, and planning under each of the above headings, you should be able to come up with a tense plot for your own story, one that will engage and absorb your reader.

**Writing techniques**

Throughout your own story, you will also need to use writing techniques that will work to keep your reader engaged and absorbed. An important skill is to put clear images of the setting and characters in your reader’s mind, as well as to create a sense of atmosphere that suits each part of the story.

- **Narration** - the voice that tells the story, either first person (I/me) or third person (he/him/she/her). This needs to have the effect of interesting your reader in the story with a warm and inviting but authoritative voice.
• **Description** - describing words such as adjectives, adverbs, similes and metaphors that add detail. This is told by the narrator. It helps engage readers by creating vivid pictures and feelings in their 'mind's eye'.

• **Dialogue** - the direct speech of characters, shown inside quotation marks. We all judge characters by what they talk about and by the way they speak. This makes dialogue a key technique for creating interest and realism.

• **Alliteration** - repetition of the same beginning sounds in nearby words. This can create a useful emphasis, maybe to highlight a sound or movement, or to intensity feeling or even to bind words together.

• **Connotation** - a word’s meaning can be literal, as in 'It looked like a cat', or it can create connotations as in 'As soon as the food reached the table, the boy pounced on it like a cat.' A connotation is a meaning created by a special use of a word in a particular way or context. It works by adding some kind of emotion or a feeling to a word’s usual meaning. All literature depends upon using language that creates connotations. They engage the reader because they evoke reactions and feelings.

• **Pathetic fallacy** - personification is a kind of metaphor and when nature is described in this way, it is called a use of pathetic fallacy. This can help suggest a suitable atmosphere or imply what the mood of the characters is at a certain point, eg in a ghost story, the storm clouds could be said to 'glower down angrily upon the group of youngsters'. A pathetic fallacy can add atmosphere to a scene. It can even give clues to the reader as to what is to come, acting as a kind of foreshadowing.

• **Personification** - this is a technique of presenting objects as if they have feelings, eg 'the rain seemed to be dancing merrily on the excited tin roof.' This creates a sense of emotion and mood for the reader.

• **Repetition** - the action of repeating a word or idea. This can add emphasis or create an interesting pattern of sound or ideas.

• **Onomatopoeia** - use of words which echo their meaning in sound, for example, 'whoosh' 'bang'. Using this can add emotion or feeling that helps give the reader a vivid sense of the effect being described.

• **Simile** - a kind of description. A simile compares two things so that the thing described is understood more vividly, eg 'The water was as smooth as glass.' (Hint - 'like' or 'as' are key words to spot as these
create the simile). A simile can create a vivid image in the reader’s mind, helping to engage and absorb them.

- **Symbolism** - we grow up learning lots of symbols and these can be used in stories to convey a lot of meaning as well as feeling in a single idea or word, eg a red rose can symbolise romantic love; a heavy buckled belt can hint at the power held by the character; an apple can even symbolize temptation if it is used in a way that the reader links to the apple that tempted Eve in the biblical Garden of Eden.

- **Impact** - symbols help writers pack a lot of meaning into just a single word. They work to engage the reader, too, for the reader automatically gets involved in working out the meaning.

**Planning and writing**

You have already planned out a setting, characters and know the features of a detective story.

Look back through the booklet to remind yourself of your ideas. This will help you to plan out and write your story.

**Task 2** - Plan the beginning, middle and ending of your own detective story using the setting, characters and plot devices you have studied over the last 3 weeks. You must also plan to include at least three of the writing techniques above. In your plan have a go at coming up with examples you can include in your draft.

In your story, you must include:

- A mystery (this could be a murder or a missing item)
- Three clues – a key, an old letter and fingerprints
- An investigation using a magnifying glass and forensics
Opening – must hook your reader in!

Setting:

Weather:

Plot hook:

What can your character see?

What can your character hear?

What can your character smell?

What is your character feeling?

Techniques to include:

Middle – Investigating the case!

What happens that urges the reader to keep reading?

What goes wrong for your character?

How do they get out of this sticky situation?

Techniques to include:

End – The climax and solving of the case!

How does your character solve the mystery?
Do they meet the villain?

Will you leave it on a cliffhanger?

Will your story have a big twist?

Now have a go at writing the opening of your detective story.

Challenge task – write the complete story (beginning, middle and end)!
Complete the week 4 quiz:

1. What must the opening of your story do?
   A. Hook the reader in
   B. be very long, explaining every detail

2. What plot hook have you used in your story? Was it effective?

3. Where did you set your story? Do you think it worked as a location for a detective story?

4. What techniques did you include in your opening? Can these be improved in any way?

5. What mystery did you include in your story? Was this effective or could you have changed it in some way?

6. How did you introduce the clues in your story? How did the characters react to finding the clues?

7. What was the climax in your story? Was it effective in creating suspense and tension?

8. How did you end your story? Did you leave the story open for further writing?

10. Give yourself one even better if target for your story

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**Week 5: The Tempest Context**

Read the two articles below that explain the context of The Tempest. Then complete the activities and answer the questions.

**Article 1: Key Context**

*The Tempest* was written around 1610-1611, and is believed to be the last play William Shakespeare wrote before retiring from the theatre. Its genre is that of a romantic comedy, although it does have many deeper themes and criticisms of Elizabethan society. The play was first performed in 1611 at the Court by the King’s Men with very little scenery and theatrical effects, which meant that the audience had to use their imagination to a large extent. It can be suggested that this play is a symbolic farewell of Shakespeare's to the theatre, and the themes of the play do support this idea. The play is not one of Shakespeare's most famous, but it is still extremely respected and revered within literature and the theatre. The title of the play *The Tempest* can be interpreted in two ways: firstly, in a literal sense, as a play about a group of people who are shipwrecked by a storm, and secondly, symbolically, as a representation of the emotional and psychological turmoil that almost all the characters suffer.

**The Tempest**

In 1609 a fleet of nine ships left England carrying five hundred colonists with the goal of settling in Virginia but encountered trouble, and one ship - the Sea Venture - was driven onto the rocks of Bermuda the 'Devil's Islands' and London mourned this loss for a year. However, in 1610 it was discovered that this ship had survived and eventually reached Virginia, after finding that Bermuda was plentiful and that they were able to survive there, but mutiny broke out and some survivors began to steal resources and it was after this that the group left for Virginia. It is argued that this event inspired Shakespeare to create a similar

**The Attitudes and Values of the Time**

The time that Shakespeare was writing in was full of attitudes and values which directed and influenced the themes of literature. Some common attitudes and values were: romance, prosperity, peace, conspiracies, colonisation, a decline in the significance of religion, science, technology and exploration, virginity, theatre, music, fine arts and entertainment such as Masques. These attitudes and values may have inspired or affected Shakespeare's work. For example, *The Tempest* uses several themes taken from the attitudes and values of this time such as: romance, peace and colonisation.

**Shakespeare's Theatre**

Shakespeare is the author of around thirty-seven plays and one hundred and fifty four sonnets and he became the most popular writer in England at the time, and his legacy is still immense today. Shakespeare was part-owner of an acting company called Lord Chamberlain's Men, which after their success and popularity with King James the First was renamed The King's Men, and with this company he performed many of his plays at The Globe Theatre in London - a theatre which the group built. This theatre and its productions were extremely popular during Shakespeare's time, but the Globe burnt down in 1613, during a production. As I have already mentioned, *The Tempest* is viewed by some as a farewell from Shakespeare to theatre. This is primarily due to the fact that this was Shakespeare's last play and this goodbye to theatre is paralleled by the character of Prospero who gives up his magic and art at the end of the play. This character even makes references to 'the great globe', which can be interpreted as either the world itself, or Shakespeare's Globe theatre.

There are many other references to the theatre with *The Tempest*, such as its spectacular dramatic events - the shipwreck, the banquet and the Masque which appear like stage productions - produced by Prospero, the director and writer of the play. The language used within the play also suggests that *The Tempest* can be viewed as Shakespeare's theatre: Ariel 'performs' tasks, such as setting up the Masque, Antonio uses a semantic field of acting - 'cast... perform... act... prologue...' (Act 2, Scene 1) and Prospero refers to life as 'the great globe itself' (Act 4, Scene 1).

**Religion**

At the time of the play's creation religion was still a major influence in everyday life. Religion was an intense and a powerful influence which dictated how society should conduct itself. It can be suggested that Prospero is a tool used by Shakespeare to criticise the controlling nature of religion. For example, Prospero
dominates the island in which the play is set and its inhabitants, from the native Caliban to his daughter Miranda, and as the self-imposed 'God' of the island his initial shallow and revengeful portrayal may be a critique by Shakespeare to suggest that religion should not restrict society.

Colonisation

The Tempest is concerned with the issue of colonisation. Shakespeare makes many comments about this subject throughout the play, the most obvious of which being the idea that western colonisation is foolish and irrational. For example, Prospero as the leader of the island takes control of the natives for his own purposes, such as Caliban and Ariel, but this is presented negatively through Shakespeare's negative portrayal of Prospero as arrogant and manipulative.

Magic

The play is full of magic. The storm which disrupts the opening of the play is merely an enchantment and many of the characters are magical or illusions, for example Ariel and the spirits Juno, Ceres and Iris. Elizabethan England's relationship with magic was complex; the distinction between magic and science was not always clear and many people believed in superstition, witches and magicians. Both the good and bad sides of magic are used within the play - it is presented as an effective way to express feelings and create positive events, and contrastingly, as a devious and shrewd technique to achieve selfish desires. Prospero's magic is benign as he uses it to achieve success and solve his problems and the darker side of magic is shown through Sycorax, Caliban and the evil God Sebetos who use magic to cause pain. However, these magical powers, especially Prospero's, are limited. For example, Prospero cannot force Miranda and Ferdinand to fall in love and he depends upon luck to assist him in his endeavors.

The Tempest as a Romance

The Tempest can be viewed as a romance through its ending which involves a wedding and a reconciliation between two families. Romance is most obviously portrayed through Miranda and Ferdinand who experience love at first sight and are representative of the innocence of true love. It is argued that some of Shakespeare's plays with the potential to become tragedies become romances because their tragic elements are resolved at the end of the play. Other elements of love are also explored by Shakespeare, for example Prospero's fatherly love for Miranda, Alonso's fatherly concern for Ferdinand, and the relationship between Ariel and Prospero.
Article 2: Elizabethan Explorers

Advancements in the practical skills of navigation allowed explorers to thrive during the Elizabethan era. The main benefit of exploration around this time was to open up trade routes with countries around the world. There were a number of famed explorers who led these voyages.

**Sir Francis Drake:** Sir Francis Drake was the most famous seaman of Elizabeth's reign. His career has been interpreted in different ways, ranging from national hero to villain. He grew up as a Puritan who hated Catholics and he was very anti-Spanish. His first voyage in 1566 was as a slave trader. He was attacked in 1568 by the Spanish at San Juan de Ulua in Mexico, losing four ships and over 300 men. He sought to take revenge on the Spanish after this.

**Notable expeditions:** Drake was the first Englishman to sail around the world, circumnavigating the globe between 1577 and 1580. He went on to play a role in the Spanish Armada by attacking Cadiz in 1587 and delaying preparations. He was also vice-admiral during the Armada.

**Impact:** Launched successful attacks on the Spanish empire, bringing back gold, silver and jewels, making a huge profit.
Claimed new lands for England and made valuable trading contacts with the Spice Islands.
Knighted by Elizabeth and made an admiral.

**John Hawkins:** He was a navigator and slave trader who was Sir Francis Drake’s cousin.

**Notable expeditions:** He made three voyages during the 1560s, capturing Africans and selling them into slavery in Central America to Spanish settlers.

After this he returned to England and designed and built ships for the navy. Elizabeth appointed him as a vice-admiral fighting against the Spanish Armada.

**Impact:** Developed a new type of fighting galleon which was faster, lighter and better able to withstand harsh weather conditions than ships in the Spanish fleet.
His innovative designs were important in helping to lead England to victory.

**Walter Raleigh:** He was a famous sailor, explorer and courtier. The queen invested in his privateering expeditions against the Spanish. He wanted to establish colonies for Elizabeth in North America. The area was thought to have an inexhaustible supply of wine, oil, sugar and flax and would reduce England’s trading dependence upon Europe.
Notable expeditions: In 1584 he obtained a royal charter to establish a colony on Roanoke Island off the coast of North Carolina. He organised two expeditions to take settlers to the colony. The first group came home after a year; the second were left there but later disappeared. There is no conclusive proof of what happened to the colonists - perhaps they were forced to leave, ran away or lacked food. The reasons for their disappearance are unclear and Roanoke is sometimes given the name ‘The Lost Colony’.

Raleigh didn’t play a major part in the Armada campaign.

Impact: Raleigh was imprisoned in the Tower of London in June 1592 for marrying one of Elizabeth’s ladies-in-waiting, He was released in August 1592 to lead a very successful naval attack against the Spanish. Following the attack, Raleigh was sent back to the Tower but was released the following year and became a Member of Parliament. Whilst imprisoned in the Tower, Raleigh wrote many poems and even wrote a history of the world.

Week 5 Activities

Activity 1: Summarise the main things that influenced Shakespeare when he was writing The Tempest.

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Activity 2: Make a mind map or a poster about what life was like in Elizabethan England.
Activity 3: Write a diary from the point of view of a teenager in Elizabethan England. Describe what life is like and how society is changing and developing.

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Activity 4: Context Quiz

1. In what era was The Tempest written?
   a. Elizabethan Era
   b. Jacobean Era
   c. Shakespearian Era

2. What does The Tempest criticise?
   a. Attitudes and values of Elizabethan society
   b. Attitudes and values of people outside of England
   c. Other playwrights that were Shakespeare’s rivals

3. What inspired Shakespeare to write The Tempest?
   a. A dream that he had about a magical island.
   b. Hearing about explorers going off and discovering new lands.

Aspire. Expect. Achieve. Together
c. When he travelled abroad on a ship and helped to discover a new island.

4. Why is The Tempest viewed as Shakespeare’s farewell to theatre?
   a. It was the last thing he wrote before he died.
   b. It was the last play Shakespeare wrote.
   c. It was the last play Shakespeare wrote in England.

5. How does Shakespeare present the idea of colonisation in The Tempest?
   a. It is a good thing as it helped to grow the kingdom of Britain.
   b. It is a bad thing that is foolish and irrational.
   c. It is important because then the British explorers could educate the native people.

6. How does Shakespeare present the idea of religion in The Tempest?
   a. It is a good thing that everyone should follow.
   b. It is a bad thing that is used to control people.
   c. Religion is made up and not real.

7. Who thrived during the Elizabethan era?
   a. Explorers.
   b. Poor people.
   c. Magicians

8. What was Sir Francis Drake famous for?
   a. He was a famous playwright.
   b. He invented ships.
   c. He was the first Englishman to sail around the world.

9. What is the term used to describe explorers claiming new lands they discover for themselves?
   a. Colonisation
b. Explorisation

c. Discoveryation

10. How did Elizabethan explorers impact Britain?

___________________________________________________________________________

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11. How is the theme of exploration shown in The Tempest?

___________________________________________________________________________

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**Week 6: Plot Summary**

Read through the plot summary of The Tempest:

*The Tempest* is a play about magic, betrayal, love and forgiveness. It is set on an island somewhere near Italy where Prospero, the one-time Duke of Milan, and his beautiful daughter, Miranda, live with a sprite called Ariel and a strange wildman called Caliban. Prospero is a powerful magician who creates a storm, or tempest, that sets the scene for the play. In the events that follow we see a plot to murder the King of Naples, a drunken scheme to kill Prospero and a romance between Miranda and the King’s son, Ferdinand. In the end everyone is forgiven and they all set sail for home.

This play starts dramatically with a ship being tossed around by waves in a violent storm. The stage directions tell us that ‘thunder and lightning’ are heard. On board the ship is King Alonso of Naples who is heading home from his daughter’s wedding in Tunis. He is accompanied by his son Ferdinand, and his friends Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo. As the storm worsens, the boatswain asks the noblemen to stay in their cabins out of harm’s way so the crew can keep the boat safe.

Antonio and Sebastian curse the boatswain, who suggests they do some work or be quiet. The opening scene ends with cries of panic and prayer as the boat begins to sink.

On a nearby island Miranda and her father, Prospero, watch the storm. She worries for the poor souls onboard. Prospero instructs her to be calm as his magic powers have ensured that the passengers are safe. He then tells her about their past.

Twelve years earlier Prospero was the Duke of Milan and Miranda was a princess. However, they were betrayed by his brother, Antonio, and the King of Naples, who sent Prospero and his daughter away on a rotten carcass of a boat. The two washed up on the island and since then, Prospero has spent his time learning powerful magic. He controls Ariel, a sprite, and Caliban, his servant and son of the witch Sycorax.

He says it is fortunate that his enemies are now stranded on the island following the shipwreck.

After telling his story, Prospero puts Miranda under a sleeping spell and talks to his servant, Ariel. Ariel explains that he caused the storm, as instructed, and has landed the passengers safely on different parts of the island. He has left the King’s son, Ferdinand, by himself. Ariel asks for his freedom in return for all the worthy service he has done for Prospero. Prospero agrees to set him free after two more days and meanwhile asks Ariel to remain invisible to everyone.
Prospero orders his poisonous slave Caliban to fetch more firewood. Caliban curses his master, but has to obey because he is afraid of Prospero’s magic ‘art’. We learn that Caliban inhabited the island long before Prospero arrived.

Ariel then uses magical music to lure Ferdinand to Prospero. When Miranda first sees him she is convinced he is a spirit and the two fall instantly in love.

Alonso (King of Naples), Sebastian (his brother), Antonio (Prospero’s brother) and Gonzalo (a kind nobleman) are stranded on another part of the island. Alonso is upset because he believes his son is dead.

Ariel, invisible to the other characters, plays solemn music which sends everyone to sleep apart from Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio. Alonso starts to feel wondrous heavy and the others promise to guard him while he takes a rest. Antonio suggests that this is an opportunity for Sebastian to become king. With Ferdinand apparently dead, and the King’s daughter married in Tunis, Sebastian would be next in line to rule Naples. They draw their swords planning to kill Alonso and Gonzalo as they sleep. However, Ariel returns and awakens Gonzalo and the King. Sebastian and Antonio pretend their swords are drawn because they heard a noise like a whole herd of lions.

Elsewhere on the island, Caliban is collecting wood and cursing Prospero as he does so. When Trinculo, the ship’s jester appears, Caliban hides under his cloak. Trinculo wonders whether the monster under the cloak is an islander. When the storm starts again he decides to take shelter under Caliban’s cloak. Stephan, the ship’s butler, arrives, drinking and singing. He thinks the cloak hides a monster with four legs and feeds wine first into Caliban’s mouth and then Trinculo’s. Trinculo recognises Stephano and the two dance about joyfully. Caliban praises Stephano and calls him a god. He promises to show them all the best parts of the island and promises to serve them. Ironically he then sings about his freedom from Prospero.

Meanwhile, Ferdinand is collecting logs and working hard to prove to Prospero that he is a worthy match for his daughter. Miranda proposes marriage to Ferdinand and he accepts.

Trinculo, Caliban and Stephano are now drunk and Caliban pledges his allegiance to Stephano. Ariel plays tricks by impersonating their voices and causes the three to argue. Caliban persuades Stephano that he should kill Prospero and become lord of the island. They plot to approach Prospero during his afternoon nap and brain him after taking his books. Caliban says that Stephano could take Prospero’s beautiful daughter as his queen of the island.

Ariel overhears this plan and declares that he will tell his master. He plays mysterious music which the three drunken plotters follow.

As Alonso and his party continue to search for Ferdinand, Prospero prepares an imaginary banquet for them. Ariel appears as a harpy and accuses Alonso,
Antonio and Sebastian of being three men of sin. They are terrified by the vision and run away.

Prospero agrees that Ferdinand may take his daughter as his wife, but insists they must be officially married. Prospero asks Ariel to bring all the spirits together and prepare a celebration for the couple. A series of nymphs appear to Miranda and Ferdinand.

Ariel makes beautiful clothes appear to distract Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo. As they marvel at the clothes, a noise of hunters is heard and a pack of spirits shaped like hounds chase the plotters away.

Ariel explains to Prospero that the King and his followers are all deeply disturbed by the earlier magical vision and are suffering. Prospero sends Ariel to fetch them.

Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio cannot believe that Prospero is alive. Prospero confronts each of the men in turn, reminds them of their sins and then forgives them. Alonso is repentant and reinstates Prospero as Duke of Milan. Antonio says nothing.

Alonso is delighted when Prospero reveals that his son, Ferdinand, is alive and engaged to Miranda.

Ariel disappears to magically repair the ship and fetch the crew.

Ariel then brings in Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo, wearing their stolen clothes. Prospero forgives Caliban and with a final request for calm seas and kind winds, he sets Ariel free.

In his closing speech Prospero says he is finished with magic and asks the audience for his own forgiveness and freedom.
The Tempest Plot Summary Quiz

1. What event does the play begin with?

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A sea storm</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A whirlwind</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>An earthquake</td>
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2. Who lives on the island with Prospero?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Miranda, Animal and Persil</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Miranda, Caliban and Ariel</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Orlanda, Balican and Daz</td>
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3. How did Prospero and Miranda end up on the island?

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>They were on a cruise</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>They were sent away from Naples by the King</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Orlanda, Balican and Daz</td>
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4. Where is the ship headed?

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>To Naples</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>To Tunis</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>To Timbuktu</td>
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5. What happens when Ariel lures Ferdinand to Prospero?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Miranda is repulsed by him</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Miranda falls instantly in love with him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Miranda is terrified by him</td>
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</table>

6. Who do Antonio and Sebastian plot to kill?
A  Ferdinand
B  Stephano
C  Alonso, King of Naples

7. Why does Trinculo hide under Caliban’s cloak?
A  To shelter from a storm
B  To hide from Stephano
C  To hide from Prospero

8. How does Caliban react to Trinculo and Stephano?
A  He tells them they are handsome
B  He attacks them
C  He vows to be their servant

9. How does Ariel distract Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo?
A  By making beautiful clothes
B  By doing a dance
C  By appearing as a nymph

10. What does Prospero ask for at the end of the play?
A  Wine
B  Forgiveness
C  A horse

Article: The First Globe
The First Globe

Many of Shakespeare’s plays were first performed at the Globe, although his plays were performed at other theatres and many playwrights wrote for the Globe.

Who built the first Globe?

The first Globe was built by the company Shakespeare was in – the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. Richard Burbage was the company’s leading actor. They had played at the Theatre, built by the Burbage family on land leased from a Mr Allen. In 1597, Allen refused to renew the lease. However the Burbages owned the Theatre because the lease said they owned anything built on the land. They took it down while Allen was away over Christmas. Their builder stored it in his yard on the north bank of the Thames. The Burbages could not afford to lease a new theatre site. So they offered five of the company, including Shakespeare, the chance to become part-owners of the new theatre for £10 each. With this money they leased land on the south bank of the River Thames, near the Rose theatre.

When and where was the Globe built?

The builder who stored the timbers of the Theatre was Peter Streete. Once the weather was better Streete took the timber across the Thames, to Southwark, and used them to build the Globe theatre.

Southwark was a good place for the new theatre. It was outside the control of the city officials (who were hostile to theatres). People already went there to be entertained. It had two theatres (the Rose and the Swan), animal baiting arenas, taverns and brothels.

Streete and his workmen built a brick base for the theatre. The walls were made from big timber frames, filled with smaller slats of wood covered with plaster that had cow hair in it. Because the owners were struggling for money, they used the cheapest options in the building process. For example, the roof of the theatre was thatched with reeds, not covered with more expensive tile. In 1599 the theatre opened and was a huge success.
What plays were performed at the Globe?

Probably the first Shakespeare play to be performed at the Globe was Julius Caesar, in 1599. Some other Shakespeare plays first performed there are: As You Like It; Hamlet; Measure for Measure; Othello; King Lear; Macbeth and Antony and Cleopatra. Other playwrights wrote for the Globe, including Ben Jonson, Thomas Dekker, and John Fletcher.

What happened to the first Globe?

Disaster struck the Globe in 1613. On 29 June, at a performance of Shakespeare’s Henry VIII, some small cannons were fired. They didn’t use cannon balls, but they did use gunpowder held down by wadding. A piece of burning wadding set fire to the thatch. The theatre burned down in about an hour. It was big news. By the next day two different songs had been printed about it. The company built a second Globe on the brick foundations of the first. It was the same size and shape, but was much more extravagantly decorated; the company could now afford it. It also had a tiled roof, not a thatched one.

Fortunately, no-one was harmed when the first Globe burned down. A man’s breeches caught fire, but a bystander put the flames out with his bottle of beer!

Audiences
Audiences

By 1600 London theatres, like the Globe, could take up to 3000 people for the most popular plays. With several theatres offering plays most afternoons, this meant between 10,000 and 20,000 people a week going to London theatres. That’s a lot of people! So who were they?

Who came to the theatres?

The answer is ‘just about everyone in London society’ – generally more men than women, but all sorts of people. One visitor, in 1617, described the crowd around the stage as ‘a gang of porters and carters’. Others talked of servants and apprentices spending all their spare time there. But wealthier people were in the audience too. In 1607, the Venetian ambassador bought all the most expensive seats for a performance of Shakespeare’s *Pericles*. Even royalty loved watching a play. They didn’t go to public theatres, but companies of actors were summoned to perform at the courts of Elizabeth I and James I.

Theatres had to compete for audiences against other London entertainment. These included cock-fighting and bear-baiting which were enjoyed by both the poor and the wealthy. In 1591, London theatres were banned from performing on Thursdays because ‘the players do recite their plays to the hurt of bear-baiting, maintained for Her Majesty’s pleasure’.

How much did it cost?

In open air theatres the cheapest price was only 1 penny which bought you a place amongst the ‘groundlings’ standing in the ‘yard’ around the stage. (There were 240 pennies in £1.) For another penny, you could have a bench seat in the lower galleries which surrounded the yard. Or for a penny or so more, you could sit more comfortably on a cushion. The most expensive seats would have been in the ‘Lord’s Rooms’. Admission to the indoor theatres started at 6 pence. One penny was only the price of a loaf of bread. Compare that to today’s prices. The low cost was one reason the theatre was so popular.

Today, the place where you buy your theatre tickets is called the Box Office. In Shakespeare’s day, as people came into the theatre or climbed the steps to their seats, audiences had to put their money in a box. So the place where audiences pay became known as the box office.

What did they get for their money?

The groundlings were very close to the action on stage. They could buy food and drink during the performance – pippins (apples), oranges, nuts, gingerbread and ale. But there were no toilets and the floor they stood on was probably just sand, ash or covered in nutshell. Some visitors complained that the pit smelled of garlic and beer and no good citizen would show his face there. So paying more got the wealthy a seat under cover, and perhaps a cushioned seat.
The Globe Theatre quiz questions

1. What happened to the first globe theatre?
   a. It burned down
   b. It collapsed
   c. It was turned into homes

2. In Shakespeare’s time, how many people would go to the theatre every week?
   a. Only a few rich people
   b. Between 10,000 and 20,000 a week
   c. Between 10,000,000 and 20,000,000 a week

3. What was a groundling?
   a. A magical creature
   b. The people who bought the cheapest tickets
   c. The people who bought the most expensive tickets

4. How much did a groundling pay to go to The Globe?
   a. One penny
   b. One pound
   c. Ten pounds

5. Who visited The Globe Theatre?
   a. Anyone because it was cheap
   b. Rich people or royal people
   c. Only men were allowed
Activity 1) Create a story board that shows all the key events in the play.
Activity 2) Imagine you are an Elizabethan person who is watching a The Tempest in The Globe Theatre. Describe your experience of seeing the play there.
Aspire. Expect. Achieve. Together
Week 7: Key Characters in The Tempest

Read the information about the key characters in The Tempest. Then complete the activities and answer the questions.

Overview of characters

The human characters in this play are from Italy – they are kings, dukes and noblemen, accompanied by their jesters, servants and ship’s crew. Prospero and his daughter, Miranda, originally hail from Milan and others come from Naples. There are also some ‘spirit’ characters, Ariel and his fellows: magical airy creatures who help Prospero to conduct his magic. Lastly there is the island’s only native, Caliban, who is described as a monster, a demi-devil and a strange fish.

The main characters are:

- Prospero
- Caliban
- Miranda
- Ariel

**Prospero:** Prospero is the central character of this play. He is a powerful magician who was once the Duke of Milan. He was usurped by his brother, Antonio, and forced to flee Milan with his daughter on a barely sea-worthy raft. When the play begins, he has lived on the island with Miranda for twelve years. During that time he has learned magic and has become master of Caliban and Ariel.

He looks after his daughter and is protective of her. Even though he seems to have set up the meeting between Miranda and Ferdinand, Prospero still makes Ferdinand work hard to prove that he is worthy of Miranda’s love.

In the end Prospero is forgiving rather than vengeful. Although he makes it clear to Antonio and Alonso that what they did was wrong, ultimately Prospero is merciful.

Character attributes
**Powerful** – Prospero once held power in Milan and also rules over the inhabitants of the island, Caliban and Ariel.

**Controlling** – he uses threats of cruelty to control Caliban and is only kind to Ariel when the spirit does as he requests.

**Forgiving** – after frightening the ship’s passengers and his old enemies, Prospero actually forgives Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio for the treacherous behaviour of their past.

**Friends and enemies**
Prospero’s friends are:

**Ariel** - although the magical spirit argues with Prospero in Act 1, later Prospero takes his advice about becoming tender towards his enemies

**Miranda** – his daughter is his only human companion on the island for many years and he cares for her dearly

He is enemies with:

**Antonio** - Prospero’s brother betrayed him twelve years before the action of the play by sending him away on a barely sea-worthy boat

**Changes in character**
Throughout the play Prospero uses magic to show his power, but at the end he says he is giving his magic up.

Prospero frightens the men who betrayed him by wrecking their ship and later sending Ariel disguised as a harpy to remind them of their sins. However, at the end of the play he shows forgiveness to them all.

At first Prospero doubts Ferdinand’s sincerity when he pledges love for Miranda. Later in the play he seems proud to show Alonso that the two are united in their love.

**Caliban:** Caliban is the only native of the island that we meet. It is unclear whether he is a man or a monster and as such this character has been performed in many different ways over time. He is introduced early in the play as Prospero’s slave, a position he resents and rages about. In the past he has attempted to attack Miranda, and she cannot bear to even look at him. He plots with the drunken Trinculo and Stephano to murder Prospero.

**Character attributes**

**Bitter** – he complains and curses about Prospero and claims his island has been stolen from him.
**Savage** – Caliban’s behaviour seems rough and unpleasant throughout most of the play. However, he does have a more sensitive side that is shown in his speeches about the beauty of the island.

**Subservient** – when Caliban meets Stephano he bows to him and calls him a god and yet sings about being free from Prospero. In truth he is replacing one master with another.

**Friends and enemies**

Caliban does not have any true friends but he likes:

**Stephano** - Caliban worships Stephano and bows at his feet

He is enemies with:

**Prospero** – Caliban curses his master throughout the play

**Miranda** – she can’t bear to even look at the villain (Act 1 Scene 2) and she calls him an abhorred slave (Act 1 Scene 2)

**Changes in character**

Early in the play Caliban’s language is bitter and mostly filled with curses aimed at his master. When he talks about the island in Act 3 Scene 2, his language becomes poetic.

Caliban explains how he used to have a good relationship with Prospero, but that has changed and now Prospero treats him badly. His experiences seem to parallel Prospero’s in some ways – for example his island is taken from him in the same way that Prospero’s title is taken. However, unlike Prospero, he is unable to find forgiveness and instead comes up with plots of murder.

**Miranda:** Miranda is the innocent young daughter of Prospero. She has been on the island since she was three years old and barely remembers her former life in Milan. She is amazed when she first meets Ferdinand and at first thinks he is a spirit. As she has been on the island for much of her life, she is not aware of some of the manners expected of young women in society and is quite straight talking. She asks Ferdinand to marry her and later when she meets the rest of the ship’s passengers exclaims about how wonderful and beautiful they are.

**Character attributes**

Kind-hearted – when she witnesses the ship in the storm, Miranda’s concern is for the poor souls on board.

Innocent – she has never met any other people apart from her father and Caliban, so when she meets Ferdinand, she falls instantly in love.
Obedient – she generally follows her father’s orders. Except when her love for Ferdinand overwhelms her!

**Friends and enemies**

Miranda’s friends are:

Prospero - her father and main companion, carer and teacher for most of her life so far

Ferdinand – she falls in love with him

She is enemies with:

Caliban – he once tried to attack her and she is not able to forgive his savage behaviour

**Changes in character**

Miranda’s concern for the ship passengers in Act 1 Scene 2 is contrasted with the harsh words she uses towards Caliban.

She falls in love with Ferdinand and even rebels (mildly) against her father to talk to him.

She is consistent in her wonder at the world and marvels at the beauty of mankind.

**Ariel:** Ariel is an airy spirit who is in debt to Prospero. When Prospero and Miranda first arrived on the island, Ariel was imprisoned in a tree. He had been trapped there by the witch, Sycorax (Caliban’s mother). Prospero used his magic to release Ariel then made the spirit become his servant in return.

Ariel creates the storm at the start of the play and is also entrusted to make sure the weather stays calm for the ship’s return journey. He plays music that sends some characters to sleep, makes some follow him and wakes others up.

The shape, form and even gender of Ariel are ambiguous and this character has been performed in many different ways, including with several actors playing him at the same time.

**Character attributes**

Obedient – Ariel carries out all of the tasks that Prospero sets for him.

Trusting – one of the reasons Ariel is obedient is because Prospero has promised to set him free. Ariel works hard and without complaint hoping that Prospero will stick to his vow.

Considerate – in Act 5 Scene 1, Ariel encourages Prospero to show some tenderness towards the King and his followers.
Friends and enemies

Ariel is friends with:

Prospero - Ariel’s master thinks highly of the spirit and is sad in the end to part with him

He is enemies with:

Sycorax – Although the witch does not appear in the play, we know that she imprisoned Ariel in a tree

Changes in character

At the start of the play Ariel is subservient to Prospero, but later he offers his master advice.

The play begins with Ariel creating a storm to wreck the ship and ends with him keeping the winds calm for the return journey.

In the beginning he is enslaved to Prospero, but in the end Ariel wins his freedom.

Additional characters

Ferdinand: Ferdinand is the son of Alonso, the King of Naples. After the shipwreck, he finds himself wandering alone on the island, believing his fellow passengers to have drowned. He is lured by Ariel’s magical music to the cell where Prospero and Miranda live. He falls in love with Miranda, though his sincerity is tested by Prospero who makes him work hard to prove his love. At the end of the play he is reunited with his father and they all head back to Naples where he and Miranda will be married.

FERDINAND

No, precious creature,

I'd rather crack my sinews, break my back,

Than you should such dishonour undergo,

While I sit lazy by.

Act 3 Scene 1

Character attributes

- Romantic
- Strong
Alonso: Alonso is the King of Naples and Ferdinand’s father. He helped Antonio to overthrow Prospero when he was Duke of Milan. He grieves for his son, who he believes to have drowned in the shipwreck. He is filled with guilt when Ariel accuses him of his sins in Act 3 Scene 1. In the end Prospero shows him that his son is safe and well and also that he has fallen in love with Miranda. Alonso seems repentant and glad that his son and his old enemy’s daughter are united.

ALONSO

O, it is monstrous: monstrous!

Methought the billows spoke and told me of it

Act 3 Scene 1

Character attributes

- Emotional
- Regretful

Sebastian and Antonio: These characters are very similar. They talk together in witty asides throughout the play, often mocking the older Gonzalo. Both are prepared to usurp or kill their older brothers in their greed for power. Antonio plotted with the King of Naples to take his brother Prospero’s position as Duke of Milan. On the island he encourages Sebastian to kill his brother Alonso whilst he is sleeping so that Sebastian can become king. Neither of them shows regret for his behaviour.

SEBASTIAN

But for your conscience?

ANTONIO

Dost thou think so, spirit?

ARIEL

Ay, sir: where lies that?

Act 2 Scene 1

Character attributes

- Ruthless
- Remorseless

Stephano and Trinculo: These two characters add comedy to the play with their drunken and foolish behaviour. They are weak and greedy characters who meet Caliban and feed him wine. Stephano, the ship’s cook, enjoys the attention
that Caliban pays him and is easily drawn into the plot to murder Prospero. Trinculo, the King’s jester, repeatedly calls Caliban a monster.

**CALIBAN**

Hast thou not dropped from heaven?

**STEPHANO**

Out o' th'moon, I do assure thee. I was the man i' th'moon, when time was.

**Act 2 Scene 2**

**Character attributes**

- Greedy
- Foolish

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**Week 7 Activities**

Activity 1) Create a mind map/summary/facebook page for these key characters:
- Ariel
- Caliban
- Prosepro
- Miranda
- Ferdinand

Include:
- Who they are
- What they are like
- What happens to them in the play
Ariel:

Caliban:
Prospero:

Miranda:
Activity 2) Look at the key quotes here and write down what the quote means, what it shows about the character and what it shows about their relationship with other characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point</th>
<th>When?</th>
<th>Who is speaking?</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>What does the quote mean?</th>
<th>What does the quote show about the character?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caliban resents Prospero.</td>
<td>Act 1 Scene 2</td>
<td>Caliban</td>
<td>You taught me language and my profit on’t is I know how to curse you. The red plague rid you for learning me your language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caliban loves the island</td>
<td>Act 3 Scene 2</td>
<td>Caliban</td>
<td>Be not afeard. The isle is full of noises, Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and</td>
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<tr>
<td>The other characters often call Caliban a ‘monster’</td>
<td>Act 2 Scene 2</td>
<td>Trinculo</td>
<td>I shall laugh myself to death at this puppy-headed monster. A most scurvy monster! I could find in my heart to beat him.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prospero can be seen as cruel</td>
<td>Act 1 Scene 2</td>
<td>Prospero</td>
<td>For this, be sure, tonight thou shalt have cramps, Side-stitches... Thou shalt be pinched As thick as honeycomb, each pinch more stinging Than bees that made ‘em.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ariel is a faithful servant to Prospero</td>
<td>Act 1 Scene 2</td>
<td>Ariel</td>
<td>All hail, great master! Grave sir, hail! I come To answer thy best pleasure, be ’t to fly, To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride On the curled cloud. To thy strong bidding,</td>
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<td>Activity 3: Characters Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. What was Prospero's position in Milan?</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Duke</td>
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<td>b. Jester</td>
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<td>c. Servant</td>
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<td>2. Who is Miranda?</td>
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<td>a. Prospero's wife</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ariel wants freedom</th>
<th>Act 1 Scene 2</th>
<th>Ariel</th>
<th>Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains, Let me remember thee what thou hast promised, Which is not yet performed me.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miranda is a kind and empathetic person</td>
<td>Act 1 Scene 2</td>
<td>Miranda</td>
<td>If by your art, my dearest father, you have Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miranda worships Ferdinand</td>
<td>Act 5 Scene 1</td>
<td>Miranda</td>
<td>O wonder! How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world That has such people in ’t!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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b. Prospero's niece

c. Prospero's daughter

3. What sort of creature is Ariel?
   a. A drunken butler
   b. An airy spirit
   c. A deformed slave

4. Who causes the sea storm?
   a. Prospero
   b. Caliban
   c. Miranda

5. What is the name of Caliban's mother?
   a. Ariel
   b. Miranda
   c. Sycorax

6. Who falls in love with Miranda?
   a. Stephano
   b. Ferdinand
   c. Ariel

7. How is the ruthless aspect of Antonio's character revealed?
   a. He rescues the King from the shipwreck
   b. He plots to kill Sebastian
c. He plots to kill the King

8. Which word is used repeatedly to describe Caliban?
   a. Angel
   b. Monster
   c. Fairy

9. What does Ariel long for?
   a. Freedom
   b. A husband
   c. A banquet

10. How does Alonso react to the engagement between Ferdinand and Miranda?
    a. He is angry
    b. He is broken-hearted
    c. He is delighted
Week 8: Key Themes in The Tempest

Read the texts below to revise the key themes of The Tempest.

Freedom:

Everyone loves a Disaster movie.

It’s not just because of the action.
It’s because of the freedom!

Imagine if zombies attacked you now.

You could run around with a cricket bat
and do all the things you normally can’t do,
because the old rules wouldn’t apply!

The Tempest is a disaster for the people on board the ship.
But in the chaos, people try to rip up the old rules.
Sebastian and Antonio try to kill King Alonso.

Caliban tries to free himself from Prospero by plotting
with Trinculo and Stephano.

Which is odd, because Caliban has already
agreed to be Stephano’s slave.

Maybe Caliban is afraid of freedom?
But Prospero, who summoned the Tempest,
is on a mission to free himself.

Not just from the island he was marooned on.
But from his own past, and need for revenge.
He frees himself, and all his servants.

In this play Shakespeare suggests that
to forgive and be forgiven is the greatest freedom
that we can have.

The big softie.

Throughout the play, we see examples of characters seeking their freedom and
often experiencing the opposite, ie imprisonment. The island setting for the play
makes everyone trapped to a certain extent. Following the shipwreck (and before
Ariel steps in) there is no immediate escape from the island for any of the
characters.

Prospero and Miranda have been trapped on the island for twelve years. When
they first arrived, Prospero rescued Ariel from a prison that the witch Sycorax
had locked him in. Ariel becomes Prospero’s servant and asks early on in the
play when he might be granted his freedom.
Caliban is another character who lacks freedom. Prospero threatens him with punishments if he does not do his work. However, Caliban seems destined to be a slave. When he meets Stephano, he bows down at his feet and promises to be his loyal servant.

Prospero’s very last words in the play are set me free (Act 5 Epilogue) which shows the importance of this theme to all the characters.

Empathy and Forgiveness

Empathy is the ability to feel what somebody else might be feeling.

Like if we see someone hurt, we can feel how they might feel.

Our ability to put ourselves in other people’s shoes means that we’re likelier to treat them as we ourselves would like to be treated.

Or to put it simply, empathy makes us kind. Shakespeare knew that people can be unkind.

Prospero begins the play pretty hard hearted. He uses Ariel like a slave, ignoring the spirit’s pleas for freedom.

Prospero treats Caliban badly. Certainly, Caliban is no saint, but he was here first!

However, Prospero begins to empathise with his old foes, and in doing so, learns to empathise with his servants.

Someone who didn’t have to learn is Prospero’s daughter Miranda. She naturally empathises with everyone.

Shakespeare knew that it’s hard to be kind and forgiving to selfish people.

We just have to hope they learn their lesson.

Before they meet someone as bad as them.

Empathy is the ability to put yourself in someone else’s shoes and understand how they might be feeling. In order to forgive someone it is quite useful to be
able to feel empathy. Some characters in *The Tempest* seem skilled at this, whilst others struggle to think of anyone but themselves.

Miranda seems to have a very natural sense of empathy. When she sees the ship caught in the storm she shows empathy for the crew. She gets upset about the suffering that she imagines they must have gone through.

Prospero on the other hand seems to learn empathy as the play progresses. When we first see him with Ariel, the spirit is asking for his liberty which Prospero has promised. However, instead of showing understanding for his servant, Prospero seems to become angry. He reminds Ariel that he rescued the spirit from his prison in a tree.

Later in the play, Prospero becomes softer in his manner towards Ariel, calling him dainty and chick. When Ariel tells him he should feel sorry for the king and his followers, Prospero takes his advice. Instead of taking revenge Prospero offers forgiveness.
Nature vs Nurture

Ooh. The cinema. I want a choc ice.

Nature versus Nurture? I hope this is educational.

It’s the age-old question. Whether our character is more influenced by what we are born with? Or by the environment in which we are raised?

For example, are some people naturally bad, like Shakespeare’s Caliban? Certainly Prospero thinks so.

Other people seem to be naturally good, like Prospero’s daughter Miranda.

Nature itself is mastered and controlled by Prospero through magic. Whereas Gonzalo suggests that we would be much happier if we lived in harmony with nature.

So what is more important? Nature or Nurture? The answer is…

Well, Mr Shakespeare. What do you think?
You don’t know. That’s why you wrote the play.
Explore the issues about the positive and negative in both nature and civilisation.

And whether we can change nature for the better?
Or are we stuck with what we’re born with?

Get me a choc-ice. I’m hungry. On you go.

I can’t help it! It’s my nature!

And find out what’s on next! That last film was rubbish!

The theme of nature versus nurture is presented on a number of levels in *The Tempest*. There is the natural beauty of the island, that Caliban tells us about with the sounds and sweet airs (Act 3 Scene 2). Then there is the comparison between what is natural and what is civilised. Miranda represents a natural innocence and naivety, whereas Caliban represents something savage, uncivilised and unnatural.

Gonzalo, in Act 2 Scene 2, talks about a commonwealth where nature and man would work together more harmoniously. At the same time the supposedly civilised men, shipwrecked on the island, are mostly shown as greedy drunkards and traitors.
Now complete the quiz:

1. Which main theme does Ariel represent?
   a. Love
   b. Freedom
   c. Death

2. In what way is everyone in the play trapped?
   a. They are in a prison
   b. They are on a ship
   c. They are on an island

3. How long have Prospero and Miranda been trapped on the island?
   a. 12 years
   b. 6 years
   c. 4 weeks

4. Which character seems destined never to be free?
   a. Ariel
   b. Prospero
   c. Caliban

5. What are Prospero’s final words in the play, showing the importance of the theme of freedom?
   a. Let me go
   b. Set me free
   c. Let me see

6. How does Miranda feel about the ship’s crew during the storm?
   a. She is worried about them
   b. She laughs at them
c. She hopes they sink

7. Who does Caliban offer to beat?
   a. Stepanho
   b. Miranda
   c. Trinculo

8. What does Prospero eventually learn to do?
   a. A three card trick
   b. Forgive
   c. Sing

9. What does Prospero think is responsible for Caliban’s evil character?
   a. Nature
   b. Nurture
   c. Education

10. What aspects of the island does Caliban say is sweet?
    a. The water
    b. The plants
    c. The air

Read this article about the themes of power and colonisation.
The Tempest includes elements of both tragedy and comedy. It was written around 1610 and it's generally considered Shakespeare's final play as well as the last of his romance plays. The story is set on a remote island, where Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, schemes to restore his daughter Miranda to her proper place using manipulation and illusion. He conjures up a storm—the aptly named tempest—to lure his power-hungry brother Antonio and the conspiring King Alonso to the island.

In The Tempest, power and control are dominant themes. Many of the characters are locked into a power struggle for their freedom and for control of the island, forcing some characters (both good and evil) to abuse their power. For example:

- Prospero enslaves and treats Caliban badly.
- Antonio and Sebastian plot to kill Alonso.
- Antonio and Alonso aim to get rid of Prospero.
The Tempest: Power Relationships

In order to demonstrate power relationships in The Tempest, Shakespeare plays with master/servant relationships.

For example, in the story Prospero is master to Ariel and Caliban -- although Prospero conducts each of these relationships differently, both Ariel and Caliban are acutely aware of their subservience. This leads Caliban to challenge Prospero's control by taking on Stefano as his new master. However, in trying to escape one power relationship, Caliban quickly creates another when he persuades Stefano to murder Prospero by promising that he can marry Miranda and rule the island.

Power relationships are inescapable in the play. Indeed, when Gonzalo envisages an equal world with no sovereignty, he is mocked. Sebastian reminds him that he would still be king and would therefore still have power -- even if he did not exercise it.
The Tempest: Colonization

Many of the characters compete for colonial control of the island – a reflection of England’s colonial expansion in Shakespeare's time.

Sycorax, the original colonizer, came from Algiers with her son Caliban and reportedly performed evil deeds. When Prospero arrived on the island he enslaved its inhabitants and the power struggle for colonial control began - in turn raising issues of fairness in The Tempest.

Each character has a plan for the island if they were in charge: Caliban wants to “people the isle with Calibans,” Stefano plans to murder his way into power, and Gonzalo imagines an idyllic mutually controlled society. Ironically, Gonzalo is one of the few characters in the play who is honest, loyal and kind throughout – in other words: a potential king.

Shakespeare calls into question the right to rule by debating which qualities a good ruler should possess – and each of the characters with colonial ambitions embodies a particular aspect of the debate:

- **Prospero:** embodies the all-controlling, omnipresent ruler
- **Gonzalo:** embodies the utopian visionary
- **Caliban:** embodies the rightful native ruler

Ultimately, Miranda and Ferdinand take control of the island, but what sort of rulers will they make? The audience is asked to question their suitability: Are they too weak to rule after we have seen them manipulated by Prospero and Alonso?
Activity 1) Create a mindmap for each key theme of the play. Use this example to help you:
The Tempest Key Themes

- Magic
- God & Humanity
- Power & Freedom
- New World and Old World
- Reality vs. Forgiveness

The play, despite having a larger focus on the supernatural, places a large emphasis on human spirit. The contrast between virtue and vice is evident in the themes of love and betrayal. Prospero’s capacity for mercy and forgiveness towards his enemies, Miranda’s empathy, and Gonzalo’s thoughtfulness demonstrate the triumph of human spirit.

In Gonzalo’s monologue, he envisions a utopian state, reflecting a Communist state—a world of ‘riches, poverty, and use of service’ gone, where all men and women are idle but are ‘innocent’ and ‘pure’.

By the end of the play, all imprisoned characters—with Ariel, Caliban, Ferdinand, and Miranda free—are free. Perhaps, Shakespeare had sympathies with the poor and women—rendering a world of freedom and equality. Perhaps, this is the ‘never known world’ Miranda discovers.

Many scholars argue that reconciliation and forgiveness is at the centre of the play. The motif of ‘hope’ and ‘freedom’ is explored through the characters’ transformations.

Gonzalo’s utopian state would be ideal, where everyone is equal and cares for one another.

Kerry Nix sees the play as ‘a tale of political power and social responsibility’.

Sebastian and Antonio are both despicable men—men who mimic the foolish characters of Stephano and Trinculo who both desire power.

Prospero and Caliban’s relationship deteriorates into one of rebellion (Ivan Linley).

Reflects rebellion against monarchs during the reign of Elizabeth? The Northern Rebellion of 1569 and the numerous Catholic plots to overthrow Elizabeth.

Shakespeare may be talking about class rather than colonialism.

The Tempest has often been seen as a play based on colonialism, reflecting the European expansionism occurring during that time. Prospero comes to Caliban’s island, subdues him, rules the island and repossesses his culture upon him, teaching him his language.

Caliban is described as a ‘magical’ ‘whore’ who is not ‘honoured with a human shape’. Shakespeare demonstrates him to build sympathy for the character, and to reflect the coloniser’s attitudes towards the native Americans. He is portrayed as a despicable entity, as well as the creatures from the original world, even with animals on it.

In England during the time the play was published there was still a widespread belief in magic; James I believed in witches and persecuted many of them. Maybe why Shakespeare portrays Sycorax as an evil witch, yet Prospero as a just magician.

It is as if the island is enchanted, as recognised by Caliban. “...the sky is full of noises, Sounds and sweet airs...” That put Caliban to sleep.

Prospero is very powerful. A very omnipotent character. He wins every single stage of the play. He controls the characters, and controls the elements. All this is symbolised in Act 5, where Ferdinand and Miranda are playing chess.

It could be argued Prospero is in fact a self portrait of Shakespeare. Samuel Taylor Coleridge describes Prospero as “the very Shakespeare himself.”

The Tempest was written in 1611 and is believed to be Shakespeare’s final play. Shakespeare like Prospero is aging and beginning to question his own mortality.

Although it appears Prospero is being evil with his magic he is not as he is very careful not to harm anyone (on-board the ship) even with such powers in my art. He could safely order that there is no witch, for so much magic as in an hair. Be it to any creature in the vessel (act 2, scene 5).

Prospero receivises the limitations of his powers. “I find my zeal doth depend upon my power—my power upon my magic. I dare not rely upon his ability even when nature too, and he is very grateful, and respectful of it. Though he’s powerful, he is not omnipotent.”

It is true no one has harmed the conflict—both Ferdinand and Caliban suffer during the experience, thinking one another is dead.

*Jen Thorsen* notes that the masque scene demonstrates Prospero’s “ability to defy the laws of time and nature” again demonstrating his omnipotence.
Activity 2) Write a summary of two of the themes that you think are most important. Include: -Why do you think this theme is important? -How is this theme presented in the play? -What do you think Shakespeare wants the audience to learn from this theme?