Creative Writing Tasks

Extracts from Great Literature!

Models to inspire creative writing (Section B; English Language Paper 1).

For homework, select at least 3 of the extracts and complete the tasks which follow them.

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Page 34 Extract from *'The Book Thief'* by Markus Zusak and page 36 Extract from *'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time'* by Mark Haddon.

From ‘The Snow Child’ by Eowyn Ivey.

Context: This novel is set in the 1920s and tells the story of a middle aged couple who experience the tragedy of a still-birth and re-locate to Alaska to start a new life. In the chapter prior to this extract, the couple have built a snow girl and dressed it in red mittens and a scarf.

Jake woke to the cold. In the few hours he’d slept the weather had changed. He could smell it and feel it in his arthritic hands. He propped himself on an elbow and grabbed at the nightstand until he found a match and lit the candle. His back and shoulders were stiff a she eased his legs over the side of the bed. He sat on the edge of the mattress until the cold was unbearable. Not far from the pillow where Mabel slept, frost crept between the logs with its feathery crystals. He swore quietly and pulled the quilt up over her shoulder. A warm secure home – he couldn’t even give her that much. He carried the candle holder into the main room. The heavy metal door on the woodstove clanged noisily as he opened it. A few coals smouldered in the ash.

As he reached for his boots, through the window he saw a flicker. He stood at the frost-edged glass and peered out.

Fresh snow blanketed the ground and glittered and glowed silver in the moonlight. The barn and trees beyond were muted outlines. There, at the edge of the forest, he saw it again. A flash of blue and red. He was groggy with sleep. He closed his eyes slowly, opened them again and tried to focus.

There it was. A little figure dashed through the trees. Was that a skirt about the legs? A red scarf at the neck, and white hair trailing down the back. Slight. Quick. A little girl. Running at the edge of the forest. Then disappearing into the trees.

Jack rubbed his eyes with the heels of his hands. Not enough sleep – that had to be it. Too many long days. He left the window and stepped into his boots, leaving the laces untied. He opened the door and the chill air sucked the breath out of him. The snow crunched beneath his boots as he walked to the woodpile. It was only as he was returning with an armload of split birch that he noticed their little snow girl. He set the wood on the ground and with empty arms went to where it had stood. In its place was a small, broken heap of snow. The mittens and scarf were gone.

He pushed at the snow with the toe of his boot.

An animal. Maybe a moose had stumbled through. But the scarf and mittens? A raven or a whisky jack maybe. Wild birds had been known to snatch things. As he turned away, he caught sight of the tracks. Moonlight fell in the hollows. The prints ran through the snow, away from the cabin and into the trees. He bent over them. The silvery blue light was weak, so at first he didn’t trust his eyes. Coyote, or maybe lynx. Something other than this. He bent closer and touched the track with the tips of his bare fingers. Human footprints. Small. The size of a child’s.

Jack shivered. His skin prickled with goose bumps, and his bare toes ached cold inside his boots. He left the tracks and the pile of snow, stacked the wood in the

cork of his arm, and went inside, quickly closing the door behind him. As he shoved each piece of wood into the stove, he wondered if the racket would wake Mabel. Just his eyes playing tricks. It would come to sense in the morning. He stayed beside the woodstove until the fire roared again, and then he closed the damper.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Interesting adjectives and language choices
- Sensory imagery and setting descriptions
- The mixture of Jack's feelings and omniscient narration
- Use of sentence types and lengths to convey emotions and character thoughts
- Use of narrative hooking at the end of paragraphs

Task 2 Apply – Using Ivey's style, continue the story for 2 paragraphs…

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives and language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery and setting descriptions	
➢ The mixture of Jack's feelings and omniscient narration	
➢ Use of sentence types and lengths to convey emotions and character thoughts	
➢ Use of narrative hooking at the end of paragraphs	

From ‘The Hunger Games’ by Suzanne Collins.

Context: This novel is set in a dystopian world where its citizens must watch selected participants fight to the death in a macabre televised game called ‘The Hunger Games’. This extract is from near the beginning of the novel where the participants, or ‘Tribunes’, from District 12 are being selected to take part in the game.

At one o’clock, we head for the square. Attendance is mandatory unless you’re at death’s door. This evening, officials will come around and check to see if this is the case. If not, you’ll be imprisoned.

It’s too bad, really, that they hold the reaping in the square – one of the few places in District 12 that can be pleasant. The square’s surrounded by shops, and on public market days, especially if there’s good weather, it has a holiday feel to it. But today, despite the bright banners hanging on the buildings, there’s an air of grimness. The camera crews, perched like buzzards on rooftops, only add to the effect.

People file in silently and sign in. The reaping is a good opportunity for the Capitol to keep tabs on the population as well. Twelve-to eighteen –year-olds are herded into roped areas marked off by ages, the oldest in front, the young ones, like Prim, towards the back. Family members line up around the perimeter, holding tightly to one another’s hands. But there are others, too, who have no one they love at stake, or who no longer care, who slip among the crowd, taking bets on the two kids whose names will be drawn. Odds are given on their ages and if they will break down and weep. Most refuse dealing with the racketeers but carefully, carefully. These same people tend to be informers, and who hasn’t broken the law? I could be shot on a daily basis for hunting, but the appetites of those in charge protect me. Not everyone can claim the same.

The space gets tighter, more claustrophobic, as people arrive. The square’s quite large, but not enough to hold District 12’s population of about eight thousand. Latecomers are directed to the adjacent streets, where they can watch the event on screens as it’s televised live by the state.

I find myself standing in a clump of sixteens. We all exchange terse nods, then focus our attention on the temporary stage that is set up before the Justice Building. It holds three chairs, a podium and two large glass balls, one for the boys and one for the girls. I stare at the paper slips in the girls’ ball. Twenty of them have Katniss Everdeen written on them in careful handwriting.

Just as the town clock strikes two, the mayor steps up to the podium and begins to read. It’s the same story every year. He tells the history of Panem, the country that rose out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America. He lists the disasters, the droughts, the storms, the fires, the encroaching seas that swallowed up so much of the land, the brutal war for what little sustenance remained. The result was Panem, a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity to its citizens. Then came the Dark Days, the

uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteenth obliterated. The Treaty of Treason gave us new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of typically dystopian* setting features
- The careful establishment of a paranoid, claustrophobic atmosphere through language choices
- The choice of political sounding vocabulary and precise detail to allow the reader to understand the warped context.
- Use of narrative hooking in the deliberately vague but sinister sounding “dark days” and “reaping”

Task 2 Apply – Using Collins’ style, continue the story for 2 paragraphs…

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives and language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery and precise setting descriptions	
➢ Sinister-sounding political language	
➢ Use of sentence lengths to convey emotions and character thoughts	
➢ Use of narrative hooking through vague yet sinister terms	

- Dystopian literature describes fiction that is set in a future nightmarish version of our own world. Typically it involves cruel regimes and extreme governments or barren landscapes following environmental disasters.

From ‘Perfume’ by Patrick Suskind.

Context: This novel is set in 18th Century France and follows the fortunes of a young, male serial killer called Grenouille. Grenouille has an extraordinary, superior sense of smell that sees him become a hugely successful perfume maker as well as a man driven to great lengths to find the most powerful and perfect smell ever re-created. This disturbing extract comes from the first chapter and tells of Grenouille’s birth.

In the period of which we speak, there reigned in the cities a stench barely conceivable to us modern men and women. The streets stank of manure, the courtyards of urine, the stairwells stank of mouldering wood and rat droppings, the kitchens of spoiled cabbage and mutton fat; the unaired parlours stank of stale dust, the bedrooms of greasy sheets, damp featherbeds, and the pungently sweet aroma of chamber-pots. The stench of sulphur rose from the chimneys, the stench of caustic lyes from the tanneries, and from the slaughterhouses came the stench of congealed blood. People stank of sweat and unwashed clothes; from their mouths came the stench of rotting teeth, from their bellies that of onions, and from their bodies, if they were no longer very young, came the stench of rancid cheese and sour milk and tumorous disease. The rivers stank, the marketplaces stank, the churches stank, it stank beneath bridges and in palaces. The peasant stank as did the priest, the apprentice as did his master’s wife, the whole of the aristocracy stank, even the King himself stank, stank like a rank lion, and the queen like an old goat, summer and winter. For in the eighteenth century there was nothing to hinder bacteria busy at decomposition, and so there was no human activity, either constructive or destructive, no manifestation of germinating or decaying life, that was not accompanied by stench.

And of course, the stench was foulest in Paris, for Paris was the largest city of France. And in turn there was a spot in Paris under the sway of particularly fiendish stench: between the rue aux Fers and the rue de la Ferronnaire, the Cimetiere des Innocents to be exact. For 800 years the dead had been brought here from the Hotel-Dieu and from the surrounding Paris churches, for 800 years, day in, day out, corpses by the dozens had been carted here and tossed into long ditches, stacked bone upon bone for 800 years in the tombs and charnel houses. Only later – on the eve of the Revolution, after several of the grave pits had caved in and the stench had driven the swollen graveyard’s neighbours to more than mere protest and to actual insurrection – was it finally closed and abandoned. Millions of bones and skulls were shovelled into the catacombs of Montmartre and in its place a food market was erected.

Here, then, on the most putrid spot in the whole kingdom Jean Baptiste Grenouille was born on the 17th July 1738. It was one of the hottest days of the year. The heat lay leaden upon the graveyard, squeezing its putrefying vapour, a blend of rotting melon and the fetid odour of burnt animal horn put into the nearby alleys. When the labour pains began, Grenouille’s mother was standing at a fish stall in the rue aux Fers, scaling whiting that she had just gutted. The fish, ostensibly taken that very morning from the Seine, already stank so vilely that the smell masked the odour of corpses. Grenouille’s mother, however, perceived the odour neither of the fish nor

of the corpses, for her sense of smell had been utterly dulled, besides which her belly hurt and the pain deadened all susceptibility to sensate impressions. She only wanted the pain to stop, she wanted to put this revolting birth behind her as quickly as possible. It was her fifth. She had effected all the others here at the fish booth, and all had been still births, or semi-still births, for the bloody meat that had emerged had not differed greatly from the fish guts that lay there already, nor had lived much longer, and by evening the whole mess had been shovelled away and carted off to the graveyard or down to the river. It would be much the same today, and Grenouille's mother, who was still a young woman, barely in her mid-twenties, and who still was quite pretty and had almost all her teeth in her mouth and some hair on her head and – except for gout and syphilis and a touch of consumption – suffered from no serious disease, who still hoped to live a while yet, perhaps a good five or ten years, and perhaps even to marry one day and as the honourable wife of a widower with a trade or some such to bare real children… Grenouille's mother wished that it were already over. And when the final contractions began, she squatted down under the gutting table and there gave birth, as she had done four times before, and cut the newborn thing's umbilical cord with her gutting knife. But then, on account of the heat and the stench, which she did not perceive as such but only as an unbearable, numbing something – like a field of lilies or a small room filled with too many narcissi – she grew faint, toppled to one side, fell out from under the table into the street, and lay there knife in hand.

Tumult and turmoil. The crowd stands in a circle around her, staring, someone hails the police. The woman with the knife in her hand is still lying in the street. Slowly she comes to.

"What has happened to her?"

"Nothing."

"What is she doing with that knife?"

"Nothing."

"Where does the blood on her skirt come from?"

"From the fish."

She stands up, tosses the knife aside, and walks off to wash.

And then, unexpectedly, the infant under the gutting table begins to squall. They have a look, and beneath a swarm of flies and amid the offal and fish heads they discover a newborn child. They pull it out. As prescribed by law, they give it to a wet nurse and arrest the mother. And since she confesses, openly admitting that she would definitely have let the thing perish, just as she had with those other four by the way, she is tried, found guilty of multiple infanticide, and a few weeks later decapitated at the place de Greve.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Sensory imagery of all different types, especially colour, smell and touch (this can be quite unsettling!)
- Precise setting descriptions
- Use of different sentence lengths to create tone and echo meaning

Task 2 Apply – Try to imagine yourself back in London or Paris in the 1700s. Write a description in which you walk through a busy market recording the bustle and chaos of the scene.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives, verbs and adverbs and precise language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery and precise setting descriptions	
➢ Use of colour imagery to convey the scene	
➢ Use of sentence lengths to represent your thoughts and the pace of the scene around you	
➢ Figurative techniques* to enhance the atmosphere of the scene.	

- Figurative techniques means any imagery used, such as metaphor, simile, personification, pathetic fallacy, extended metaphor.

From ‘The Ghost Road’ by Pat Barker.

Context: This is a World War I novel, which mixes the stories of real-life characters with imagined ones to engage us in the horrors of World War I. In this extract, which appears near the end of the novel, the tragic death of some of the key characters are described, including that of the famous war poet, Wilfred Owen.

The barrage was due to start in fifteen minute’s time. Prior shared a bar of chocolate with Robson, sitting hunched up together against the damp cold mist. Then they started crawling forward. The sappers, who were burdened by materials for the construction of the pontoon bridge, were taking the lane, so the Manchesters had to advance over the waterlogged fields. The rain had stopped, but the already marshy ground had flooded in places, and over each stretch of water lay a thick blanket of mist. Concentrate on nothing but the moment, Prior told himself, moving forward on knees and elbows like a frog or a lizard or like – like anything except a man. First the right knee, then the left, then the right, then the left again, and again, and again, slithering through fleshy green grass that smelled incredibly sharp as scrabbling boots cut it. Even with all this mist there was now a perceptible thinning of the light, a gleam from the canal where it ran between spindly, dead trees.

There is to be no retirement under any circumstances. That was the order. They have tied us to the stake, we cannot fly, but bear-hyphen like, we must fight the course. The men were silent, staring straight ahead into the mist. Talk, even in whispers, was forbidden. Prior looked at his watch and licked dry lips, watched the second hand crawl to the quarter hour. All around him was a tension of held breath. Five forty three. Two more minutes. He crouched further down, whistle clenched between his teeth.

Prompt as ever, hell erupted. Shells wind over, flashes of light, plumes of water from the drainage ditches, tonnes of mud and earth flung into the air. A shell fell short. The ground shock beneath them and a shower of pebbles and clods of earth peppered their steel helmets. Five minutes of this, five minutes of the air bursting in waves against your face, men with dazed faces braced against it, as they picked up the light bridges meant for fording the flooded draining ditches, and carried them out to the front. Then, abruptly, silence. The gasp for air, then noise again, but further back, as the barrage lifted and drummed down onto the empty fields.

Prior blew the whistle, couldn’t hear it, was on his feet and running away, urging the men on with wordless cries. They rushed forward, making for the line of trees. Prior kept shouting, “steady, steady! Not too fast on the left!” It was important there should be no bunching when they reached the bridges. “Keep it straight!” Though the men were stumbling into quagmires or tripping over clumps of grass. A shell whizzing over from the German side exploded in a shower of mud and water. And another. He saw several little figures topple over, it didn’t look serious, somehow, they didn’t look like beings that could be hurt.

Bridges laid down, quickly, efficiently, no bunching at the crossings, just the clump of boots on wood, and then they emerged from beneath the shelter of the

trees and out into the terrifying openness of the bank. As bare as an eyeball, no cover anywhere, and the machine-gunners on the other side were alive and well. They dropped down, firing to cover the sappers as they struggled to assemble the bridge but nothing covered *them.* Bullets fell like rain, puckering the surface of the canal, and the men started to fall. Prior saw the man next to him, a silent, surprised face, no sound, as he twirled and fell, a slash of scarlet like a large flower bursting open on his chest. Crawling forward, he fired at the bank opposite though he could hardly see it for the clouds of smoke that drifted across. The sappers were still struggling with the bridge, binding pontoon sections together with wire that sparked in their hands as bullets struck it. And still the terrible rain fell. Only two sappers left, and then the Manchesters took over the building of the bridge. Kirk paddled out in a crate to give covering fire, was hit, hit again, this time in the face, went on firing directly at the machine gunners who crouched in their defended holes only a few yards away. Prior was about to start across the water with ammunition when he was himself hit, though it didn't feel like a bullet, more like a blow from something big and hard, a truncheon or a cricket bat, only it knocked him off his feet and he fell, one arm trailing over the edge of the canal.

He tried to crawl back beyond the drainage ditches, knowing it was only a matter of time before he was hit again, but the gas was thick here and he couldn't reach his mask. Banal, simple, repetitive thoughts ran round and round his mind. *Balls up. Bloody mad. Oh Christ.* There was no pain, more a spreading numbness that left his mind clear. He saw Kirk die. He saw Owen* die, his body lifted off the ground by bullets, describing a slow arch in the air as it fell. It seemed to take forever to fall, and Prior's consciousness fluttered down with it. He gazed at his reflection in the water, which broke and reformed and broke again as bullets hit the surface and then, gradually, as the numbness spread, he ceased to see it.

*Wilfred Owen – the famous World War 1 Poet.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of figurative techniques to convey meaning and enhance atmosphere
- Use of different sentence lengths to create tone and echo meaning
- Use of onomatopoeia and other auditory techniques* to bring the descriptions to life.

Task 2 Apply – Write a short creative piece based on the Wilfred Owen poem 'Exposure', which you have read in your anthology. It might be effective to write from the point of view of one of the soldiers in the poem.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives, verbs and adverbs and precise language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery, especially sound and colour to enhance meaning. A	
➢ Use of sentence lengths to represent your thoughts and the pace of the scene around you	
➢ Figurative techniques to enhance the atmosphere of the scene. Use pathetic fallacy to reflect the soldiers' fears and the cold weather.	

*auditory techniques refers to phonic devices, i.e. those that create a strong sense of sound.

From ‘If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things’ by Jon McGregor.

Context: In this novel characters are connected by a terrible event that shatters the quiet of an ordinary summer evening. This extract is early on and tells of how time freezes when the event takes place but it doesn’t reveal what the event is.

He was the first to move, the boy from number eighteen. He was up and across the street before anyone had blinked, before anyone had made a sound.

It was as if he knew what he had to do, as if he’d been waiting for the opportunity.

He moved off the doorstep like a loaded sprinter, and by the time I turned to see who it was he was there.

He was there and then it was over, and it was so sudden that I felt as though a camera flash had exploded in my face.

Everything went white, ghostly, like old news footage, faded and stained.

I couldn’t understand what was happening, I couldn’t believe what was happening.

I sat there, in the warm afternoon of the last day of summer, and I couldn’t work out what I was seeing.

I watched him moving across the street, the boy from number eighteen, and I tried to understand.

I don’t remember seeing it, not the moment itself, I remember strange details, peripheral images, small things that happened away from the blinded centre.

I remember the girl next to me dropping her can of beer and swaying backwards, as though from a shockwave.

I can picture the can hitting the ground, the weight of it crushing into the grass, the way it tipped to one side but stayed upright, like a half-fallen telegraph pole in a storm.

I can see a slow-motion image of the beer, frothing from the top of the can, a coil of it rising up like smoke, hanging in the light a moment before spreading flat into the grass and spraying across my lap.

I don’t know where that comes from.

I don’t know how I could possibly have seen these details. The fizz of the beer popping into sparkles of air.

Blades of grass straightening themselves as the liquid soaks into the soil, the damp patch on my skirt shrinking and fading and drying in the sun.

The brightness of the light.

There was a woman leaning out of a high window, shaking a blanket.

There were some boys over the road having a barbeque, pushing a knife into the meat to see if it was cooked.

There was a man with a long beard, up a ladder at number twenty-five, painting his window frames, he’d been there all day and he’d almost finished.

Each frame was gleaming wetly in the sun, a beautiful pale blue like the first faint colour of dawn and it had been nice to watch the slow thoroughness of his work.

There was a boy in the next-door garden, cleaning his trainers with a nailbrush and a bowl of soapy water.

I can see all these moments as though they were cast in stone, small moments captured and enlarged by the context, like figures in a Pompeii exhibition.

The woman with the blanket, interrupted mid-swing, her attention snatched away, the blanket losing momentum and flapping gently against the wall.

Her arms still stretched out, her lips still pursed against the billowing dust.

The blanket hanging down towards the ground like a semaphore.

Somebody said oh my God.

A boy on a red tricycle rode into a tree.

His feet slipped off the pedals and got caught under the wheels, tugging him from his seat and down towards the ground.

I can see him, falling sideways, his leg about to scrape the concrete, his head about to hit the tree, his tricycle tipping onto two wheels and his attention clamped into the road.

His head kept turning as he fell, and when he hit the ground, he could only lie there, watching, like everyone else. I wanted to run to him and cover his eyes but I couldn't move so he kept on looking.

A man who'd been washing his car lifted both his hands to the top of his head, squeezing them into his fists.

He was still holding a sponge, water crushing out of it and down his back but he didn't move.

Somebody said oh God oh God oh God.

This piece of writing is very effective because of how it is structured to maintain the reader's suspense.

The writer uses whole text, paragraph and sentence structures to create a shocked, disjointed mood and the use of finite and precise detail and repeated structures create an atmosphere of fear and suspense.

Task 1 Apply – Practice this same technique by writing a paragraph to describe one other person's reaction to the event. Your paragraph should be structured the same as the one in the model.

Review – if you have been successful, your paragraph should be able to be added anywhere within the story before the final paragraph.

From ‘The Great Gatsby’ by F Scott Fitzgerald.

Context: This is a novel about unrequited love. The title character is besotted with a woman named Daisy who is married to someone else. In this extract, which appears near the end of the novel, Gatsby is waiting for a phone call from Daisy that sadly never comes. In the meantime, he decides to go for a swim in his pool.

At two o’clock Gatsby put on his bathing-suit and left word with the butler that if anyone phoned word was to be brought to him at the pool. He stopped at the garage for a pneumatic mattress* that had amused his guests during the summer, and the chauffeur helped him pump it up. Then he gave instructions that the open car wasn’t to be taken out under any circumstances – and this was strange, because the front right fender needed repair.

Gatsby shouldered the mattress and started for the pool. Once he stopped and shifted it a little, and the chauffeur asked him if he needed help, but he shook his head and in a moment disappeared among the yellowing trees.

No telephone message arrived, but the butler went without his sleep and waited for it until four o’clock – until long after there was anyone to give it to if it came. I have an idea that Gatsby himself didn’t believe it would come and perhaps he no longer cared. If that was true he must have felt that he had lost the old warm world, payed a high price for living too long with a single dream. He must have looked up at an unfamiliar sky through frightening leaves and shivered as he found what a grotesque thing a rose is and how raw the sunlight was upon the scarcely created grass. A new world, material without being real, where poor ghosts, breathing dreams like air, drifted fortuitously about… like that ashen, fantastic figure gliding toward him through the amorphous trees.

The chauffeur heard the shots – afterward he could only say that he hadn’t thought anything much about them. I drove from the station directly to Gatsby’s house and my rushing anxiously up the front steps was the first thing that alarmed anyone. But they knew then, I firmly believe. With scarcely a word said, four of us, the chauffeur, butler, gardener, and I, hurried down to the pool.

There was a faint, barely perceptible movement of the water as the fresh flow from one end urged its way towards the drain at the other. With little ripples that were hardly the shadows of waves, the laden mattress moved irregularly down the pool. A small gust of wind that scarcely corrugated the surface was enough to disturb its accidental course with its accidental burden. A cluster of leaves revolved it slowly, tracing, like the leg of transit, a thin red circle in the water.

*Lillo.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of interesting verbs and adverbs;
- Use of figurative techniques to convey meaning and enhance atmosphere
- Use of different sentence lengths to convey mood
- Use of descriptive minute details and zooming in techniques to keep the reader waiting

Task 2 Apply – Write the next two paragraphs to this extract using Scott Fitzgerald's style for your own writing.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Use of interesting verbs and adverbs	
➢ Use of figurative techniques to convey meaning and enhance atmosphere	
➢ Use of different sentence lengths to convey mood and pace	
➢ Use of descriptive minute details and zooming in techniques to keep the reader waiting	

From ‘Frankenstein’ by Mary Shelley.

Context: In this novel a young scientist tries to play God and bring the dead back to life. In doing so, he creates a being with super-strength that he then rejects and denies responsibility for. In this extract, his creation finds him to confront him about his responsibilities in a desolate but impressive landscape.

It was nearly noon when I arrived at the top of the ascent. For some time I sat upon the rock that overlooks the sea of ice. A mist covered both that and the surrounding mountains. Presently a breeze dissipated the cloud, and I descended upon the glacier. The surface is very uneven, rising like the waves of a troubled sea, descending low, and interspersed by rifts that sink deep. The field of ice was almost a league in width, but I spent nearly two hours in crossing it. The opposite mountain is a bare perpendicular rock. From the side where I now stood Montanvert was exactly opposite, at the distance of a league; and above it rose Mont Blanc, in awful majesty. I remained in the recess of the rock, gazing on this wonderful and stupendous scene. The sea, or rather the vast river of ice, wound among its dependant mountains, whose aerial summits hung over its recesses. Their icy and glittering peaks shone in the sunlight over the clouds. My heart, which was before sorrowful, now swelled with something like joy; I exclaimed – “wondering spirits, if indeed ye wonder, and do not rest in your narrow beds, allow me this faint happiness, or take me, as your companion, away from the joys of life.”

As I said this I suddenly beheld the figure of a man, at some distance, advancing towards me with superhuman speed. He bounded over the crevices in the ice among which I had walked with caution; his stature, also, as he approached, seemed to exceed that of a man. I was troubled; a mist came over my eyes, and I felt a faintness seize me; but I was quickly restored by the cold gale of the mountains. I perceived, as the shape came nearer (sight tremendous and abhorred!) that it was the wretch whom I had created. I trembled with rage and horror, resolving to wait his approach and then close with him in mortal combat. He approached; his countenance bespoke bitter anguish, combined with disdain and malignity, while its unearthly ugliness rendered it almost too horrible for human eyes. But I scarcely observed this; rage and hatred had at first deprived me of utterance, and I recovered only to overwhelm him with words expressive of furious detestation and contempt.

“Devil,” I exclaimed, “do you dare approach me? Do you not your fear the fierce vengeance of my arm wreaked on your miserable head? Be gone, vile insect! Or rather, stay, that I may trample you to dust! And, oh! That I could, with the extension of your miserable existence, restore those victim who you have so diabolically murdered!”

“I expected this reception,” said the daemon. “All men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bond by ties only dissoluble by annihilation of one of us. You purpose to kill me. How dare you sport thus with life? Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest

of mankind. If you will comply with my conditions, I will leave them and you at peace; but if you refuse, I will gut the maw of death, until it be satiated with the blood of your remaining friends."

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of figurative techniques to convey setting and enhance atmosphere
- Use of narrative hooks and tension devices to convey mystery and suspense
- Use of some of the typical features of gothic horror (think back to year 8!)

Task 2 Apply – Write a short creative piece using many of the same features present in this model. Imagine you are on a lonely walk in a vast landscape – it could be mountainous or vast flat rolling hills. Suddenly you spot a strange creature/ form approaching…

Try to create a real sense of fear and mystery in your piece.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives, verbs and adverbs and precise language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery, especially sound and colour to enhance atmosphere	
➢ Use of sentence lengths to represent your thoughts and fearful feelings	
➢ Figurative techniques* to enhance the atmosphere of the scene. Use pathetic fallacy to suggest being frightened.	

From ‘Lord of the Flies’ by William Golding.

Context: In this novel a group of young school boys have been marooned on a desert island after their evacuation plane crashes. Without the safety of adults and rules, they try to form a new society in order to survive, but jealousies and the fight for power turn things into a nightmare. This extract describes the tragic, violent death of Simon, one of the most gentle and kind boys on the island. The boys kill him as they mistake him for the beast and Golding sarcastically refers to him as the beast throughout this extract.

Again the blue-white scar jagged above them and the sulphurous explosion beat down. The littluns screamed and blundered about, fleeing from the edge of the forest, and one of them broke the ring of biguns in his terror.

“Him! Him!”

The circle became a horseshoe. A thing was crawling out of the forest. It came darkly, uncertainly. The shrill screaming that rose before the beast was like a pain. The beast stumbled into the horseshoe.

“Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!”

The white-blue scar was constant, the noise unendurable. Simon was crying out something about a dead man on a hill.

“Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood! Do him in!”

The sticks fell and the mouth of the new circle crunched and screamed. The beast was on its knees in the centre, its arms folded over its face. It was crying out against the abominable noise something about a body on the hill. The beats struggled forward, broke the ring and fell over the steep edge of the rock to the sand by the water. At once the crowd surged after it, poured down the rock, leapt on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore. There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws.

Then the clouds opened and let down the rain like a water-fall. The water bounded from the mountain-top, tore leaves and branches from the trees, poured like a cold shower over the struggling heap on the sand. Presently the heap broke up and figures staggered away. Only the beast lay still, a few yards from the sea. Even in the rain they could see how small a beast it was; and already its blood was staining the sand…

Towards midnight the rain ceased and the clouds drifted away, so that the sky was scattered once more with the incredible lamps of stars. Then the breeze died too and there was no noise save the drip and trickle of water that ran out of clefts and spilled down, leaf by leaf, to the brown earth of the island. The air was cool, moist and clear; and presently even the sound of the water was still. The beast lay huddled on the pale beach and the stains spread, inch by inch.

The edge of the lagoon became a streak of phosphorescence which advanced minutely, as the great wave of the tide flowed. The clear water mirrored the clear sky and the angular bright constellations. The line of phosphorescence

bulged about the sand grains and the little pebbles; it held them each in a dimple of tension, then suddenly accepted them with an inaudible syllable and moved on.

Along the shoreward edge of the shallows the advancing clearness was full of strange, moonbeam-bodied creatures with fiery eyes. Here and there a larger pebble clung to its own air and was covered with a coat of pearls. The tide swelled in over the rain-pitted sand and smoothed everything with a layer of silver. Now it touched the first of the stains that seeped from the broken body and the creatures made a moving patch of light as they gathered at the edge. The water rose further and dressed Simon's coarse hair with brightness. The line of his cheek silvered and the turn of his shoulder became sculpted marble. The strange, attendant creatures, with their fiery eyes and trailing vapours, busied themselves round his head. The body lifted a fraction of an inch from the sand and a bubble of air escaped from the mouth with a wet plop. Then it turned gently in the water.

Somewhere over the darkened curve of the world the sun and moon were pulling; and the film of water on the earth planet was held, bulging slightly on one side while the solid core turned. The great wave of the tide moved further along the island and the water lifted. Softly, surrounded by a fringe of inquisitive bright creatures, itself a silver shape beneath the steadfast constellations, Simon's dead body moved out towards the open sea.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of pathetic fallacy to enhance atmosphere and characters' feelings/ actions (look at the use of the storm)
- Use of symbolism to convey meaning – e.g. how is the beast represented and how does Simon sound holy?
- Use of figurative techniques and sensory imagery, especially sound and colour imagery

Task 2 Apply – Write the next two chapters using many of the same features present in this model.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives, verbs and adverbs and precise language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery, especially sound and colour to enhance atmosphere	
➢ Figurative techniques to enhance the atmosphere of the scene. Use pathetic fallacy to suggest the sadness of the scene	

From ‘Tess of the D’Urbervilles’ by Thomas Hardy.

Context: This novel is about the fate and fortune of its tragic heroine, Tess Durbeyfield. Often in the novel, Tess feels hunted and betrayed by men. In this extract she sees an old acquaintance that was unkind to her in the past and then thinks of her newly-wed husband, Angel, who has already abandoned her. Hardy creates a sinister, melancholy and threatening atmosphere to allow the reader to empathise with her character.

The lane was long and unvaried, and, owing to the rapid shortening of the days, dusk came upon her before she was aware. She had reached the top of a hill down which the lane stretched its serpentine length in glimpses, when she heard footsteps behind her back, and in a few moments she was overtaken by a man. He stepped up alongside Tess and said –

“Good-night, my pretty maid”: to which she civilly replied.

The light still remaining in the sky lit up her face, though the landscape was nearly dark. The man turned and stared hard at her.

“Why, surely, it is the young wench who was at Trantridge awhile – young Squire d’Urberville’s friend? I was there at that time, though I don’t live there now.”

She recognised in him the well-to-do boor whom Angel had knocked down at the inn for addressing her coarsely. A spasm of anguish shot through her, and she returned him no answer.

“Be honest enough to own it, and that what I said in the town was true, though your fancy-man was so up about it – hey, my sly one? You ought to beg my pardon for that blow of his, considering.”

Still no answer from Tess. There seemed to be only one escape for her hunted soul. She suddenly took to her heels with the speed of the wind, and, without looking behind her, ran along the road till she came to a gate which opened directly into a plantation. Into this she plunged, and did not pause till she was deep enough in its shade to be safe against any possibility of discovery.

Under foot the leaves were dry, and the foliage of some holly bushes which grew among the deciduous trees was dense enough to keep off draughts. She scraped together dead leaves till she had formed them into a large heap, making a sort of nest in the middle. Into this Tess crept.

Such sleep as she got was naturally fitful; she fancied she heard strange noises, but persuaded herself that they were caused by the breeze. She thought of her husband in some vague warm clime on the other side of the globe, while she was here in the cold. Was there another such wretched being as she in the world? Tess asked herself; and, thinking of her wasted life, said, “All is vanity.” […] All was, alas, worse than vanity – injustice, punishment, exaction, death. The wife of Angel Clare put her hand to her brow, and felt its curve, and the edges of her eye-sockets perceptible under the soft skin, and thought as she did so that time would come when that bone would be bare. “I wish it were now,” she said.

In the midst of these whimsical fancies she heard a new strange sound among the leaves. It might be the wind; yet there was scarcely any wind. Sometimes it was a palpitation, sometimes a flutter; sometimes a sort of gasp or gurgle. Soon she was certain that the noises came from wild creatures of some kind, the more so when, originating in the boughs overhead, they were followed by the fall of heavy body upon the ground. Had she been ensconced here under other and more pleasant conditions she would have become alarmed; but, outside humanity, she had at present no fear.

Day at length broke in the sky. When it had been day aloft for some little while it became day in the wood.

Directly the assuring and prosaic light of the world's active hours had grown strong she crept from under her hillock of leaves, and looked around boldly. Then she perceived what had been going on to disturb her. The plantation wherein she had taken shelter ran down at this spot into a peak, which ended it hitherward, outside the hedge being arable ground. Under the trees several pheasants lay about, their rich plumage dabbled with blood: some were dead, some feebly twitching a wing, some staring up at the sky, some pulsating quickly, some contorted, some stretched out – all of them writhing in agony, except the fortunate ones whose tortures had ended during the night by the inability of nature to bear more.

Tess guessed at once the meaning of this. The birds had been driven down into this corner the day before by some shooting-party; and while those that had dropped dead under the shot, or had died before nightfall, had been searched for and carried off, many badly wounded birds had escaped and hidden themselves away, or risen among the thick boughs, where they had maintained their position till they grew weaker with loss of blood in the night-time, when they had fallen one by one as she heard them.

[…] With the impulse of a soul who could feel for kindred sufferers as much as herself, Tess's first thought was to put the still living birds out of their torture, and to this end with her own hands she broke the necks of as many as she could find, leaving them to lie where she had found them till the game-keepers should come – as they probably would come – to look for them a second time.

"Poor darlings – to suppose myself the most miserable being on earth in the sight o' such misery as yours!" she exclaimed, her tears running down as she killed the birds tenderly. "And not a twinge of bodily pain about me! I be not mangled, and I be not bleeding; and I have two hands to feed and clothe me." She was ashamed of herself for her gloom of the night, based on nothing more tangible than a sense of condemnation under an arbitrary law of society which had no foundation in Nature.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of pathetic fallacy to enhance atmosphere and characters' feelings
- Use of symbolism to convey meaning – e.g. how do the animals described represent Tess?
- Use of figurative techniques and sensory imagery, especially sound and colour imagery
- Use of setting description to enhance a melancholy mood

Task 2 Apply – Write the next two chapters using many of the same features present in this model.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives, verbs and adverbs and precise language choices	
➢ Use of pathetic fallacy to enhance atmosphere and characters' feelings	
➢ Sensory imagery to enhance your setting descriptions	
➢ Figurative techniques, including using animals to symbolise Tess, to enhance the sad atmosphere of the scene.	

From ‘Metamorphosis’ by Franz Kafka.

Context: This short novel is about a young man called Gregor whose job rules him so much and makes him feel extremely isolated, that one morning he wakes to find that he’s changed into an insect!

As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect. He was lying on his hard, as it were armor - plated, back and when he lifted his head a little he could see his dome – like brown belly divided into stiff arched segments on top of which the bed quilt could hardly keep in position and was about to slide off completely. His numerous legs, which were pitifully thin compared to the rest of his bulk, waved helplessly before his eyes.

What has happened to me? He thought. It was no dream. His room, a regular human bedroom, only rather too small, lay quiet between the four familiar walls. Above the table on which a collection of cloth samples was unpacked and spread out – Samsa was a commercial traveller – hung the picture which he had recently cut out of an illustrated magazine and put into a pretty gilt frame. It showed a lady, with a fur cap on and a fur stole, sitting upright and holding out to the spectator a huge fur muff into which the whole of her forearm had vanished! Gregor’s eyes turned next to the window, and the overcast sky – one could hear rain drops beating on the window gutter – made him quite melancholy. What about sleeping a little longer and forgetting all this nonsense, he thought, but it could not be done, for he was accustomed to sleep on his right side and in his present condition he could not turn himself over. However violently he forced himself towards his right side he always rolled on to his back again. He tried it at least a hundred times, shutting his eyes to keep from seeing his struggling legs, and only desisted when he began to feel in his side a faint dull ache he had never experienced before.

Oh God, he thought, what an exhausting job I’ve picked on! Travelling about day in, day out. It’s much more irritating work than doing the actual business in the office, and on top of that there’s the trouble of constant traveling, of worrying about train connections, the bed and irregular meals, casual acquaintances that are always new and never became intimate friends. The devil take it all! He felt a slight itching up on his belly; slowly pushed himself on his back nearer to the top of the bed so that he could lift his head more easily; identified the itching place which was surrounded by many small white spots the nature of which he could not understand and made to touch it with a leg, but drew the leg back immediately, for the contact made a cold shiver run through him.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of vocabulary - adjectives, verbs and adverbs to create a vivid impression of Gregor's state, appearance and movements
- Use of sensory imagery
- Use of sentence structures to echo frantic character feelings.

Task 2 Apply – Write a short creative piece in which you awake one morning to gradually realise that you have turned into another creature. Use many of the same stylistic features present in this model.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives to describe appearance.	
➢ Interesting and precise verb and adverb choices to describe movements	
➢ Sensory imagery	
➢ Use of sentence lengths and types to reflect movements and character mood.	

From ‘Pigeon English’ by Stephen Kelman.

Context: This novel tells the story of eleven year old Harri Opoku who has moved from Ghana to England and now lives in a problematic inner-city housing estate. This extract is from the beginning of the novel and sets the scene in which the character is growing up.

You could see the blood. It was darker than you thought. It was all on the ground outside Chicken Joe’s. It just felt crazy.

Jordan: “I’ll give you a million quid if you tough it.”

Me: “You don’t have a million.”

Jordan: “One quid then.”

You wanted to touch it but you couldn’t get close enough. There was a line in the way:

POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

If you cross the line you’ll turn to dust.

We weren’t allowed to talk to the policeman, he had to concentrate for if the killer came back. I could see the chains hanging from his belt but I couldn’t see the gun.

The dead boy’s mamma was guarding the blood. She wanted it to stay, you could tell. The rain wanted to come and wash the blood away but she wouldn’t let it. She wasn’t even crying, she was just stiff and fierce like it was her job to scare the rain back up into the sky. A pigeon was looking for his chop. He walked right in the blood. He was even sad as well, you could tell where his eyes were all pink and dead.

* * *

3

The flowers were already bent. There were pictures of the dead boy wearing his school uniform. His jumper was green.

My jumper’s blue. My uniform’s better. The only bad thing about it is the tie, it’s too scratchy. I hate it when they’re scratchy like that.

There were bottles of beer instead of candles and the dead boy’s friends wrote messages to him. They all said he was a great friend. Some of the spelling was wrong but I didn’t mind. His football boots were on the railings tied up by their laces. They were nearly new Nikes, the studs were proper metal and everything.

Jordan: “shall I t’ief them? He don’t need ‘em no more.”

I just pretended I didn't hear him. Jordan would never really steal them, they were a million times too big. They looked too empty just hanging there. I wanted to wear them but they'd never fit.

Me and the dead boy were only half friends, I didn't see him very much because he was older and he didn't go to my school. He could ride his bike with no hands and you never even wanted him to fall off. I said a prayer for him inside my head. It just said sorry. That's all I could remember. I pretended like if I kept looking hard enough I could make the blood move and go back in the shape of a boy. I could bring him back alive that way. It happened before, where I used to live there was a chief who brought his son back like that. It was a long time ago before I was born. Asweh, it was a miracle. It didn't work this time.

I gave him my bouncy ball. I don't need it anymore, I've got five more under my bed. Jordan gave him a pebble he found on the floor.

Me: "That doesn't count. It has to be something that belonged to you."

4

Jordan: "I ain't got nothing. I didn't know we had to bring a present.

I gave Jordan a strawberry Chewit to give to the dead boy, then I showed him how to make a cross. Both the two of us made a cross. We were very quiet. It even felt important. We ran all the way home. I beat Jordan easily. I can beat everyone, I'm the fastest in Year 7. I just wanted to get away before the dying caught us.

The buildings are all mighty around here. My tower is as high as the lighthouse at Jamestown. There are three towers in a row: Luxembourg House, Stockholm House and Copenhagen House. My flat is on floor 9 out of 14. It's not even hutious, I can look from the window now and my belly doesn't even turn over. I love going in the lift, it's brutal, especially when you're the only one in there. Then you could be a spirit or a spy. You even forget the pissy smell because you're going so fast.

It's proper windy at the bottom like a whirlpool. If you stand at the bottom where the tower meets the ground and put your arms out, you can pretend like you're a bird. You can feel the wind try to pick you up, it's nearly like flying…

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of simple, naïve vocabulary
- Use of speech, dialogue and eye-dialect (speech written in an accent) to establish character
- Effective contrast between simple descriptions and serious, tragic subject matter to sustain childish narrative voice.

Task 2 Apply – Write the next paragraph to this extract. Use many of the same stylistic features present in this model.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Use of simple, naïve vocabulary	
➢ Use of speech, dialogue and eye-dialect (speech written in an accent) to establish character	
➢ Effective contrast between simple descriptions and serious, tragic subject matter to sustain childish narrative voice.	

From ‘1984’ by George Orwell.

Context: This novel is synonymous with the dystopian genre and tells the story of Winston Smith who is living in an extreme state-controlled regime, where even thought can be controlled.

1

It was a cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift-shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right – hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the meagreness of his body merely emphasised by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the party. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter had just ended.

Outside, even through the shut window–pane, the world looked cold. Down the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere. The blackmoustachio’d face gazed down from every commanding corner. There was no one on the house–front immediately opposite. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said, while the dark eyes looked deep into Winston’s own. Down at street level another poster, torn at one corner, flapped fitfully in the wind, alternately covering and uncovering the single word INGSOC. In the far distance a helicopter skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle, and

darted away again with a curving flight. It was the police patrol, snooping into people's windows. The patrols did not matter, however. Only the \thought Police mattered.

Behind Winston's back the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away about pig – iron and the over fulfilment of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug into your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live – did live, from habit that became instinct – in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of use of capital letters to create a dystopian world
- Use of pathetic fallacy and sentence types to depict the character's feelings and help the reader to empathise with him
- Word choices that create a tense atmosphere and lexical choices that surprise the reader.
- Narrative hooking to encourage the reader to read on.
- Use of dystopian features. Think back to The Hunger Games text. What political-sounding words and strange phrases create a sense of threat?

Task 2 Apply – Imagine you live in Bristol in the future. Write a short piece describing where and how you live – the year is 2084. Use many of the same stylistic features present in this model.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives and language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery and precise setting descriptions	
➢ Sinister-sounding political language	
➢ Use of sentence lengths to convey emotions and character thoughts	
➢ Use of narrative hooking through vague yet sinister terms	

From ‘Great Expectations’ by Charles Dickens.

Context: The central character of this novel is Pip. Pip dreams of shaking off his humble beginnings and making something of himself, but, even as he begins to accomplish this, he cannot shake off the influence of the characters from his past. This extract occurs at the beginning of the novel and describes a terrifying encounter that the very young Pip has with an escaped convict.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of sea. My first most vivid memory and broad impression of the identity of things seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Phillip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgina wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

“Hold your noise!” cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. “Keep still, you little devil or I’ll cut your throat!”

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared, and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

“Oh! Don’t cut my throat, sir! I pleaded in terror. “Pray don’t do it, sir.”

“Tell us your name!” said the man. “Quick!”

“Pip, sir.”

“Once more,” said the man, staring at me. “Give it mouth!”

“Pip. Pip, sir.”

“Show us where you live,” said the man. “Pint out the place!”

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself, -- for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet, -- when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling while he ate the bread ravenously.

“You young dog,” said the man, licking his lips, “what fat cheeks you ha’ got.”

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized for my years, and not strong.

"Darn me if I couldn't eat em'," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I hadn't half a mind to't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now then lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"
"There, sir!" said I
He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.
"There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."
"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father" alonger your mother?"
"Yes, sir," said I; "him too; late of this parish."

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- How the narrative switches from being descriptive, to taking us right into the action (this mirrors how shocked and frightened Pip is)
- Use of descriptive detail to depict the setting
- Use of a lexical field of the grey and gloomy and deathly
- Use of speech, dialogue and eye-dialect to enhance character
- Shorter sentences to create shock

Task 2 Apply – Write the next two paragraphs to this extract. Use many of the same stylistic features present in this model to give your piece an eerie feel.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Interesting adjectives and language choices	
➢ Sensory imagery and precise setting descriptions	
➢ Sinister-sounding language choices to sustain the lexical field of grey and gloom	
➢ Use of speech to convey emotions and characters	

From ‘Wuthering Heights’ by Emily Bronte.

Context: This gothic, tragic love story is set in an impressive and isolated landscape. Two of the main characters, Heathcliff and Catherine, experience an over-powering but ultimately destructive love. In this extract, one of the novel’s narrators, Mr Lockwood, seeks refuge from a snow storm in Heathcliff’s house. Whilst dozing in and out of sleep, he is visited by Catherine’s child-like ghost.

This time I remembered I was lying in the oak closet, and I heard distinctly the gusty wind, and the driving of the snow; I heard, also, the fir bough repeat its teasing sound, and ascribed it to the right cause: but it annoyed me so much, that I resolved to silence it, if possible; and, I thought, I rose and endeavoured to unhasp the casement. The hook was soldered into the staple: a circumstance observed by me when awake, but forgotten. “I must stop it, nevertheless!” I muttered, knocking my knuckles through the glass, and stretching an arm out to seize the importune branch; instead pf which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice – cold hand! The intense horror of nightmare came over me: I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed, “Let me in – let me in!”

“Who are you?” I asked, struggling, meanwhile, to disengage myself.

“Catherine Linton,” it replied, shiveringly (why did I think of Linton? I had read Earnshaw twenty times for Linton) – “I’m come home: I’d lost my way on the moor!” As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child’s face looking through the window. Terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on to the broken pane, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bedclothes: still it wailed, “Let me in!” and maintained its tenacious gripe, almost maddening me with fear.

“How can I!” I said at length. “Let me go, if you want me to let you in!” The fingers relaxed, I snatched mine through the hole, hurriedly piled the books up in a pyramid against it, and stopped my ears to exclude the lamentable prayer. I seemed to keep them closed above a quarter of an hour; yet, the instant I listened again, there was the doleful cry moaning on! “Begone!” I shouted. “I’ll never let you in, not if you beg for twenty years.”

“It is twenty years,” mourned the voice: “twenty years. I’ve been a waif for twenty years!” Thereat began a feeble scratching outside, and the pile of books moved as if thrust forward. I tried to jump up; but could not stir a limb; and so yelled aloud, in a frenzy of fright.

To my confusion, I discovered the yell was not ideal: hasty footsteps approached my chamber door; somebody pushed it open, with a vigorous hand, and a light glimmered through the squares at the top of the bed. I sat shuddering yet, and wiping the perspiration from my forehead: the intruder appeared to hesitate, and muttered to himself. At last, he said, in a half-whisper, plainly not expecting an answer, “Is anyone here?”

I considered it best to confess my presence; for I knew Heathcliff's accents, and feared he might search further, if I kept quiet. With this intention, I turned and opened the panels. I shall not soon forget the effect my action produced. Heathcliff stood near the entrance, in his shirt and trousers; with a candle dripping over his fingers, and his face as white as the wall behind him. The first creak of the oak startled him like an electric shock: the light leaped from his hold to a distance of some feet, and his agitation was so extreme, that he could hardly pick it up.

"It is only your guest, sir," I called out, desirous to spare him the humiliation of exposing his cowardice further. "I had the misfortune to scream in my sleep, owing to a frightful nightmare. I'm sorry I disturbed you."

"Oh, God confound you, Mr Lockwood! I wish you we are the-" commenced my host, setting the candle on a chair, because he found it impossible to hold it steady. "And who showed you up into this room?" he continued, crushing his nails into his palms, and grinding his teeth to subdue the maxillary convulsions. "Who was it? I've a good mind to turn them out of the house this moment?"

Features to discuss with students might include: use of mysterious details and lexical choices that fit the gothic ghost story genre; use of a lexical field to create and sustain a cold, fearful atmosphere; use of dramatic and emotive language.

Task 1 - Features to highlight in the model include:

- Use of dramatic and emotive language
- Use of descriptive detail to depict the setting
- Use of lexical choices that fit the gothic/ ghost story genre
- Use of imagery to create a cold, fearful atmosphere

Task 2 Apply – Write a short ghost story, using many of the same stylistic features present in this model to give your piece an eerie feel. Try to create suspense and a cold, fearful atmosphere.

Task 3 Review – Highlight your own work using the skills grid below as a key:

➢ Use of dramatic and emotive language	
➢ Use of descriptive detail to depict the setting	
➢ Use of lexical choices that fit the gothic/ ghost story genre	
➢ Use of imagery to create a cold, fearful atmosphere	

The next two extracts come from 2 novels that use a very unusual narrative voices. Read through them and look out for things listed in the box that follows each piece:

From 'The Book Thief' by Markus Zusak.

Context: This novel is narrated by Death! It tells the story of Liesel, a young girl growing up in Nazi occupied Europe. Her parents have been taken to a concentration camp and she lives with a foster family. This extract is from the beginning of the novel and allows Death to introduce himself to the reader before introducing her character.

First the colours.

Then the humans.

That's usually how I see things.

Or at least, how I try.

--- HERE IS A SMALL FACT ---
You are going to die.

I am in all truthfulness attempting to be cheerful about this whole topic, though most people find themselves hindered in believing me, no matter my protestations. Please, trust me. I most definitely *can* be cheerful. I can be amiable. Agreeable. Affable. And that's only the As. Just don't ask me to be nice. Nice has nothing to do with me.

--- REACTION TO THE AFOREMENTIONED FACT ---
Does this worry you?
I urge you – don't be afraid.
I'm nothing if not fair.

Of course, an introduction.

A beginning.

Where are my manners?

I could introduce myself properly, but it's not really necessary. You will know me well enough and soon enough, depending on a diverse range of variables. It suffices to say that at some point in time, I will be standing over you, as genially as possible. Your soul will be in my arms. A colour will be perched on my shoulder. I will carry you gently away.

At that moment, you will be lying there (I rarely find people standing up). You will be caked in your own body. There might be a discovery; a scream will dribble down the air. The only sound you'll hear after that will be my own breathing, and the sound and smell of my footsteps.

The question is, what colour will everything be at that moment when I come for you? What will the sky be saying?

Personally, I like chocolate – coloured sky. Dark, dark chocolate. People say it suits me. I do, however, try to enjoy every colour I see – the whole spectrum. A billion or so flavours, none of them quite the same, and a sky to slowly suck on. It takes the edge pf the stress. It helps me relax.

--- A SMALL THEORY ---
People only observe the colours of a day only at its beginning and ends, but to me it's quite clear that a day merges through a multitude of shades and intonations, with each passing moment. A single *hour* can consist of thousands of different colours. Waxy yellows, cloud – spat blues. Murky darknesses. In my line of work, I make it a point to notice them.

As I've suggested, my one saving grace is distraction. It keeps me sane. It helps me cope, considering the length of time I've been performing this job. The trouble is, who could ever replace me? Who could step in while I take a break in your stock – standard resort – style holiday destination, whether it be tropical or of the ski – trip variety? The answer, of course, is nobody, which has prompted me to make a conscious, deliberate decision – to make distraction my holiday. Needless to say, I holiday in increments. In colours.

Still, it's possible that you might be asking, why does he even need a holiday? What does he need distraction *from*?

Which brings me to my next point.

It's the leftover humans.

The survivors.

They're the ones I can't stand to look at, although on many occasions, I still fail. I deliberately seek out the colours to keep my mind off them, but now and then, I witness the ones who are left behind, crumbling amongst the jigsaw puzzle of realisation, despair and surprise. They have punctured hearts. They have beaten lungs.

Which in turn brings me to the subject I am telling you about tonight, or today, or whatever the hour and colour. It's the story of one of those perpetual survivors – an expert at being left behind.

It's just a small story really, about, among other things:

- A girl
- some words
- an accordionist
- some fanatical Germans
- a Jewish fist-fighter
- and quite a lot of thievery.

I saw the book thief three times.

Things to look out for: use of structure to create a unique narrative voice and draw attention to meaning; use of narrative hooking; use of figurative techniques and sensory imagery.

From ‘The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time’ by Mark Haddon.

Context: This novel is told from the point of view of Christopher Boone, a 15 year old boy who has many traits of Asperger’s syndrome. It is a bitter-sweet comedy and sees Christopher playing the role of amateur sleuth to solve the mystery surrounding the brutal killing of a neighbour’s dog. This extract is from the first chapter and describes Christopher’s reaction to finding the dead body of the dog.

It was 7 minutes after midnight. The dog was lying on the grass in the middle of the lawn in front of Mrs Shears' house. Its eyes were closed. It looked as if it was running on its side, the way dogs run when they think they are chasing a cat in a dream. But the dog was not running or asleep. The dog was dead. There was a garden fork sticking out of the dog. The points of the fork must have gone all the way through the dog and into the ground because the fork had not fallen over. I decided that the dog was probably killed with the fork because I could not see any other wounds in the dog and I do not think you would stick a garden fork into a dog after it had died for some other reason, like cancer for example, or a road accident. But I could not be certain about this.

I went through Mrs Shears' gate, closing it behind me. I walked onto her lawn and knelt beside the dog. I put my hand on the muzzle of the dog. It was still warm.

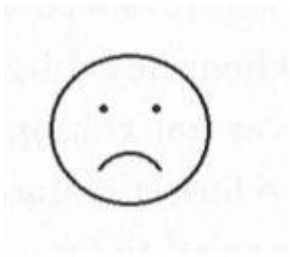
The dog was called Wellington. It belonged to Mrs Shears who was our friend. She lived on the opposite side of the road, two houses to the left.

Wellington was a poodle. Not one of the small poodles that have hairstyles but a big poodle. It had curly black fur, but when you got close you could see that the skin underneath the fur was a very pale yellow, like chicken.

I stroked Wellington and wondered who had killed him, and why.

3

My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I know all the countries of the world and their capital cities and every prime number up to 7,057. Eight years ago, when I first met Siobhan, she showed me this picture.

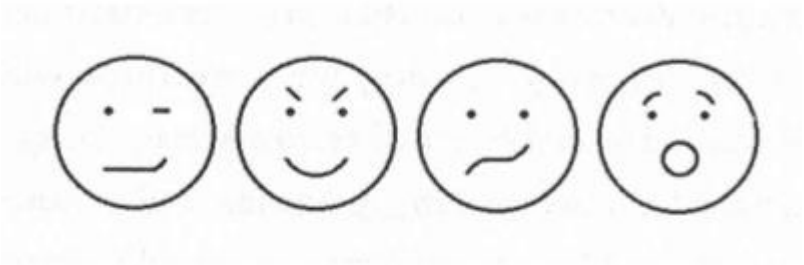


And I knew that it meant 'sad,' which is what I felt when I found the dead dog. Then she showed me this picture



And I knew that it meant 'happy', like when I'm reading about the Apollo space missions, or when I am still awake at 3 am or 4 am in the morning and I can walk up and down the street and pretend that I am the only person in the whole world.

Then she drew some other pictures



but I was unable to say what these meant.

I got Siobhan to draw lots of these faces and then write down next to them exactly what they meant. I kept the piece the piece of paper in my pocket and took it out when I didn't understand what someone was saying. But it was very difficult to decide which of the diagrams was most like the face they were making because people's faces move very quickly.

When I told Siobhan that I was doing this, she got out a pencil and another piece of paper and said it probably made people feel very



And then she laughed. So I tore the original piece of paper up and threw it away. And Siobhan apologised. And now if I don't know what someone is saying I ask them what they mean or I walk away.

Features to look out for: use of sentence, paragraph and text structure to shape characterisation, particularly Christopher's thought processes and feelings.

Final task:

Write a short creative piece from an unusual narrative perspective – it's entirely up to you what you choose to do.

You can take inspiration from any of the genres studied in this booklet and use the features listed below to make your writing effective:

➢ Interesting adjectives and language choices
➢ Dramatic verbs and adverbs
➢ The mixture of character feelings and omniscient narration
➢ Use of sentence types and lengths to convey meaning, mood, pace and character thoughts
➢ Use of narrative hooking at the end of paragraphs and through vague language
➢ Use of sensory imagery – including colour and sound
➢ Use of descriptive minute details and zooming in techniques to keep the reader waiting or convey setting
➢ Sinister-sounding political language
➢ Childish, naïve language
➢ Use of speech, dialogue and eye-dialect (speech written in an accent) to establish character
➢ Use of lexical choices that fit the gothic/ ghost story/ dystopia genre
➢ Use of imagery to create atmosphere. Use of pathetic fallacy to create setting