

Year 7 English

Terms 3-4 The Art of Storytelling



In this unit, students will:

1. Study a full novel (*A Monster Calls*)
2. Learn about the different purposes of storytelling and read a range of short stories that showcase these.
3. Write their own short story.

Students are studying these topics at this point in Year 7, because this will enable them to build on all of the skills they have been working on in Year 7 so far. By this point, our curriculum aims to have: developed students understanding of language and its effects; introduced the idea of context and its role in analysing texts; taught students analytical comparison skills; enabled students to practise selecting relevant evidence to support ideas; harnessed their imagination through creative projects; practised using descriptive techniques in both their fiction and non-fiction writing.

A Monster Calls includes challenging subject matter, which we feel students at the end of Year 7 have the maturity to deal with (in contrast to the start of Year 7). This scheme builds on the previous literature scheme (*Romeo & Juliet*), which focusses on the reader's interpretation, the writer's intentions and how these link to the text's context. In the AMC scheme, we will introduce students to language analysis and teach them how to interpret this alongside the interpretation and contextual skills they have already practised.

Successful narrative writing is a more difficult skill to master than descriptive writing, so students at the end of Year 7 will be better-equipped to approach the short story writing unit, having been exposed to different texts (including for their fortnightly reading homework). They will also be able to incorporate into their narrative writing the descriptive writing skills learnt in the first set of units.

Previous topic:

Epic Worlds (reading a range of non-fiction travel writing and creating their own. Creating a description of their own fantasy world)

Next topic:

Love Through Time (*Romeo & Juliet*; comparing how love is presented in a range of poems/extracts; stagecraft unit designing an adapted performance of *Romeo & Juliet*)

Core knowledge/skills/concepts

As part of this (and all KS3 English topics) we have split our thematic focus into two or three 'strands' which usually focus on: 1) a key text (novel or play), 2) extracts from a range of texts and 3) creative writing.

All three strands link together under the topic title of The Art of Storytelling.

	A Monster Calls	Exploring Stories	Short Story Writing
Skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To explain how stories and storytelling are presented. 2. To analyse the writer's use of figurative language. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand the different purposes of telling stories. 2. To analyse how writers tell stories in different ways. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be able to structure a story for a specific purpose. 2. To employ a range of narrative techniques to engage the reader.
Knowledge / Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding how storytelling has changed over time. • Identifying different phases of a story and different structural formats used in narrative writing (e.g. framed narratives). • Selecting evidence from a text to support specific ideas. • Identify a range of techniques used by the writer and explain the effects of these. • Learn about different character types and their purposes. • Identify overarching themes in the text and explain how these are used/portrayed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and understanding a selection of short stories. • Understanding different purposes of storytelling. • Identifying key features of different story types. • Identifying what the main purpose of a short story is. • Justifying how each story achieves its purpose, through the writer's choices (e.g. characters, language, events, structural decisions). • Identifying a range of techniques used by the writer and explaining the effects of these. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To write, edit and redraft an original short story. • To confidently check over work and make alterations for improvement. • To successfully write a story that achieves a particular purpose. • To make choices about characters, setting, plot and language to create specific effects. • To use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately throughout own writing.

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Essential vocabulary

The Oral Tradition
Narrative
Climax
Morals/proverbs
Protagonist
Antagonist
Framed narrative
Literary Tradition
Inference
Theme
Symbolism
Motif
Simile
Metaphor
Alliteration
Sibilance
Personification

Threshold concepts

- Reading comprehension skills
- Understanding the basic structure of a story (e.g. start - middle - end)
- Common conventions of fiction
- Selecting evidence from a text
- Some confidence with the 'What, How, Why' paragraph structure
- Have some ability to form opinions and inferences independently

In their writing:

- To be able to choose vocabulary appropriate to tone (e.g. scary, tense)
- Grasp of basic grammar
- To be able to have some ideas in relation to creating a story

How and when will the core learning be assessed?

Pupils will complete two extended writing 'assessments' for this topic; one for strand one and one for strand three.

Strand 1 Assessment: Explore how Ness presents the monster as a good storyteller.

Strand 2 Assessment: To write the final draft of a short story with a purpose.

Opportunities for reading

Reading will be part of every lesson:

- A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness
- Reading example responses as models for analytical writing
- A range of short stories
- Reading back over own writing and other student's writing during drafting process
- Reading homework remains as part of library lessons

Links to other topics/subjects

Links with previous Year 7 schemes:

Identifying how an idea or character is presented
Identifying words which are used to create this presentation
Forming opinions about a text
Selecting evidence to support ideas.
Linking points to contextual information
Using descriptive writing techniques

Links to other subjects:

Drama - creating plots for performances
PSHE - dealing with death and grief