

**ТИХОМИРОВА ОЛЕНА
ІЗОВА НАТАЛЯ**

**ГОЛОСИ СВІТУ:
читаємо сучасну літературу**

Частина 1

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**Друкується за рішенням Вченої ради
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Рецензенти

Гайдаш А.В. – доктор філологічних наук, доцент, завідувач кафедри германської філології Київського університету імені Бориса Грінченка;

Маріна О.С. – доктор філологічних наук, доцент, завідувач кафедри англійської філології, перекладу і філософії мови імені професора О.М. Мороховського Київського національного лінгвістичного університету;

Марчишина А.А. – доктор філологічних наук, професор, завідувач кафедри англійської мови Кам'янець-Подільського національного університету імені Івана Огієнка.

Снайдер М. – експертка з вивчення англійської мови Американського дому в Києві.

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Підручник пропонує курс з розвитку англомовної комунікативної компетенції студентів на основі сучасного англомовного художнього дискурсу. Передбачається вдосконалення культури усного та писемного мовлення студентів за допомогою читання та обговорення аутентичних художніх текстів, аудіювання, виконання різноманітних комунікативно спрямованих завдань на збагачення словникового запасу і виправлення типових лексичних і граматичних помилок. Підручник містить завдання, що активують знання студентів з літературознавства і стилістики англійської мови з метою всебічного аналізу художнього дискурсу і надбання студентами індивідуального підходу до інтерпретації тексту. Для цього зроблено акцент на форматі рекомендації (усної та письмової) художнього твору різним групам адресатів. Для розвитку аналітичного мислення і здатності переконливо висловлювати свою думку також пропонуються оригінальні письмові завдання та теми дослідних проектів для самостійної роботи.

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INTRODUCTION

General Description

This textbook is intended as a guide to reading and interpreting contemporary English-language fiction for senior students of foreign languages departments. The book provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing students' literary awareness and linguistic aptitude.

The texts chosen for analysis have been taken from the works by contemporary authors from different English-speaking countries across the world. An emphasis is laid on linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as plurality of opinions and polyphony of expression in contemporary fiction. The excerpts, short stories and poetic works under discussion belong to different genres, enabling students to familiarise themselves with recent developments in the 21st century literature.

Objective

The textbook is aimed at improving students' English-language competence by enlarging their vocabulary and developing their listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. Analysing and discussing literary discourse, students are expected to activate their philological sensitivity and hone their critical thinking skills.

Structure

The book consists of 16 units, wordlists, guidelines for self-study projects, project topics and bibliography. Each unit is structured in the following way: To begin, the "Lead In" section serves as a warming-up activity. It is aimed at prompting spontaneous speaking on topics related to the central theme of the unit. This section has a communicative focus and encourages interaction among students.

The next section offers concise information on a certain philological or cultural issue that facilitates the process of text interpretation. This section is accompanied with a range of activities that will enable students to come to grips with theoretical framework and terminology. In many cases, a selection of short excerpts from fiction is provided to illustrate the highlighted issues and give students a broader view of the subject matter.

The main reading assignment of each unit is based on extracts from a fictional text (or sometimes the whole text). The excerpts are preceded with background information about the author and the contents of the novel. After the excerpts students will find questions checking their general comprehension of the text and prompting discussions. The questions for discussion are aimed at cultivating students' philological competence: they tap into their knowledge of linguistics, stylistics and literature, draw students' attention to distinctive features of a genre or style, spur them to establish cross-cultural links and connections, as well as express their own appreciation of the effects that authors create in their writing. There is no strict pattern of analysis that students are supposed to follow; on the contrary, they are encouraged to apply diverse interpretative strategies and develop their own approach to literary critique.

The array of texts chosen for classroom discussions ranges from short stories taken from various collections ("Best American Shorts Stories", "The Book of Other People", "Contemporary Short Fiction by Native American Women" and others) to novels in different genres, including historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, dystopian novels, etc. There is a chapter that focuses on poetic imagery. Whenever the audio version of the corresponding book is available, listening to it is offered as an alternative to reading. The textbook frequently engages video materials (TED talks, interviews, musical videos, etc.) that give further insights into the topics under discussion. The first unit in the book is based on a TED talk by Ann Morgan rather than on a fictional text with the view of inspiring students to uncover their own blind spots in relation to literature and find their own ways of broadening their fields of vision. The majority of the texts under discussion were written in the 21st century, which accounts for their topicality and ability to raise students' active interest.

The "Language Practice" section aims at developing students' language competence (phonetic, grammatical and lexical). The tasks are diverse and learner-centered: they boost both language skills and transferable professional skills, such as working in a team work, critical assessment of one's work, strategic planning and graphical presentation of data (using diagrams, mind mapping and other techniques). The assignments in this section are linked to

the extracts under analysis or to the theme of the unit, thus enabling students to use particular grammatical and lexical phenomena in discourse. While working on this section the authors of this book took into account the common mistakes that learners of English are prone to make when their first language is Ukrainian. A particular emphasis is placed on idioms and phrasal verbs, as well as vocabulary for book discussions and recommendations. In order to activate the usage of such lexical units, they have been used frequently in the textbook in a variety of assignments. The full wordlists are found in the end of the textbook.

Writing activities make use of the formats of book reviews and recommendations. The corresponding skills are developed gradually, beginning from writing a basic plot summary and moving on to expressing one's appreciation focusing on linguistic and literary peculiarities of the text. Several authentic book reviews are given as examples, and numerous expressions that can be used as prompts are provided. Once again, as with text interpretation, students are not expected to follow a strict pattern: they are encouraged to express themselves as individually and creatively as they can. Some of the writing assignments can be done as actual online posts or video blogging.

In the end of each unit one can find a self-study assignment. Self-study work utilises the format of a project that can be carried out as an individual or team research. The project assignments are linked thematically to the corresponding unit and they entail practising the acquired knowledge, making connections with the previous material, developing skills of critical analysis and academic research. Since students are expected to present the results of their research in class, the project assignments will boost their public speaking and presentation skills. The guidelines for projects are provided in the end of the textbook.

The list of references includes a range of books on literary criticism, stylistics, text interpretation, language skills, as well as an array of Internet resources.

UNIT 1

Reading the World: Diversity of Fiction

Lead In

- ❖ Close your eyes. Picture some bookshelves in your home (or, alternatively, in your iPhone, e-reader or other gadget). Which three titles first spring to mind?
- ❖ What do your bookshelves tell about you?
- ❖ Read the text below and find out what Ann Morgan discovered about herself by looking at her bookshelves.



Ann Morgan is a British author. In 2012 she challenged herself to read a book from every country of the world. In her 2015 TED talk she explained why she decided to do that:

“It’s often said that you can tell a lot about a person by looking at what’s on their bookshelves. What do my bookshelves say about me? Well, when I asked myself this question a few years ago, I made an alarming discovery. I’d always thought of myself as a fairly cultured, cosmopolitan sort of person. But my bookshelves told a rather different story. Pretty much all the titles on them were by British or North American authors, and there was almost nothing in translation. Discovering this massive, cultural blind spot in my reading came as quite a shock.”

Discussion



Would you answer the question “What do your bookshelves tell about you?”

❖ Name some countries that...

- ...you have read books from.
- ...you haven't read any books from but would like to.

❖ Do you think you have a cultural blind spot?

In the end of her talk Ann Morgan explains what she has gained from her world-reading quest. Read the excerpt below and say what her discoveries are.

“The books I read that year opened my eyes to many things. As those who enjoy reading will know, books have an extraordinary power to take you out of yourself and into someone else’s mindset, so that, for a while at least, you look at the world through different eyes. That can be an uncomfortable experience, particularly if you’re reading a book from a culture that may have quite different values to your own. But it can also be really enlightening.



Wrestling with unfamiliar ideas can help clarify your own thinking. And it can also show up blind spots in the way you might have been looking at the world.

When I looked back at much of the English-language literature I’d grown up with, for example, I began to see how narrow a lot of it was, compared to the richness that the world has to offer. And as the pages turned, something else started to happen, too. Little by little, that long list of countries that I’d started the year with, changed from a rather dry, academic register of place names into living, breathing entities.

Now, I don’t want to suggest that it’s at all possible to get a rounded picture of a country simply by reading one book. But cumulatively, the stories I read that year made me more alive than ever before to the richness, diversity and complexity of our remarkable planet. It was as though the world’s stories and the people who’d gone to such lengths to help me read them had made it real to me. These days, when I look at my bookshelves or consider the works on my e-reader, they tell a rather different story. It’s the story of the

power books have to connect us across political, geographical, cultural, social, religious divides. It's the tale of the potential human beings have to work together”.

Language Practice

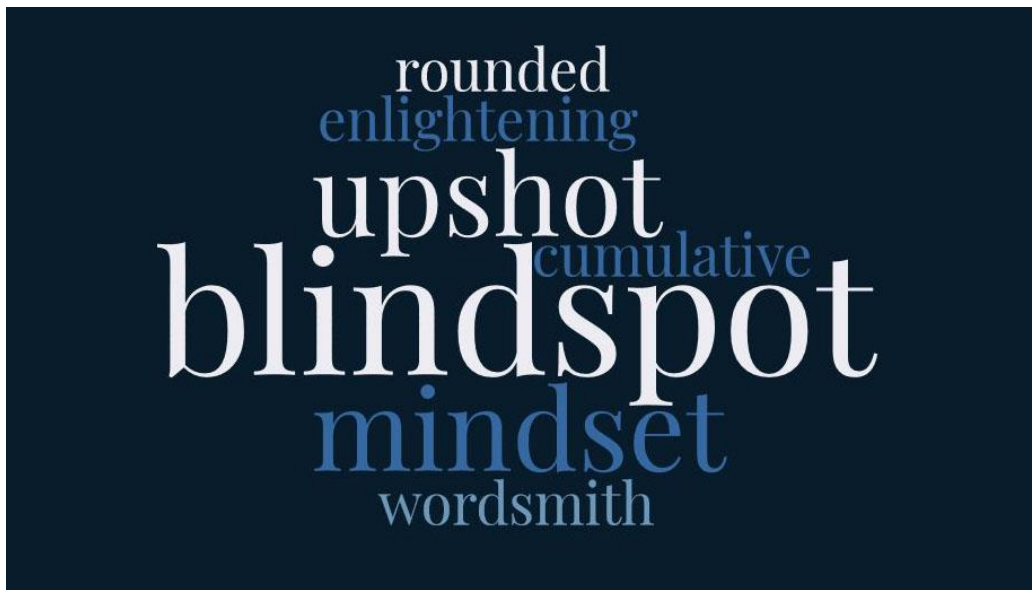
Task 1: Vocabulary



Read the vocabulary units in the table below and add your own examples to the ones that are given.

<p>A blind spot is a subject or an area about which one is ignorant or prejudiced.</p>	<p>Even great scientists have their blind spots. I can speak English fluently but grammar is my blind spot.</p>
<p>A mindset is a way of thinking characteristic of a person or a group of people.</p>	<p>This programme seeks to cultivate a humanitarian mindset. He has a solution-oriented mindset. They do not have a proper mindset to discuss financial issues.</p>
<p>When something is enlightening, it provides us with a deep understanding or an insight.</p>	<p>This lecture has been enlightening. That trip gave me an enlightening glimpse into Asian mindset.</p>
<p>When something is cumulative, it is formed by or results from accumulation or the addition of successive elements.</p>	<p>Human activity results in cumulative effect for the environment. Do not underestimate the power of cumulative efforts.</p>
<p>We used rounded in a variety of contexts to say that something is balanced, developed or complete.</p>	<p>I am not sure I can give a rounded opinion on the matter. After the talk he was able to form a rounded view of the project.</p>
<p>The upshot of something is its result or consequence.</p>	<p>The upshot of it all is that we'll have to start from scratch. The upshot of her argument was ...</p>

To encounter something or someone means to meet unexpectedly, often in a conflicting situation.	Be ready to encounter numerous obstacles. She was shocked to encounter such hostile attitude.
A wordsmith is someone who uses words expertly, usually a successful writer.	Toni Morrison is an acknowledged wordsmith. Your son is a budding wordsmith: he'll turn into an author one day.



Task 2: Discussion

Work in pairs. Ask each other the following questions and find out whether you have anything in common in these areas.

- ❖ What is your blind spot when learning languages?
- ❖ Do you think you have a humanitarian mindset?
- ❖ What kind of experiences would you call enlightening?
- ❖ What is the typical cumulative effect of using gadgets, lack of sleep and multitasking on you?
- ❖ Add your own questions, using the vocabulary above.

Task 3: Phrasal Verbs

Read the citations from Ann Morgan's TED talk. All of them contain phrasal verbs. Find equivalents for them in your first language.

To work out / to end up doing sth	After I'd worked out which of the many different lists of countries in the world to use for my project, I ended up going with the list of UN-recognized nations, to which I added Taiwan, which gave me a total of 196 countries.
To go about doing sth	Having spent my life reading almost exclusively British and North American books, I had no idea how to go about sourcing and finding stories and choosing them from much of the rest of the world.
To get hold of sth	And when I tweeted at it about my project, it suggested that I might like to try and get hold of the work of the Panamanian author Juan David Morgan.

Work in pairs. Think of a ridiculous book title and ask your partner how to find it, as in the example:

➤ I need to get hold of a book about (martial arts for dentists / gardening in space / famous shopaholics). How do I go about finding one?

Task 4: Idioms

Look at the idioms in the table below. Place the provided examples in a larger context, as in the example below.

To tell a different story	Your test results tell a different story.
To come as a shock	The news came as a shock to him.
To face up to the fact	Grow up and face up to the fact that parents can't solve all your problems for you.
From scratch	She did it from scratch.
To go to great lengths	They were prepared to go to great lengths to achieve it.
To go out of one's way	You really went out of your way to help me.

➤ I did a thorough revision before the test, I swear! - Your test results tell a different story.

Watch the whole TED talk online¹ and answer the questions:

1. How did Ann Morgan compile her list of books to read?
2. Why did she refer to herself as a “clueless literary xenophobe”?
3. How did different people help her in her quest?
4. What did she mean by “privileged glimpses of some remarkable imaginary worlds”?

Writing



If you were asked to recommend one book from your own country for Ann Morgan to read, which one would you recommend?

Write a short post for a social network about it.

Project

Book Challenge!



Another TED talker, Lisa Bu², reads books in pairs: e.g., about two different people involved in the same event, or similar stories in different genres or cultures. Different social media that specialise in books offer challenges and games for involved

readers.

Brainstorm ideas for individual reading challenges.

Choose one of the ideas you've generated and accept your own book challenge.



¹https://www.ted.com/talks/ann_morgan_my_year_reading_a_book_from_every_country_in_the_world

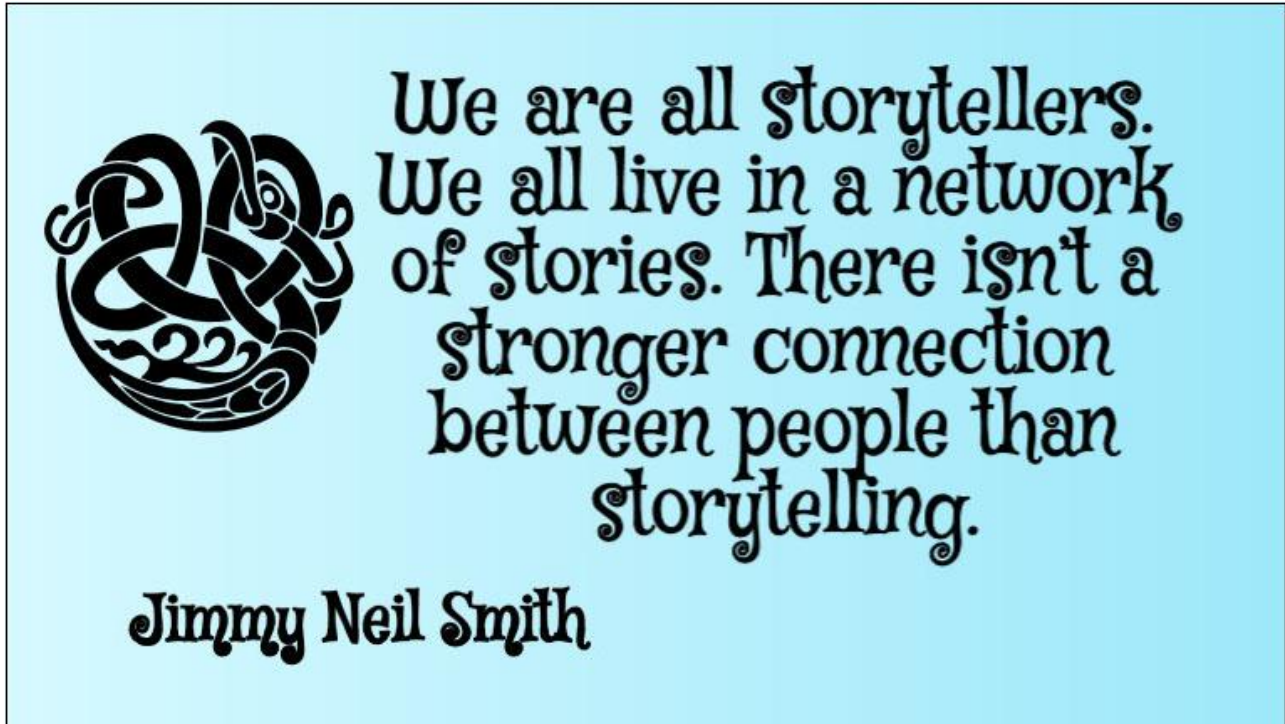
²https://www.ted.com/talks/lisa_bu_how_books_can_open_your_mind

UNIT 2

The Art of Storytelling: How to Spin a Yarn

Lead In

- ❖ Do you enjoy telling stories? Do you think you have a knack for it?
- ❖ Read the citation below and explain what it means. Do you agree or disagree?



Telling a Story



Neil Gaiman (born in 1960) is a British writer, famous for his short stories, fantasy novels (“Neverwhere”, “Stardust”, “American Gods”, “Coraline” and others), comic books and graphic novels. He has won several awards, including the Hugo, Nebula, Bram Stoker awards, the Newbery and Carnegie medals. He often makes public appearances and eagerly interacts with his fans via his blog and social media.

“**Fragile Things**” is a collection of short stories and poems published in 2006. Fiction in this volume ranges from fantasy, gothic, horror and magic realism to parody and science fiction. Abundance of allusions, typical of Neil

Gaiman’s prose, is also apparent in this collection. “Fragile Things” won the 2007 Locus Award for Best Collection, and “How to Talk to Girls at Parties” won for Best Short Story and was nominated for a Hugo Award.

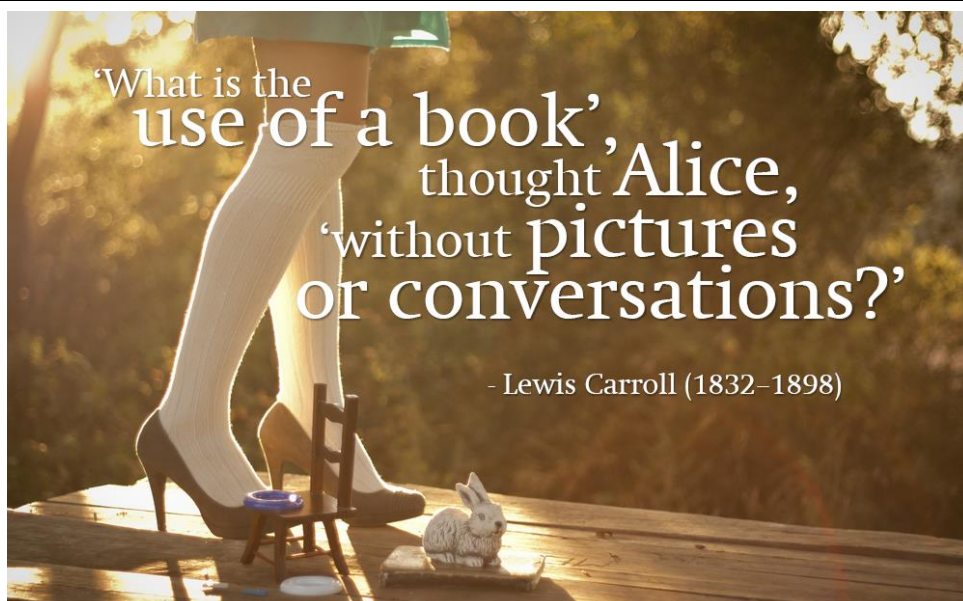
Read an excerpt from the story “October in the Chair”, in which personified twelve months gather to tell one another stories.

They looked at one another across the fire, the months of the year. June, hesitant and clean, raised her hand and said, “I have one about a guard on the X-ray machines at LaGuardia Airport, who could read all about people from the outlines of their luggage on the screen, and one day she saw a luggage X-ray so beautiful that she fell in love with the person, and she had to figure out which person in the line it was, and she couldn’t, and she pined for months and months. And when the person came through again she knew it this time, and it was the man, and he was a wizened old Indian man and she was pretty and black and, like, twenty-five, and she knew it would never work out and she let him go, because she could also see from the shapes of his bags on the screen that he was going to die soon.” October said, “Fair enough, young June. Tell that one.” June stared at him, like a spooked animal. “I just did,” she said. October nodded. “So you did,” he said, before any of the others could say anything. And then he said, “Shall we proceed to my story, then?”

Discussion



1. Why did October think that June was about to start her story when she had actually finished it?
2. When one tells a story, orally or in a written form, listeners or readers have certain expectations. What are these expectations? Do stories always come up to our expectations?



Brainstorm



Work in groups of 3 or 4 students. Brainstorm all the necessary components of a good story. When you have finished, compare your list to those of the other groups.

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciation Tips

The length of vowels in English is crucial for comprehension. Look at the list of words below and divide them into three groups, according to the vowel in the stressed syllable:

short vowels	long vowels	diphthongs
<i>Bass, deserve, good, novel, violin, oboe, technique, curve, bald, scarcely, focus, orchestra, old, threaten, contraption, either, glance, smooth, clumsy, famous, Hollywood, appear, fragrant, expound, timbre, would, incongruous, install, huge</i>		

Practise the pronunciation of these words in pairs. If there is a word that is difficult for you to remember, create a tongue-twister or a poem where it rhymes with a more familiar word.

Task 2: Choosing Tenses

Skillful storytelling requires expert use of tenses. Which tense is most often used in narrating stories? What other tenses can also be used and in which cases?

Read the first paragraph of the story below and comment on the usage of tenses in it.



Reading a short story

Read the story below or listen to the audio version of it. As you read or listen, note if this story includes all of the items on the list generated in your brainstorm session.

Judging by the title, the picture on the left and the first paragraph only, what do you expect this story to be about?

GOOD BOYS DESERVE FAVOURS

Neil Gaiman

My own children delight in hearing true tales from my childhood: The Time My Father Threatened to Arrest the Traffic Cop, How I Broke My Sister's Front Teeth Twice, When I Pretended to Be Twins, and even The Day I Accidentally Killed the Gerbil. I have never told them this story. I would be hard put to tell you quite why not.

When I was nine the school told us that we could pick any musical instrument we wanted. Some boys chose the violin, the clarinet, the oboe. Some chose the timpani, the pianoforte, the viola.

I was not big for my age, and I, alone in the Junior School, elected to play the double bass, chiefly because I loved the incongruity of the idea. I loved the idea of being a small boy, playing, delighting in, carrying around an instrument much taller than I was.

The double bass belonged to the school, and I was deeply impressed by it. I learned to bow, although I had little interest in bowing technique, preferring to pluck the huge metal strings by hand. My right index finger was permanently puffed with white blisters until the blisters eventually became calluses.

I delighted in discovering the history of the double bass: that it was no part of the sharp, scraping family of the violin, the viola, the 'cello; its curves were gentler, softer, more sloping; it was, in fact, the final survivor of an extinct family of instruments, the viol family, and was, more correctly, the bass viol.

I learned this from the double bass teacher, an elderly musician imported by the school to teach me, and also to teach a couple of senior boys, for a few hours each week. He was a clean-shaven man, balding and intense, with long, callused fingers. I would do all I could to make him tell me about the bass, tell me of his experiences as a session musician, of his life cycling around the country. He had a contraption attached to the back of his bicycle, on which his bass rested, and he pedaled sedately through the countryside with the bass behind him.

He had never married. Good double bass players, he told me, were men who made poor husbands. He had many such observations. There were no great male cellists – that's one I remember. And his opinion of viola players, of either sex, was scarcely repeatable.

He called the school double bass *she*. “She could do with a good coat of varnish,” he’d say. And “You take care of her, she’ll take care of you.”

I was not a particularly good double bass player. There was little enough that I could do with the instrument on my own, and all I remember of my enforced membership in the school orchestra was getting lost in the score and sneaking glances at the ’cellos beside me, waiting for them to turn the page, so I could start playing once more, punctuating the orchestral schoolboy cacophony with low, uncomplicated bass notes.

It has been too many years, and I have almost forgotten how to read music; but when I dream of reading music, I still dream in the bass clef¹. All Cows Eat Grass. Good Boys Deserve Favours Always.

After lunch each day, the boys who played instruments walked down to the music school and had music practice, while the boys who didn’t lay on their beds and read their books and their comics.

I rarely practiced. Instead I would take a book down to the music school and read it, surreptitiously, perched on my high stool, holding on to the smooth brown wood of the bass, the bow in one hand, the better to fool the casual observer. I was lazy and uninspired. My bowing scrubbed and scratched where it should have glided and boomed, my fingering was hesitant and clumsy. Other boys worked at their instruments. I did not. As long as I was sitting at the bass for half an hour each day, no one cared. I had the nicest, largest room to practice in, too, as the double bass was kept in a cupboard in the master music room.

Our school, I should tell you, had only one Famous Old Boy. It was part of school legend – how the Famous Old Boy had been expelled from the school after driving a sports car across the cricket pitch, while drunk, how he had gone on to fame and fortune – first as a minor actor in Ealing Comedies, then as the token English cad in any number of Hollywood pictures. He was never a true star but, during the Sunday afternoon film screening, we would cheer if ever he appeared.

When the door handle to the practice room clicked and turned, I put my book down on the piano and leaned forward, turning the page of the dog-eared *52 Musical Exercises for the Double Bass*, and I heard the headmaster say, “The music school was purpose-built of course. This is the master practice room...” and they came in.

They were the headmaster and the head of the music department (a faded, bespectacled man whom I rather liked) and the deputy head of the music department (who conducted the school orchestra, and disliked me cordially) and, there could be no mistaking it, the Famous Old Boy himself, in company with a fragrant fair woman who held his arm and looked as if she might also be a movie star.

I stopped pretending to play, and slipped off my high stool and stood up respectfully, holding the bass by the neck.

The headmaster told them about the soundproofing and the carpets and the fund-raising drive to raise the money to build the music school, and he stressed that the next stage of rebuilding would need significant further donations, and he was just beginning to expound upon the cost of double glazing when the fragrant woman said, “Just look at him. Is that cute or what?” and they all looked at me.

“That’s a big violin – be hard to get it under your chin,” said the Famous Old Boy, and everyone chortled dutifully.

“It’s so big,” said the woman. “And he’s so small. Hey, but we’re stopping you practicing. You carry on. Play us something.”

The headmaster and the head of the music department beamed at me, expectantly. The deputy head of the music department, who was under no illusions as to my musical skills, started to explain that the first violin was practicing next door and would be delighted to play for them and –

“I want to hear *him*,” she said. “How old are you, kid?”

“Eleven, Miss,” I said.

She nudged the Famous Old Boy in the ribs. “He called me ‘Miss,’” she said. This amused her. “Go on. Play us something.” The Famous Old Boy nodded, and they stood there and they looked at me.

The double bass is not a solo instrument, really, not even for the competent, and I was far from competent. But I slid my bottom up onto the stool again and crooked my fingers around the neck and picked up my bow, heart pounding like a timpani in my chest, and prepared to embarrass myself.

Even twenty years later, I remember.

I did not even look at *52 Musical Exercises for the Double Bass*. I played... something. It arched and boomed and sang and reverberated. The bow glided

over strange and confident arpeggios, and then I put down the bow and plucked a complex and intricate pizzicato melody out of the bass. I did things with the bass that an experienced jazz bass player with hands as big as my head would not have done. I played, and I played, and I played, tumbling down into the four taut metal strings, clutching the instrument as I had never clutched a human being. And, in the end, breathless and elated, I stopped.

The blonde woman led the applause, but they all clapped, even, with a strange expression on his face, the deputy head of music.

“I didn’t know it was such a versatile instrument,” said the headmaster. “Very lovely piece. Modern, yet classical. Very fine. Bravo.” And then he shepherded the four of them from the room, and I sat there, utterly drained, the fingers of my left hand stroking the neck of the bass, the fingers of my right caressing her strings.

Like any true story, the end of the affair is messy and unsatisfactory: the following day, carrying the huge instrument across the courtyard to the school chapel, for orchestra practice, in a light rain, I slipped on the wet bricks and fell forward. The wooden bridge of the bass was smashed, and the front was cracked.



It was sent away to be repaired, but when it returned it was not the same. The strings were higher, harder to pluck, the new bridge seemed to have been installed at the wrong angle. There was, even to my untutored ear, a change in the timbre. I had not taken care of her; she would no longer take care of me.

When, the following year, I changed schools, I did not continue with the double bass. The thought of changing to a new instrument seemed vaguely disloyal, while the dusty black bass that sat in a cupboard in my new school’s music rooms seemed to have taken a dislike to me. I was marked another’s. And I was tall enough now that there would be nothing incongruous about my standing behind the double bass.

And, soon enough, I knew, there would be girls.

Notes

1. A clef is a musical symbol that indicates the pitch of written notes on a stave.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did the boy choose the double bass? Was he good at playing it? 2. Who was the “Famous Old Boy”? 3. What happened during the Old Boy’s visit to the school? 4. What was the upshot of the accident in the courtyard?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did you enjoy the story? Why / Why not? 2. Did the story contain all of the elements on the list from your brainstorm session? 3. Why do you think the boy managed to play a beautiful piece on his double bass? 4. Have you ever had similar experiences with music or any other activity?

Language Practice

Task 3: Choosing Tenses

Read an excerpt from another story by Neil Gaiman and choose the correct tense forms.

For the record, I (not to expect) you to believe any of this. Not really. I (to be) a liar by trade, after all; albeit, I (to like) to think, an honest liar. If I (to belong) to a gentlemen’s club I (to recount) it over a glass or two of port late in the evening as the fire (to burn) low, but I (to be) a member of no such club, and I (to write) it better than ever I (to tell) it. So here you will learn of Miss Finch (whose name, as you already (to know), (not to be) Finch, nor anything like it, since I (to change) names here to disguise the guilty) and how it (to come about) that she (to be) unable to join us for sushi. Believe it or not, just as you (to wish). I (not to be) even certain that I (to believe) it anymore. It all (to seem) such a long way away. I (can) find a dozen beginnings. Perhaps it (to be) best to begin in a hotel room, in London, a few years ago. It (to be) 11:00 AM. The phone (to begin) to ring, which (to surprise) me. I (to hurry over) to answer it.

From “The Facts in the Case of the Departure of Miss Finch”

Task 4: Vocabulary in Use

Use the following words and expressions in your own sentences. Do not repeat the tenses that the other students have already used. Include appropriate time signals (at the moment, yesterday, already, since 2016, in the future, etc.) in your sentences.

The cumulative effect, a blind spot, to get hold of, the upshot of, to go to great length, a real wordsmith, to tell a different story, to get a rounded picture, a musician's mindset, from scratch, to encounter, to end up doing something, truly enlightening

Project

The Appeal of Incongruity



The protagonist of the story chose double bass because he felt it was incongruous for a small boy like himself. Think of similar situations in fiction / cinema / songs / poetry.

Collect several striking examples of incongruity and analyse the effect they create. Present the results of your research in class.



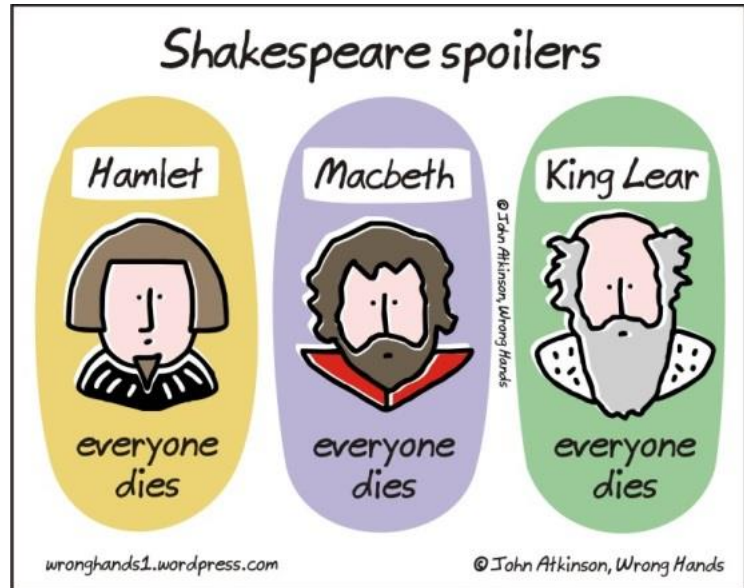
“The Boss Baby” (2017), loosely based on the 2010 picture book of the same name by Marla Frazee, focuses on a baby who behaves as an adult.

UNIT 3

Discussing Stories: Belief and Incredulity

Lead In

- ❖ When you read a book, are you desperate to know “what happened next”?
- ❖ Do you sometimes read the last pages before reading the whole novel?
- ❖ Can you predict what the story is going to be about after reading its prologue / first chapter?
- ❖ Do you prefer predictable storylines or unexpected “plot twists”?
- ❖ What is your attitude to “spoilers”?



Anticipating the Story

Read the excerpts from three prologues below. What would you expect to find in the corresponding novels? Can you predict their plots?

Each of us has a private Austen.

Jocelyn's Austen wrote wonderful novels about love and courtship, but never married. The book club was Jocelyn's idea, and she handpicked the members. She had more ideas in one morning than the rest of us had in a week, and more energy, too. It was essential to reintroduce Austen into your life regularly, Jocelyn said, let her look around. We suspected a hidden agenda, but who would put Jane Austen to an evil purpose?

("The Jane Austen Book Club" by Karen Joy Fowler)

How does one describe Artemis Fowl? Various psychiatrists have tried and failed. The main problem is Artemis's own intelligence. He bamboozles every test thrown at him. He has puzzled the greatest medical minds and sent many of them gibbering to their own hospitals.

There is no doubt that Artemis is a child prodigy. But why does someone of such brilliance dedicate himself to criminal activities? This is a question that can be answered by only one person. And he delights in not talking. Perhaps the best way to create an accurate picture of Artemis is to tell the by now famous account of his first villainous venture. I have put together this report from first-hand interviews with the victims, and as the tale unfolds you will realize that this was not easy.

The story began several years ago at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Artemis Fowl had devised a plan to restore his family's fortune. A plan that could topple civilizations and plunge the planet into a cross-species war. He was twelve years old at the time...

("Artemis Fowl" by Eoin Colfer)

The *Alexander*, with its cargo of convicts, had bucked over the face of the ocean for the better part of a year. Now it had fetched up at the end of the earth. There was no lock on the door of the hut where William Thornhill, transported for the term of his natural life in the Year of Our Lord eighteen hundred and six, was passing his first night in His Majesty's penal colony of New South Wales. There was hardly a door, barely a wall: only a flap of bark, a screen of sticks and mud. There was no need of lock, of door, of wall: this was a prison whose bars were ten thousand miles of water.

("The Secret River" by Kate Grenville)

Discussion



Work in pairs. Discuss your expectations for the novels which opening passages you've just read. Would you like to read any of them? Why / why not?

What can you guess about the genres of each novel? Compare your impressions.

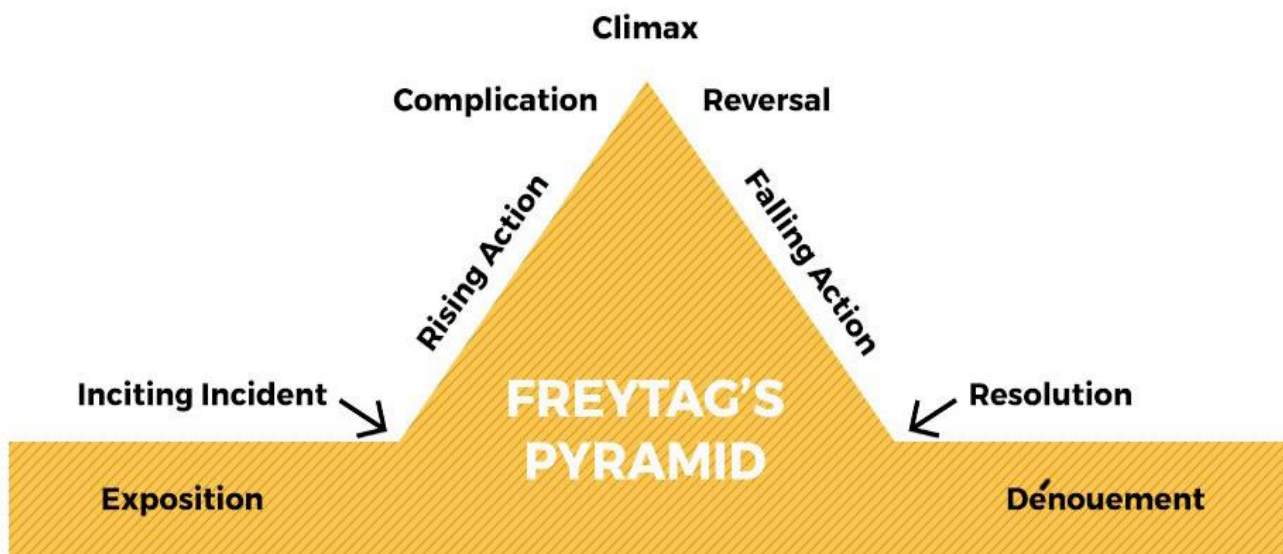
Understanding the Plot

The plot (or "the mythos" as Aristotle called it) in a narrative work or in drama is a sequence of events and actions, arranged in a certain way to

achieve an artistic effect. The term “plot” is sometimes used interchangeably with the “story”, although there is a distinction. **The story** refers to the summary of the events in their chronological order, while **the plot** also comprises their specific narrative arrangement.

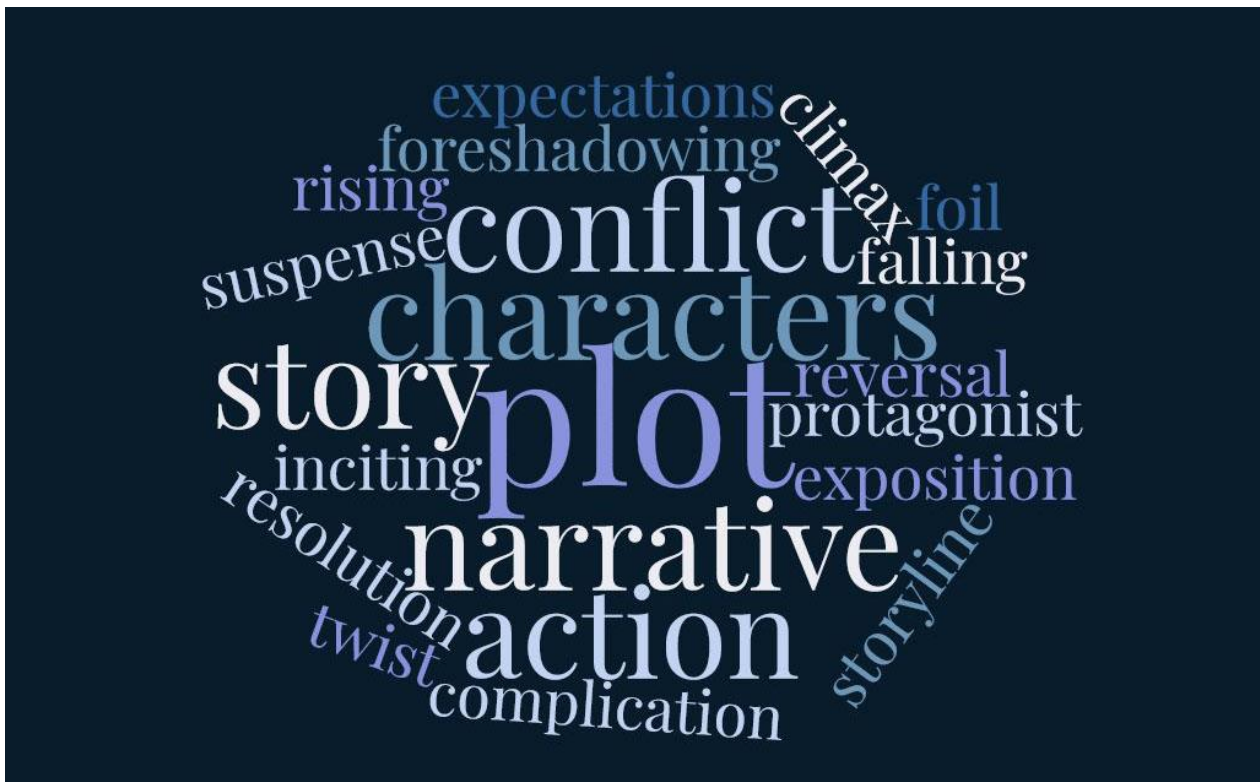
As the plot **unravels**, it arouses certain expectations in the reader about the future course of events and characters’ actions. A mental state of **suspense**, caused by a lack of certainty about what is going to happen, maintains the reader’s interest. If the subsequent events violate the reader’s **expectations**, it is known as surprise or a twist. Plots of fictional works rely heavily on the interplay of suspense and surprise.

The components of the plot event are **incidents**, while a smaller storyline within the general plot is called a **subplot**. The sequence of events in a story is traditionally described with the help of **Freytag’s Pyramid** (after the German theatre critic Gustav Freytag, who devised it for dramatic works). According to it, the typical plot consists of an **exposition**, **rising action**, **climax**, **falling action** and **dénouement**. Another term for rising action is **complication**, which can be initiated with “**the inciting incident**”. Falling action may involve a reversal: a significant change in the characters’ fortunes. **Resolution** is another term for the **dénouement**.



Sometimes the narrative starts **in medias res**, “in the middle of things”. **Flashbacks** relate events that happened before the narrative starting point, while technique of **foreshadowing** gives a hint of what will come later.

Depending on their role in the story, characters may be referred to as **major** and **minor**. The main character is called **the protagonist** (also the **hero / heroine**), while their main opponent is the **antagonist**. The latter can also be the **adversary**, **nemesis** or **villain** (if he or she is considered evil). A character who, by contrast, highlights the distinctive features of the protagonist is a **foil**. The relation between the protagonist and the antagonist takes form of a **conflict**.



Task 1

Read the summaries below and decide which one is “the plot” and which is “the story”.

Jane Austen’s “Sense and Sensibility” follows the lives of the Dashwood sisters, Elinor, Marianne and Margaret, as they are forced to move with their widowed mother from the estate on which they grew up to a cottage on the property of a distant relative. The two older sisters experience love and heartbreak before finally they get happily married.

When Mr. Henry Dashwood dies, leaving all his money to his first wife’s son John Dashwood, his second wife and her three daughters are left with no permanent home and very little income. Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters (Elinor, Marianne, and Margaret) are invited to stay with their

distant relations, the Middletons, at Barton Park. Elinor is sad to leave their home at Norland because she has become closely attached to Edward Ferrars, the brother-in-law of her half-brother John. However, once at Barton Park, Elinor and Marianne discover many new acquaintances, including the retired officer and bachelor Colonel Brandon, and the gallant and impetuous John Willoughby, who rescues Marianne after she twists her ankle running down the hills of Barton in the rain. Willoughby openly and unabashedly courts Marianne, and together the two flaunt their attachment to one another, until Willoughby suddenly announces that he must depart for London on business, leaving Marianne lovesick and miserable.

(see SparkNotes on “Sense and Sensibility” for the whole summary)

Task 2

Think of famous novels you have read (“Pride and Prejudice”, “The Lord of the Rings”, “The Catcher in the Rye”, etc.) Name protagonists, antagonists, major and minor characters in these books. Did any of the characters serve as a foil to the protagonist?

Task 3

Apply Freitag’s pyramid to the story “Good Boys Deserve Favours” by Neil Gaiman or another story known to everyone in your class. Draw a diagram in your notebook or on the board.

Task 4

Read the excerpts below. Identify the devices used in them.

Root glared at her. “I don’t know why it is, Captain Short, but whenever you start agreeing with me, I get decidedly nervous.”

Root was right to be nervous. If he’d known how this straightforward Recon assignment was going to turn out, he would probably have retired there and then. Tonight, history was going to be made. And it wasn’t the discovery-of-radium, first-man-on-the-moon happy kind of history. It was the Spanish-Inquisition, here-comes-the-Hindenburg bad kind of history. Bad for humans and fairies. Bad for everyone.

(from “Artemis Fowl” by Eoin Colfer)

When sunlight reaches the foot of the dressing table, you get up and look through the suitcase again. It's hot in New York but it may turn cold in winter. All morning the bantarn cocks have crowed. It's not something you will miss.

You must dress and wash, polish your shoes. Outside, dew lies on the fields, white and blank as pages. Soon the sun will bum it off. It's a fine day for the hay.

In her bedroom your mother is moving things around, opening and closing doors. You wonder what it will be like for her when you leave. Part of you doesn't care.

(from "The Parting Gift" by Claire Keegan)

Your mother didn't want a big family. Sometimes, when she lost her temper, she told you she would put you in a bucket, and drown you. As a child you imagined being taken by force to the edge of the Slaney River, being placed in a bucket, and the bucket being flung out from the bank, floating for a while before it sank. As you grew older you knew it was only a figure of speech, and then you believed it was just an awful thing to say. People sometimes said awful things.

("The Parting Gift" by Claire Keegan)

Discussing Stories and their Plots



Karen Joy Fowler (born in 1950) is an American author, whose fiction often deals with the lives of women and questions traditional gender roles. She also writes science fiction and fantasy. She is best known for her novel "The Jane Austen Book Club" (2004) that was made into a film of the same name.

"**The Jane Austen Book Club**" centres on the lives of 6 major characters, who gather regularly to discuss Jane Austen's novels. Jocelyn and Sylvia are in their fifties. They have been friends since school. Jocelyn has never married and she is very fond of dogs. She

organizes the book club to distract Sylvia from her sorrow (her husband, Daniel, has recently left her). Allegra, Sylvia's daughter, is a passionate young woman. She is an artist and an adrenaline addict who enjoys rock climbing and skydiving. Bernadette is a cheerful and talkative yoga enthusiast in her sixties, who has been married many times and is quite satisfied with her lifestyle. Prudie is a 28-year-old French teacher at a local high school, who is happily married but sometimes feels attracted to her students. Grigg, the only male member of the book club, is in his forties and he is an avid science fiction fan. The excerpt below is taken from the episode in which the characters are engrossed in a discussion of "Sense and Sensibility" hosted by Allegra.

Read the excerpt and compare their attitudes to Jane Austen's text.

"Austen's minor characters are really wonderful," said Grigg. "Good as Dickens's." Sylvia was very glad to have Grigg speaking right up this way. She wouldn't have taken issue for the world, and anyway, what was there to possibly take issue with? There were authors whose names she didn't like to use in the same sentence with Austen's, but Dickens had written some very good books in his day. Especially *David Copperfield*.

"And speaking of Dickens," Grigg said – were they never to be done speaking of Dickens! – "I was trying to think of contemporary writers who devote that same care to the secondary characters, and it occurred to me that it's a common sitcom device.

You can just imagine how today Austen would be writing "The Elinor Show," with Elinor as the solid moral centre and the others stumbling into and out of her New York apartment with their wacky lives."

Sylvia could imagine no such thing. It was all very well to point out fairy-tale themes in Austen; Sylvia had done this herself. *Pride and Prejudice* as "Beauty and the Beast". *Persuasion* as "Cinderella," et cetera, et cetera. It was even all right to suggest that Dickens also did well what Austen did superbly. But "The Elinor Show"! *She did not think so*. What a waste those eyelashes were on a man who watched sitcoms.

Even Bernadette was silent with disapproval. The rain drummed on the roof, the fire sputtered. The women looked at their hands or at the fire, but *not* at one another. It was Allegra who finally spoke.

“Good as the secondary characters are, I do think Austen gets better at them in her later books. The women – Mrs. Jennings, Mrs. Palmer, and that other one – are kind of a mishmash. Hard to keep straight. And I loved Mr. Palmer’s acid tongue, but then he reforms and disappears very disappointingly.”

In fact, Allegra had instantly recognized herself in the sour Mr. Palmer. She, too, often thought of sharp things to say, and she said them more often than she wished. Mr. Palmer didn’t suffer fools and neither did Allegra, but it wasn’t something she was proud of. It didn’t spring, as Austen suggested, from the desire to appear superior, unless lack of patience was a superior quality. “Plus” – Allegra allowed herself one more moment’s irritation over the silencing of Mr. Palmer – “I do think *Sense and Sensibility* stretches our credulity at the end. I mean, the sudden marriage of Robert Ferrars and Lucy Steele! The later books are more smoothly plotted.”

“It requires some hand-waving,” Grigg agreed. (That stern moment of silence utterly lost on him! What would it take?) “You see, of course, the effect Austen’s going for, that moment of misdirection, but you wish she hadn’t had to go to such lengths for it.”

The Austen-bashing was getting out of hand. Sylvia looked to Jocelyn, whose face was stoic, her voice calm but firm. “I think Austen explains it very well. My credulity remains unstretched.”

“I don’t have any trouble with it,” Sylvia said.

“Perfectly in character,” said Prudie.

Allegra frowned in her pretty way, chewing on a fingernail. You could see that she worked with her hands. Her nails were short, and the skin around them rough and dry. You could see that she took things to heart. Hangnails had been teased loose and then stripped, leaving painful peeled bits by her thumbs. Prudie would have liked to take her somewhere for a manicure. When your fingers were long and tapered like that, you might as well make the most of them.

“I suppose,” Allegra conceded, “if the writer’s not allowed to pull an occasional rabbit out of a hat, there would be no fun in writing a book at all.”

[...]

“Sense and Sensibility features one of Austen’s favourite characters – the handsome debaucher,” Jocelyn said. “She’s very suspicious of good-looking men, I think. Her heroes tend to be actively nondescript.” Twirling her glass so the ruby-coloured wine rose in thin sheets and fell again. Daniel was a nondescript man, though Jocelyn wouldn’t say it and Sylvia would never concede it. Of course, in Austenworld, that was all to his credit.

“Except for Darcy,” Prudie said.

“We haven’t gotten to Darcy yet.” There was a warning in Jocelyn’s voice. Prudie took it no further.

“Her heroes have better hearts than her villains. They’re deserving. Edward is good people,” said Bernadette.

“Well, of course,” in Allegra’s smoothest, most melodious tones. Probably only her mother and Jocelyn would know how impatient such an obvious point made her. Allegra took a gulp of wine so big Jocelyn could hear it going down.

“In real life,” said Grigg, “women want the heel, not the soul.” He spoke with great bitterness, eyelashes pumping. Jocelyn knew a lot of men who believed this. Women don’t want nice men, they cry out over beers, to any woman nice enough to listen. They condemn themselves loudly, lamenting their uncontrollable, damnable niceness. In fact, when you got to know these men better, lots of them weren’t as nice as they believed themselves to be. There was no percentage in pointing this out.

“But Austen’s not entirely unsympathetic to Willoughby in the end,” Bernadette said. “I love that bit where he confesses to Elinor. You can feel Austen softening just the way Elinor does, in spite of herself. She won’t allow that he’s a good person, because he’s not, but she lets you feel for him, just for a moment. She has to balance it on a knife edge – too much and you’ll be wishing him with Marianne after all.”

“Structurally that confession bookends the long story Brandon tells her.” Another writerly observation from Allegra. Corinne¹ might be gone, Jocelyn thought, but her ghost certainly remained, reading Allegra’s books, making Allegra’s points. Perhaps Jocelyn had been too hard on Allegra earlier. She’d neglected to factor in Corinne when calculating the loss of Daniel. Poor darling.

“Poor Elinor! Willoughby on one side, Brandon on the other. She is quite *entre deux feux*².” Prudie had a bit of lipstick on her teeth, or else it was wine. Jocelyn wanted to lean across and wipe it off with a napkin, the way she did when Sahara³ needed tidying.

But she restrained herself; Prudie didn’t belong to her. The fire sculpted Prudie’s face, left the hollows of her cheeks hollow, brightened her deep-set eyes.

She wasn’t pretty like Allegra, but she was attractive in an interesting way. She drew your eye. She would probably age well, like Anjelica Huston. If only she would stop speaking French. Or go to France, where it would be less noticeable.

“And Lucy, too,” Bernadette said. “Something about Elinor. Everyone wants to tell her their secrets. She encourages intimacy without meaning to.”



“Why doesn’t Brandon fall in love with her, I wonder?” Jocelyn asked. Jocelyn would never second-guess Austen, not in a million years, but that was the match she would have tried to make. “They’re perfect for each other.”



“No, he needs Marianne’s animation,” said Allegra. “Because he has none of his own.”

Notes

1. Corinne is Allegra’s ex-girlfriend, a writer. She used Allegra’s private stories in her writing without her permission.
2. *Entre deux feux* (French) – between two fires.
3. Sahara is Jocelyn’s dog.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did the women look at their hands or at the fire, but not at one another? What made the discussion awkward? 2. What did Grigg mean when he said “women want the heel, not the soul”? 3. How did Sylvia feel about “Austen-bashing”? 4. What do we learn about the characters’ attitude to one another?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think that Grigg approaches Austen with a different mindset as compared to those of the women in the book club? 2. What is your opinion about “stretching one’s credulity”? Do you sometimes feel that certain stories stretch your own credulity? 3. Allegra easily identifies with Austen’s characters. Do you also “recognize” yourself in fictional heroes / heroines? If so, give an example.

Language Practice



Task 1: Vocabulary

Read the vocabulary units in the table below and add your own examples to the ones that are given.

<p>We can talk of moral centre in our brain or personality, as well as in a certain area (business, education, fiction, etc.) It presupposed a certain code of ethics that defines what is right and wrong.</p>	<p>Scientists argue whether our brain has a moral centre. Albus Dumbledore is the moral centre of the Harry Potter novels.</p>
<p>A mishmash is collection or a variety of miscellaneous things.</p>	<p>There is a mishmash of bizarre characters in the series, but as the plot unfolds we realize that most of them are rounded and quite complicated.</p>

<p>A nondescript person or thing lack in distinctive features or characteristics.</p>	<p>She seems quite nondescript at first, but now I see she has her own style. It was just another nondescript novel I read and immediately forgot about.</p>
<p>To second-guess something is to criticize or correct it in hindsight, after its outcome is already known.</p>	<p>It's problematic to try and second-guess the jury's judgment: that trial took place half a century ago.</p>
<p>When we concede (a make a concession), we admit that others may be right / we may be wrong. It also means to acknowledge defeat.</p>	<p>I reluctantly conceded that I had made a mistake. In a debate, one should always make concessions to the opposing opinion.</p>
<p>To be (un)sympathetic to something or someone means (not) to be favourably inclined or (not) to understand and support. Sympathetic characters in fiction make readers feel for them, while unsympathetic fail to get their sympathy.</p>	<p>The headmistress has always been very sympathetic to our project. Kafka's characters are often thought to be quite unsympathetic.</p>
<p>When something stretches our credulity, we find it hard to believe it. It is often used when discussing storylines and plot twists.</p>	<p>The film has so many of plot holes that it stretches the audience's credulity to the limit. Scenes that offer no motivation for characters to act as they do usually stretch my credulity.</p>
<p>Hand-waving in general terms is a pejorative term referring to an attempt to make something appear reasonable and logical when it is clearly not so. In literary terms, it refers to a plot device which stretches readers' credulity.</p>	<p>When there is a major conflict in a book, one can't just resolve it by means of hand-waving, resulting in some sloppy deus ex machina. If this happens, it will definitely stretch readers' credulity.</p>

Task 2

Read the information about **willing suspension of disbelief** given below. Answer the following questions, using the vocabulary above.

- ❖ Is the state of immersion in a fictional world familiar to you? What is required to maintain this state?
- ❖ Can you think of “unwritten rules” that account for our “belief” in the story?

Willing suspension of disbelief is a term introduced by S.T. Coleridge to describe the reader’s ability to “suspend” judgment of the plausibility of the story, if the writer manages to create “human interest and a semblance of truth”. Nowadays, the term is freely applied to fiction, cinema, theatre, art, etc. to point out that we are ready to “believe” the story that we read or watch, as long as we are “transported” by it, that is immersed in a fictional world. J.R.R. Tolkien argued that to achieve this writers must use imagination to give “the inner consistency of reality” to their fictional worlds. Most recipients feel that certain rules (often unwritten) should be observed in order to uphold this consistency. Another term that describes the state of immersion into a created world is “aesthetic illusion”.



Task 3

Match the idioms in the table below with their definitions. Think of equivalents in your first language.

To take issue with (someone or something)	To do something seemingly impossible and surprising; to produce something in a way that has no obvious explanation, as if done by magic.
To keep (something) straight (in one’s mind/head)	To disagree or to challenge.
In character / out of character	To become chaotic and difficult to manage.

To get out of hand	To exploit something to the maximum; to get as much out of something as is possible.
To take things to heart	To act in a way that is (in)consistent with one's typical or expected behaviour.
To make the most of something	Used to talk about something unnoticed, unappreciated or not having effect on someone.
To pull a rabbit out of one's / the hat	To takes things seriously, to be influenced and affected by them.
To be lost on someone	To understand something clearly; not to be confused; to keep the details of something in one's mind.

Retell the following situations using the idioms above:

- This project is getting so out of control. I can barely remember all the details. To make matters worse, the team manager questions my methods. I know I shouldn't take his criticism seriously, but I still do. Unless someone can do a magic trick, we'll have to drop it and start from scratch.
- I hate it when sitcom characters suddenly start acting differently from what we are used to. Screenwriters just exploit every possible funny situation, disregarding the continuity. It always stretches my credulity, but it seems like this hand-waving is lost on most viewers. I guess I just take this too seriously – I need to learn to suspend my disbelief and just enjoy the show.

Writing



Although narration in fiction usually deploys past tenses, **plot summaries** are written mostly in the present. Write a short plot summary of a famous book or film using the Present Simple. The list of phrases below will help you to structure your summary, although you are not required to use them all.

Read the summary to your classmates without mentioning the characters' name and let them guess the book. Be careful with spoilers – make sure you use the stories that everyone already knows.

[The novel] tells the story of a... / follows the life of...

The story is set in...

The story is narrated by...

[The protagonist / the narrator] begins her story at...

The story opens with...

At the outset of the tale...

Soon... / Shortly after... / Twenty years later... / At this moment...

As the plot unfolds / unravels, we learn that...

As [the protagonist] travels to..., s/he discovers that... / encounters...

Eventually [the protagonist] decides to...

Finally... / In the end...

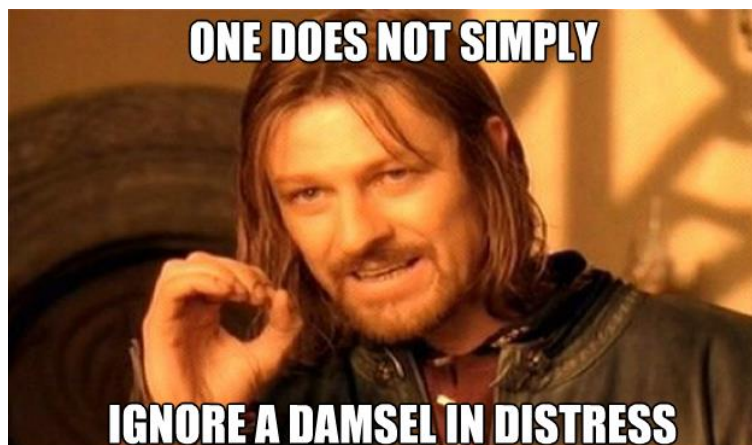
In the epilogue it is revealed that...

Project

Discover TV Tropes



TV Tropes is a website that collects various plot devices and conventions (also known as tropes) from creative works, such as film and television (which was the site's initial focus), as well as literature, mythology, drama, music, comics, manga, video games, music, advertisements and toys. The site provides both the explanation of tropes and their examples across the media. Each trope has a descriptive name, such as **Brainless Beauty**, **Damsel in Distress**, **Dark and Troubled Past**, **Foolish Sibling Responsible Sibling**, **Gold Digger**, **Knight in Shining Armor**, **Not What It Looks Like**, **Wide-Eyed Idealist** and so on. Research the site and choose one of the tropes to study in more detail. Present the examples of this trope in different creative works. Alternatively, you can focus on one work and single out several tropes in it. In conclusion, describe how these tropes affect our suspension of disbelief.



UNIT 4

Diversity of Places: Down the River of History

Lead In

- ❖ Do you prefer stories set in the past / future / contemporary context? Explain your answer and give examples.
- ❖ What, in your opinion, do descriptions of places in fiction add to the narrative?
- ❖ If you could read any book in the place where it is set (e.g., “Ulysses” by James Joyce in Dublin, “Notre Dame de Paris” by Victor Hugo in Paris, etc.), which one would you choose and why?
- ❖ Is it easy for you to visualise an imaginary place as you read a book? When you watch a film adaptation of a book you have read, do you sometimes realise that you saw it differently?



Exploring the Setting

The overall setting of a narrative work is the general place, historical time and social circumstances in which its story unfolds. The setting of a single episode within the work is the specific **location** in which it takes place. For instance, the overall setting of “Mrs. Dalloway” by Virginia Woolf is London on a day in June, 1923 (with the exception of flashbacks that introduce other times and places), while settings for various scenes and sequences in the novel comprise a number of specific locations (streets, shops, houses, etc.) in London on different times of the day. Settings in stories can be **real** or **fictional**. Sometimes they are combinations of both, as in the Harry Potter series. Spatial and temporal parameters are crucial for the **plot** arrangement. Besides, settings are often important for creating the **atmosphere** of the narrative work, e.g., as mysterious castles or ruined abbeys contribute greatly to the macabre atmosphere in gothic fiction. In many cases, settings play a significant role in **characterisation**. Sometimes places in fiction turn into

characters themselves, particularly houses and other dwellings. In works that depend on elaborated **secondary worlds**, as it often happens in epic fantasy fiction, settings can encompass whole continents, complete with their geography, history, folklore and social stratification.

Task 1

Look at the descriptions of typical settings in the table below. Can you think of stories that match them?

The novel is a love story set against the backdrop of a military conflict.
The novel describes a post-apocalyptic world where a small group of survivors desperately struggles for survival.
The novel follows the life of a castaway who spends many years on a remote tropical island.

Task 2

Read the excerpt from “A Song of Ice and Fire” by George Martin below and say which role the setting (Winterfell’s godswood) plays in it.

Catelyn had never liked this godswood.

She had been born a Tully, at Riverrun far to the south, on the Red Fork of the Trident. The godswood there was a garden, bright and airy, where tall redwoods spread dappled shadows across tinkling streams, birds sang from hidden nests, and the air was spicy with the scent of flowers.

The gods of Winterfell kept a different sort of wood. It was a dark, primal place, three acres of old forest untouched for ten thousand years as the gloomy castle rose around it. It smelled of moist earth and decay. No redwoods grew here. This was a wood of stubborn sentinel trees armored in grey-green needles, of mighty oaks, of ironwoods as old as the realm itself. Here thick black trunks crowded close together while twisted branches wove a dense canopy overhead and misshapen roots wrestled beneath the soil. This was a place of deep silence and brooding shadows, and the gods who lived here had no names.

But she knew she would find her husband here tonight. Whenever he took a man’s life, afterward he would seek the quiet of the godswood.

Look at the still of the screen adaptation of the book below. Do you like such visual depiction of the godswood?



Catelyn and Ned Stark in the godswood (HBO TV series, 2011)

Discussion



Work in pairs. Discuss the issues below and then share your summarised conclusions with the rest of the class.

What does the setting in the episode above contribute to the character of Catelyn Stark?

Do you remember other characters (in “A Song of Ice and Fire” or other books) that are inextricable from certain places, as, for example, Mr. Darcy and his mansion Pemberly?

Changing Settings

Kate Grenville (born in 1950) is an Australian author of fiction, non-fiction and biography. Her books have been awarded many prizes, including the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize and Britain’s Orange Prize. Her historical novel “**The Secret River**” (2005) focuses on the interaction between the Aboriginal people of Australia and first European settlers. It tells the story of William Thornhill, a poor Londoner who was sentenced to death for stealing wood, but later his sentence was changed to transportation to New South Wales for the term of his natural life. Thornhill went to Australia with his wife Sal and children. Gradually he managed to buy freedom and start his life from scratch on a patch of land by the Hawkesbury River (the Secret River of the title).

Kate Grenville wrote the novel as an attempt to understand the life of her own ancestor and to atone to the Aboriginals for the crimes committed against them by European settlers. The novel was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and is now often included in Australian school curricula.



Kate (Kate Grenville) by Jenny Sages (2012)

Read the two excerpts from the novel and compare the protagonist's impressions of the new land in the first and in the second episode.

Episode 1

(Thornhill and his family have just arrived in Australia)

Thornhill's wife was sleeping sweet and peaceful against him, her hand still entwined in his. The child and the baby were asleep too, curled up together. Only Thornhill could not bring himself to close his eyes on this foreign darkness. Through the doorway of the hut he could feel the night, huge and damp, flowing in and bringing with it the sounds of its own life: tickings and creakings, small private rustlings, and beyond that the sougning of the forest, mile after mile.

When he got up and stepped out through the doorway there was no cry, no guard: only the living night. The air moved around him, full of rich dank smells. Trees stood tall over him. A breeze shivered through the leaves, then died, and left only the vast fact of the forest.

He was nothing more than a flea on the side of some enormous quiet creature. Down the hill the settlement was hidden by the darkness. A dog barked in a tired way and stopped. From the bay where the *Alexander* was anchored there was a sense of restless water shifting in its bed of land and swelling up against the shore.

Above him in the sky was a thin moon and a scatter of stars as meaningless as spilt rice. There was no Pole Star, a friend to guide him on the Thames, no Bear that he had known all his life: only this blaze, unreadable, indifferent.

All the many months in the *Alexander*, lying in the hammock which was all the territory he could claim in the world, listening to the sea slap against the side of the ship and trying to hear the voices of his own wife, his own children, in the noise from the women's quarters, he had been comforted by telling over the bends of his own Thames. The Isle of Dogs¹, the deep eddying pool of Rotherhithe, the sudden twist of the sky as the river swung around the corner to Lambeth: they were all as intimate to him as breathing. Daniel Ellison grunted in his hammock beside him, fighting even in his sleep, the women were silent beyond their bulkhead, and still in the eye of his mind he rounded bend after bend of that river.

Now, standing in the great sighing lung of this other place and feeling the dirt chill under his feet, he knew that life was gone. He might as well have swung at the end of the rope they had measured for him. This was a place, like death, from which men did not return. It was a sharp stab like a splinter under a nail: the pain of loss. He would die here under these alien stars, his bones rot in this cold earth.

He had not cried, not for thirty years, not since he was a hungry child too young to know that crying did not fill your belly. But now his throat was thickening, a press of despair behind his eyes forcing warm tears down his cheeks.

There were things worse than dying: life had taught him that. Being here in New South Wales might be one of them.

Episode 2

(Much later, when Thornhill is already free and living with his family on a small piece of land in the forest by the river. The possession of the land is contested by the natives. His wife Sal informs him that she has seen the Aboriginal people nearby).

They are, she said, out there now this very minute. Watching us, biding their time. Her voice was light, as though she were discussing the weather. They ain't going nowhere, she said. They ain't never going. And mark my words, Will, they'll get us in the end if we stop here.

No call to give up on account of a few savages, he said. He forced himself to speak as calmly as she did. Anyroad^p, I got something in mind for if they come back.

But this whipped her into feeling. It ain't if they come back, she cried. You're a fool if you think that, Will Thornhill. It ain't if but when.

He put out his hand to touch her, but she ignored it. We got to go, Will, she said. She was gentle with him, like someone breaking bad news. Don't matter where, but we got to get them children on the boat and go. She glanced over at where Willie and Dick stood watching. Dick shook his head, but he might have been getting rid of a fly. While we still got the chance, Will. Today.

For a moment Thornhill tried to imagine it: turning his back on that clearing carved out of the wilderness by months of sweat. Letting some other man have it in exchange for nothing more than a few numbers on a piece of paper, some other man who would walk over it, smiling to himself at all its possibilities.

He knew his place now, by day and by night, knew how it behaved in rain and wind, under sun and under moon. He thought his way along all those green reaches of the river, those gold and grey cliffs, the whistle of the river-oaks, that sky.

He remembered how it had been that first night, the fearsome strangeness of the place. Those cold stars had become old friends: the Cross, nearly as good as the Pole to steer a course by, the Pointers, and the Frying-pan, which was nothing more than Orion, only upside down. He could tell over the bends of the Hawkesbury the way he had once been able to tell over the bends of the Thames.

He tried to show himself the picture he had so often thought of, the neat little house in Covent Garden, himself strolling out of a morning to make sure his

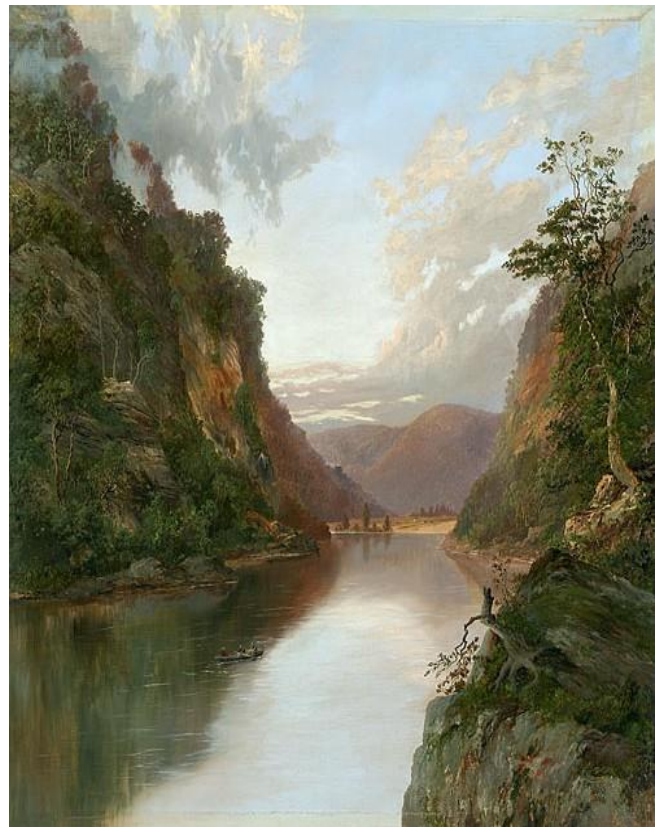
apprentices were sweating for him and that no man was stealing from him. But he could not really remember what that air had been like, or the touch of that English rain, could no longer quite believe in those streets. White's Grounds, Crucifix Lane. The picture he and Sal had carried around with them and handed backwards and forwards to each other was clear enough, but it had nothing to do with him.

He was no longer the person who thought that a little house in Swan Lane and a wherry of his own was all a man might desire. It seemed that he had become another man altogether. Eating the food of this country, drinking its water, breathing its air, had remade him, particle by particle. This sky, those cliffs, that river were no longer the means by which he might return to some other place. This was where he was: not just in body, but in soul as well.

A man's heart was a deep pocket he might turn out and be amazed at what he found there.

The sun had risen now, high enough to brush the crests of the trees on the cliff, puff-balls of brilliant green glowing against the shadows. The white parrots all rose at once out of the tree they roosted in and spread like a scatter of sand into the sky, the sun catching the brightness of their wings.



Beyond the cluster of people waiting for him to speak, the cliffs hung over the river, mysterious, colourless in the early morning shadows. At this hour the cliffs were a coarse cloth, the weft of the layers of rock, the



warp of the trees straggling upwards. Beyond the ragged line of tree-tops, the sky was a sweet blue. A sudden gust of wind on the river ruffled it into points of light and the forest heaved under the morning breeze.

Notes

1. The Isle of Dog, Rotherhithe, Lambeth are places in London on the Thames, where Thornhill used to work carrying passengers in a wherry (a type of a passenger or cargo boat).
2. Anyroad = anyway.
3. The picture is “Hawkesbury River” by William Piguenit (1881).

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What aspects of the new land make it alien for the protagonist at the outset of the story?2. What is always on his mind?3. What is Sal’s attitude to the situation with the natives? What does she encourage her husband to do?4. How have Thorhill’s memories and dreams changed?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How has Thorhill’s perception of Australia changed? What has brought this change about?2. Compare the two rivers that are depicted in the episodes. What is their importance to the protagonist?3. Have you ever experienced a similar change: a new place seemed hostile at first, but you ended up loving it? Talk briefly about your altered perception of this place.

Read the excerpt from Geraldine Bedell’s review of “The Secret River” written for The Guardian. What, according to the reviewer, is Thornhill’s driving force?

“Once freed, Thornhill falls in love with a point of land up the Hawkesbury River with the visceral desire for ownership of someone who has never been allowed to own anything. He dreams of his own hundred acres, of dignity and entitlement. It never crosses his mind, since the land is not settled, that it could already be owned. Grenville writes exactly and with passion about the Australian landscape: the bright light, the skinny, grey-green trees that refuse to shed their leaves, the cliffs that tumble into the river through snaking mangroves. Thornhill recognises that this is a landscape that can remake a man.”

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciations Tips

English words with “c” of Latin origin may be problematic for learners whose first languages have a different sound in the corresponding words. For instance, a lot of such words are pronounced with the /ts/ sound in Slavonic languages. The examples include centre (from Latin centrum), process (from Latin prōcessus), crucifix (from Late Latin crucifīxus), civil / civilisation (from Latin cīvīlis), discipline (from Latin disciplīna), concession (from Latin concessiō, concession) and so on. Unlike Slavonic languages, the English sound for “c” in these words is invariably /s/.

Work in pairs. Practise pronouncing the following words on their own and in brief sentences.

**centre, process, concession, crucifix, per cent, procession, cylinder,
discipline, civilisation, citrus, cynical**

Task 2: Idioms

Finish the sentences below using the following expressions. In some cases it is possible to use more than one.

To keep (something) straight (in one’s mind / head), in character / out of character, to get out of hand, to make the most of something, a moral centre, to be lost on someone, to come as a shock, to face up to the fact, from scratch, to stretch one’s credulity

1. When it is finally revealed that the story has been set in an alternative universe all along, it...
2. The story unfolds in a traditional British public school where severe discipline has been upheld for decades, but due to mysterious disappearances things rapidly...
3. The overall setting of the novel is contemporary Japan, with a mishmash of diverse locations across the country, as well as numerous social contexts, which make it a bit difficult to...
4. The pastoral Victorian England, where the story is set, lends the narrative a lyrical element. It is evident that the author...

5. I know that these gothic settings are supposed to create suspense and evoke the feeling of horror in the reader, but, to be honest...
6. In the previous novels in the series, the author has gone to great lengths to devise a believable fictional world, yet in this sequel the setting seems to be strangely nondescript. Moreover, the protagonist suddenly starts...
7. The story opens with an environmental catastrophe that destroys most of the world's population. One family survives, marooned on a remote island, and they have to...
8. The old lady who lives in a shabby cottage in the woods is initially perceived as a sinister character because of her surroundings, but later she comes across as...

Writing



Read the excerpts from “Critical Companion to Edgar Allan Poe: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work” by Dawn B. Sova and note the vocabulary relating to the setting. After you have read them, write a plot summary for a narrative work or its episode, in which the setting plays an important role. Add one or two comments analysing the peculiarities of the setting, as in the Poe criticism below.

◆ “Annabel Lee”

Poe introduces the setting of the poem and the character of Annabel Lee in these lines. The creation of a vague time frame and the repetition of the phrase “many and many a year ago” indicate that the poem relates an event that occurred in the distant past, and the legendary tone of the setting is further emphasised by the location in “a kingdom by the sea.”

◆ “The Cask of Amontillado”

Set in Italy and told 50 years after the events have occurred, the story is one of revenge, which the vindictive narrator, Montresor, has plotted with the careful planning required of a military campaign. Poe infused the story with numerous gothic elements and deliberately made the setting of the story vague.

◆“The Gold-Bug”

Mark Hennelly points out that “The Gold-Bug” is somewhat unusual in Poe’s work because it is set in a locale in which Poe actually lived and with which he was personally familiar. While in the army, similar to the lieutenant to whom Legrand gives the gold bug, Poe had been stationed at Fort Moultrie on Sullivan’s Island. Poe provides detailed accounts of the island terrain and foliage in the manner of an amateur naturalist, an aspect of the story that appealed to Poe’s early readers.

◆“The Masque of the Red Death”

The ambiguity of the exact setting lends the story a mystical element and suggests that the author may have meant it to function as a parable or fable. The story is set in seven rooms, through which Prospero and his guests proceed until the figure of the Red Death leads them into the final chamber, where their deaths will occur. The seven rooms 110 “Masque of the Red Death, The” reflect the passage of time for humanity, as in the seven days of the week. Time comes to an end for the prince and his guests when they reach the seventh room.

◆“The Fall of the House of Usher”

Beginning with the title, the crumbling house is a major character in the story. The Usher family mansion is an isolated, dreary, and decaying structure in “a singularly dreary tract of country” and evokes in the narrator “a sense of insufferable gloom.” The house has a distinct personality, and it is described as having “vacant eye-like windows,” “bleak walls,” and “minute fungi [that] overspread the whole exterior.” The themes of isolation and self-destructive concentration are symbolized by the house as well as by the character of Roderick Usher. When the narrator enters the house, he finds that the interior is morbidly depressing, with its “vaulted and fretted” ceilings, “comfortless, antique, and tattered” furniture, and “dark draperies hung upon the walls.” Roderick suggests that the house is one of the causes of his agitated behavior, and the narrator relates that Roderick “was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth.” The story is told from

the point of view of the rational and objective narrator, who tries valiantly to ascribe logical causes for the seemingly supernatural occurrences that take place in the house.

Project

Setting as a Character



The House of Usher in Poe’s famous tale is perceived as a character in the story. Do you remember other stories, films, songs or poems, where a house / a castle / a city / a country is personified or made special in other ways?

Research the topic and make a presentation focusing on the portrayal of the chosen location and the interaction between the setting and the characters in the story.



“Howl’s Moving Castle” (2004) directed by Hayao Miyazaki

UNIT 5

Multiple Voices: Choosing the Right Perspective

Lead In

- ❖ Do you usually pay attention to how the story is told (in which person, by who, etc.)? Why / why not?
- ❖ Do you feel more sympathetic to the protagonist when the story is narrated in the first person?
- ❖ Think of a famous novel narrated in the third person. Imagine it is retold in the first. Would it change your perception of the story?
- ❖ Have you ever read books written in the second person?



Using a first-
person narrator is
simply a matter of
hearing the voice
inside yourself.

James Lee Burke

Exploring Narrators

One of the major concerns in fiction is to establish a **point of view** from which the story is told. There are several different modes of narrating a story. Some works are written exclusively in a single mode, while others use a combination of methods. A **third-person narrative** employs someone outside the story to relate it, referring to the characters as “she”, “he” and “they”. A **third-person omniscient** point of view presupposes a narrator who knows everything about the events and characters, having an access to their thoughts and feelings. An omniscient narrator is also free to choose any point in time and space and to shift from character to character, reporting or concealing their speech, actions and states of consciousness. A variety of this mode is **an intrusive narrator** who does not simply report but also comments on the actions and motives of

the characters and sometimes expresses personal views on life. This mode was very common in the novels of the 19th century. An **unintrusive** omniscient narrator, thought to be **impersonal** or **objective**, has also been frequently employed by authors.

Another variety of the third-person narration is the **limited** point of view. In this mode, the third-person narrator can only report what is experienced, thought and felt by a single character in the story or several such characters (often called point-of-view characters or simply POVs). This mode was often combined with the “**stream-of-consciousness**” technique, since a character’s consciousness is the main focus of narration. The **first-person** narration is “I” or “we”, taking part in the story to a larger or lesser extent. Thus, a first-person narrator can be the story’s protagonist, relating what has happened (or is happening) to him or her, or one of the major or minor characters who participate in the events or simply witness them. **Unreliable** (or **fallible**) narrators are used to alert the reader that their opinions and observations should not be trusted (due to their young age and innocence, general lack of understanding, moral depravity or other reasons). **Self-conscious** narrators draw the reader’s attention to the fact that they are narrating a story, which is one of **metafictional** narrative strategies. Self-reflexivity can be present in the narration in a variety of ways, one of which is involving a **narratee**: someone to whom the story is told. It can be a character in the story or an implied reader addressed as “you”. It should not be confused with the **second-person** point of view, also represented with “you”, but in this case “you” refers to someone experiencing what is narrated. In contrast to the first and third-person points of view, this mode is rather rarely used.

Note that these categories are generalisations; in actual fiction it is possible to come across various modifications and combinations of the described modes and types.

Task 1

Read the information above and decide what the diagram below shows.



Task 2

Work in small groups. Choose one of the texts you have already covered in this textbook. Go back to the text and identify the type of the narrator. Use citations from the texts to prove your point.

Task 3

Read the excerpts below. All of them make use of “you”. Decide which “you” is a...

- ❖ a narratee
- ❖ the second-person point of view
- ❖ generic (impersonal) “you” as in “you never know”

Close to the airport, planes appear in the sky. Eugene parks the car and helps you find the desk. Neither one of you knows exactly what to do. They look at your passport, take your suitcase and tell you where to go. You step onto moving stairs that frighten you. There’s a coffee shop where Eugene tries to make you eat a fry but you don’t want to eat or stay and keep him company. Your brother embraces you. You have never been embraced this way. When his stubble grazes your face, you pull back.
‘I’m sorry,’ he says.

(from “The Parting Gift” by Claire Keegan)

I said it before and I’ll say it again: books are dead, plays are dead, poems are dead: there’s only movies. Music is still okay, because music is soundtrack. Ten, fifteen years ago, every arts student wanted to be a novelist or a playwright. I’d be amazed if you could find a single one now with such a dead-end ambition. They all want to make movies. All wanna make movies. Not write movies. You don’t write movies. You make movies. But movies are hard to live up to.

When you walk along the street, you’re in a movie; when you have a row, you’re in a movie; when you make love, you’re in a movie. When you skim stones over the water, buy a newspaper, park your car, line up in a McDonald’s, stand on a rooftop looking down, meet a friend, joke in the pub, wake suddenly in the night or fall asleep dead drunk, you’re in a movie.

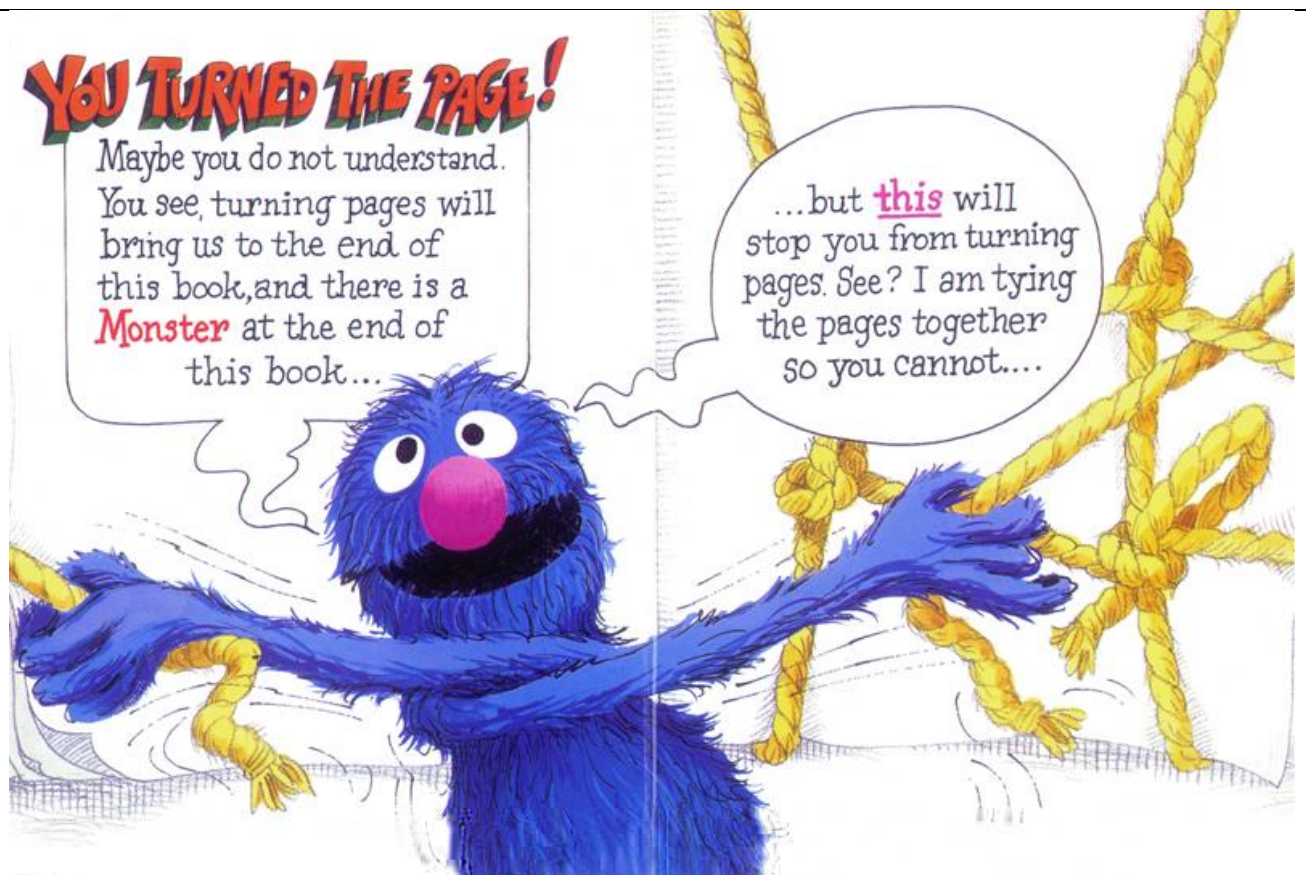
But when you are alone, dead alone, without props or costars, then you're on the cutting-room floor. Or, worse, you're in a novel; you're on stage, stuck inside a monologue; you're trapped in a poem. You are CUT.

(from "Making History" by Stephen Fry)

But this is preposterous? A character is either "real" or "imaginary"? If you think that, hypocrite lecteur, I can only smile. You do not even think of your own past as quite real; you dress it up, you gild it or blacken it, censor it, tinker with it... fictionalise it, in a word, and put it away on a shelf – your book, your romanced autobiography. We are all in flight from the real reality. That is a basic definition of Homo sapiens.

So if you think all this unlucky (but it is Chapter Thirteen) digression has nothing to do with your Time, Progress, Society, Evolution and all those other capitalised ghosts in the night that are rattling their chains behind the scenes of this book... I will not argue. But I shall suspect you.

(from "The French Lieutenant's Woman" by John Fowles)



(from "The Monster at the End of This Book", a children's picture book)

Task 4

Work in pairs.

Why, in your opinion, are song lyrics addressed to “you” very often, while in fiction it is a comparatively rare occurrence? Think of different English-language songs with “you” in them and discuss who the implied addressees might be. Which of them are closer to a narratee / second-person point of view / generic you?

Task 5

Read the excerpts below. Identify the type of the narrators used in them. Do any of them seem unusual or strange to you?

This will not be a funny book. I cannot tell jokes because I do not understand them. Here is a joke, as an example. It is one of Father's.

His face was drawn but the curtains were real.

I know why this is meant to be funny. I asked. It is because *drawn* has three meanings, and they are (1) drawn with a pencil, (2) exhausted, and (3) pulled across a window, and meaning 1 refers to both the face and the curtains, meaning 2 refers only to the face, and meaning 3 refers only to the curtains. If I try to say the joke to myself, making the word mean the three different things at the same time, it is like hearing three different pieces of music at the same time, which is uncomfortable and confusing and not nice like white noise. It is like three people trying to talk to you at the same time about different things. And that is why there are no jokes in this book.

(from “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time” by Mark Haddon)

Here, reader, I beg your patience a moment, while I make a just compliment to the great wisdom and sagacity of our law, which refuses to admit the evidence of a wife for or against her husband. This, says a certain learned author, who, I believe, was never quoted before in any but a law-book, would be the means of creating an eternal dissension between them. It would, indeed, be the means of much perjury, and of much whipping, fining, imprisoning, transporting, and hanging.

(from “The History of Tom Jones, a foundling” by Henry Fielding)

I do not know. This story I am telling is all imagination. These characters I create never existed outside my own mind. If I have pretended until now to know my characters' minds and innermost thoughts, it is because I am writing in (just as I have assumed some of the vocabulary and "voice" of) a convention universally accepted at the time of my story: that the novelist stands next to God. He may not know all, yet he tries to pretend that he does. But I live in the age of Alain Robbe-Grillet and Roland Barthes; if this is a novel, it cannot be a novel in the modern sense of the word.

(from "The French Lieutenant's Woman" by John Fowles)

Meeting the Narrator

Markus Zusak (born in 1975) is an Australian writer. His parents emigrated from Germany and Austria in the 1950s, and their memories of the World War II inspired him to write a book for young adults set in Nazi Germany. "**The Book Thief**" was published in 2005 and it became an international bestseller. The horrors of the Nazi regime are witnessed by the protagonist, an adolescent girl Liesel, who comes to Molching (a small town in Bavaria) to stay with foster parents, Hans and Rosa Hubermann. The family conceals a Jewish man in their basement, with whom the heroine establishes friendship. Liesel is the eponymous "book thief", since she saves several books from destruction and gradually learns to appreciate the power of words. She turns into a wordsmith herself and writes down her own story. One of the most remarkable aspects of the book is the way it is narrated. Read the first episode below and say who the narrator of the story is.



Episode 1
DEATH AND CHOCOLATE

First the colors.
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 A's. 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 color 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 I'll hear after that will be my own breathing, and the sound of the smell, of my footsteps.

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

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

A SMALL THEORY

People observe the colors of a day only at its beginnings 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 colors. Waxy yellows, cloud-spat blues. Murky darknesses.

In my line of work, I make it a point to notice them.

As I've been alluding to, 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 vacation 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 vacation. Needless to say, I vacation in increments. In colors. Still, it's possible that you might be asking, why does he even need a vacation? 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 colors to keep my mind off them, but now and then, I witness the ones who are left behind, crumbling among the jigsaw puzzle of realization, 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 color. 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.

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who do you think the narrator is? Which narrative mode is used here? 2. What is unusual about this narrative perspective? 3. What kind of “you” is employed in the episode? 4. What role do colours play in this abstract?
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



Read the information below and discuss in small groups how it can be applied to the excerpt. Which of the two phenomena does the picture illustrate? Share your conclusions with the class.



According to the influential thesis produced by Victor Shklovsky, by disrupting the modes of ordinary linguistic discourse, literature “makes strange” the everyday world and renews the reader’s capacity for freshness of perception. This artistic technique is known as **defamiliarisation** (from Russian “ostranenie”) and its essence lies in depicting familiar things in a strange or unfamiliar way.

Synesthesia is a perceptual condition in which stimulation of one sensory or cognitive pathway leads to automatic, involuntary experiences in another sensory or cognitive pathway. Synesthesia can involve any combination of senses. The most common type is grapheme-colour synesthesia, in which letters and numbers are associated with specific colours.

Episode 2
A GIRL MADE OF DARKNESS
SOME STATISTICAL INFORMATION

First stolen book: January 13, 1939

Second stolen book: April 20, 1940

Duration between said stolen books: 463 days

If you were being flippant about it, you'd say that all it took was a little bit of fire, really, and some human shouting to go with it. You'd say that was all Liesel Meminger needed to apprehend her second stolen book, even if it smoked in her hands. Even if it lit her ribs.

The problem, however, is this:

This is no time to be flippant.

It's no time to be half watching, turning around, or checking the stove – because when the book thief stole her second book, not only were there many factors involved in her hunger to do so, but the act of stealing it triggered the crux of what was to come. It would provide her with a venue for continued book thievery. It would inspire Hans Hubermann to come up with a plan to help the Jewish fist fighter. And it would show *me*, once again, that one opportunity leads directly to another, just as risk leads to more risk, life to more life, and death to more death.

In a way, it was destiny.

You see, people may tell you that Nazi Germany was built on anti-Semitism, a somewhat overzealous leader, and a nation of hate-fed bigots, but it would all have come to nothing had the Germans not loved one particular activity:

To burn.

The Germans loved to burn things. Shops, synagogues, Reichstags, houses, personal items, slain people, and of course, books. They enjoyed a good book-burning, all right – which gave people who were partial to books the opportunity to get their hands on certain publications that they otherwise wouldn't have. One person who was that way inclined, as we know, was a thin-boned girl named Liesel Meminger. She may have waited 463 days, but it was worth it.

At the end of an afternoon that had contained much excitement, much beautiful evil, one blood-soaked ankle, and a slap from a trusted hand, Liesel

Meminger attained her second success story. *The Shoulder Shrug*. It was a blue book with red writing engraved on the cover, and there was a small picture of a cuckoo bird under the title, also red. When she looked back, Liesel was not ashamed to have stolen it. On the contrary, it was pride that more resembled that small pool of felt *something* in her stomach. And it was anger and dark hatred that had fueled her desire to steal it. In fact, on April 20 – the *Führer*'s birthday – when she snatched that book from beneath a steaming heap of ashes, Liesel was a girl made of darkness.



The question, of course, should be why?

What was there to be angry about?

What had happened in the past four or five months to culminate in such a feeling?

In short, the answer traveled from Himmel Street, to the *Führer*, to the unfindable location of her real mother, and back again.

Like most misery, it started with apparent happiness.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why was the second book theft so important? Why is it referred to as a “success story”? 2. What feelings prompted Liesel to steal the book? Do we know at this point the origin of these feelings? 3. Who is “Führer”? What other reference to him is there in the text? 4. Which historical events are alluded to in the episode?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which technique, mentioned in Unit 3, is used throughout this passage? Why, in your opinion, is it used? 2. The book is written primarily for young adults. Do you think the theme and the style are appropriate for teenagers? 3. What other books or films about Holocaust have you read or seen? What was the effect they produced on you? How was it achieved (through the events of the plot, graphic descriptions, characters, etc.)?

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciation Tips

The pronunciation of dental phonemes /ð, θ/ (or interdental in American English) usually poses difficulties for learners whose first languages do not contain similar sounds. Divide the following words into two groups (containing /ð/ and /θ/) and practise articulating them:

Although, death, truth, truthful, breath, breathing, nothing, throughout, thief, theft, birthday, beneath, there

The articulation may become even more problematic when dental /ð, θ/ are in close proximity with the alveolar /s, z/. Practise pronouncing the following words (check their pronunciation in the dictionary if necessary).

Something, thermos, scythe, sympathetic, synthetic, synesthesia, thesaurus, aesthetic, thesis, thespian, thermostat, kinesthetic, asthma.

Tongue twister: *Six thick thistle sticks. Six thick thistles stick.*



Can you make your own tongue-twister combining the dental and alveolar sounds?

Task 2: Vocabulary

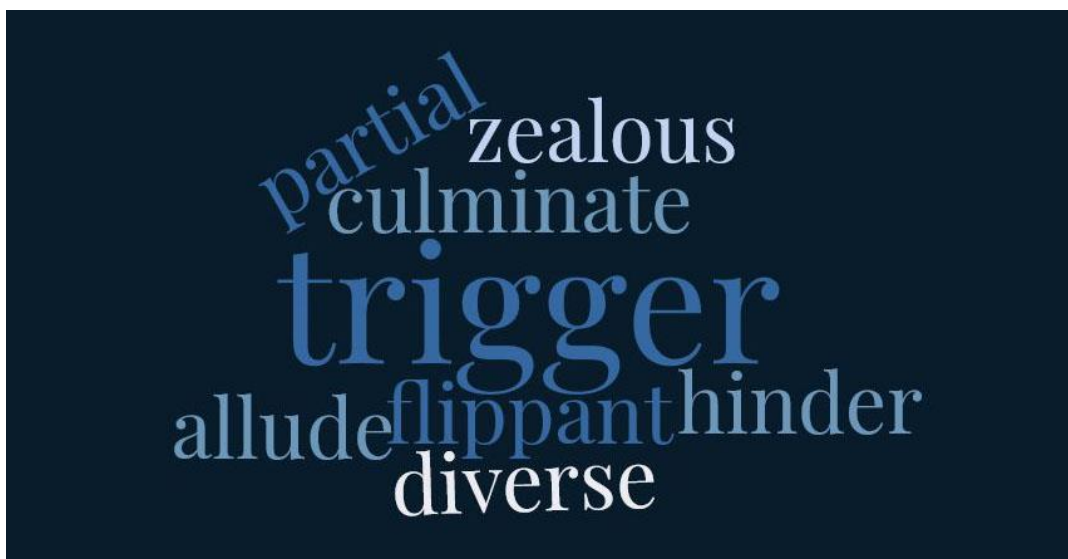


Read the vocabulary units in the table below and add your own examples to the ones that are given.

When something is flippant , it lacks in seriousness; being too frivolous or shallow for the situation.	She went out of her way to prepare her speech, so naturally she was very upset by the flippant remarks from the audience.
To trigger means to prompt a certain response, to initiate a chain of events or to set off a reaction.	The seemingly innocuous incident triggers a series of events, setting the story into motion. Sorry for the outburst, I don't know what triggered me.
To hinder is to prevent or get in the way of something.	The cumulative effects of stress and exhaustion hindered him from progress.

To allude is to refer to something implicitly or indirectly.	Never allude to her past: it might trigger painful memories. In his stories, Gaiman often alludes to Shakespeare and his characters.
To be zealous means to be filled with intense enthusiasm and dedication to something. When enthusiasm is excessive, a person becomes overzealous .	The corruption in the party is now evident even to its most zealous supporters. The actor keeps a low profile and tries to avoid encounters with overzealous fans.
To be partial to something means either to favour it (being biased) or to like it.	She is not partial to any of the children: her character is the moral centre of the play. I am a bit partial to dark chocolate.
To culminate is to result or end in something.	Years of searching culminated in his getting hold of the magic artifact. The story culminates in a double suicide: I didn't see it coming!
To be diverse is either to be made up of items with distinct characteristics or to have variety.	Our company has a diverse workforce: people from various backgrounds and possessing very different mindsets.

Work in pairs. Use the words from the table above to talk about different attitudes to work that people may have.



Task 3: Adjectives with Self

Look at the diagram with adjectives that can be used with “self”. Can you add more adjectives to this list?

Work in pairs. Paraphrase the sentences below using one of the adjectives in the diagram. Add more sentences to the activity using the adjectives that you have remembered.



1. The novel focuses mainly on its own creative process.
2. Social media seem to promote the attitude that celebrates gratifying every wish and desire.
3. He is too egocentric to consider doing charity work.
4. The narrator makes sure that no device goes unnoticed by the reader. The upshot is that even

hand-waving is thoroughly explained.

5. They finally conceded that there was no need for proof or evidence.
6. As the story unfolds, a timid teenager gradually turns into an independent and resourceful person.

Task 4: Idioms

Translate the following sentences from the excerpts paying special attention to how you render idiomatic expressions.

To make it a point (to do something)	In my line of work, I make it a point to notice them.
Saving grace	As I've been alluding to, my one saving grace is distraction. It keeps me sane.

To keep one's mind off something / someone	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 colors to keep my mind off them, but now and then, I witness the ones who are left behind, crumbling among the jigsaw puzzle of realization, despair, and surprise.
To come up with (a plan, an idea, a solution)	It would inspire Hans Hubermann to come up with a plan to help the Jewish fist fighter.
To step in	The trouble is, who could ever replace me? Who could step in while I take a break in your stock-standard resort-style vacation destination, whether it be tropical or of the ski trip variety?

Writing



Choose a book where multiple narrators or points of view can be found. Write a brief plot summary (focusing mainly on the narrative perspective), as in the example:

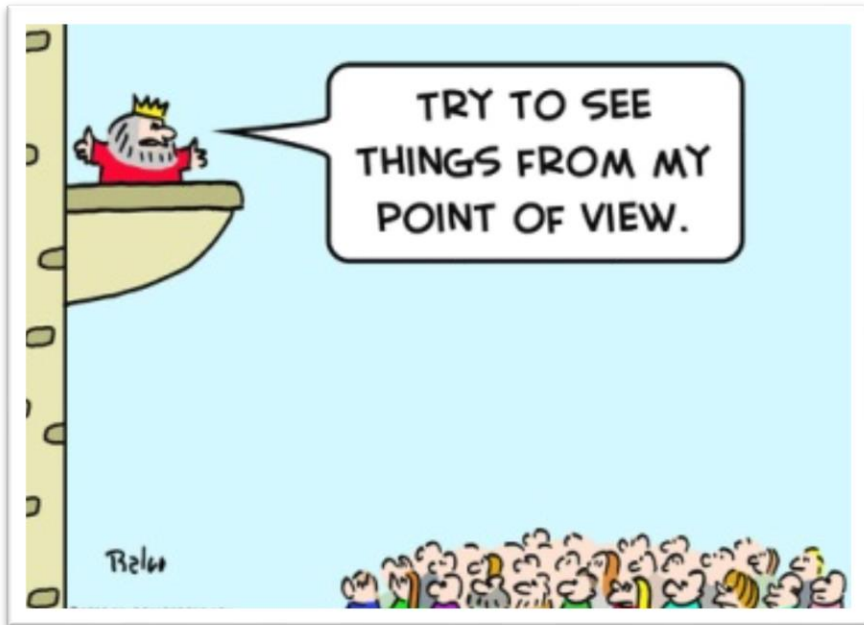
➤ “The Collector” is a John Fowles’ novel that chronicles the abduction of a young artist, Miranda, by Frederick Clegg, a clerk and butterfly collector. The first part of the novel tells the story from Clegg’s point of view, resorting to first-person narration. Clegg believes himself in love with Miranda (which is his motive for kidnapping her), but the reader soon starts questioning the narrator’s reliability (and sanity). The second part of the novel switches to Miranda’s point of view. Also narrated in the first-person, her story is given in a series of diary entries, which reflect her captivity and provide flashbacks about her life before it, especially her relationship with an older man referred to as “G.P.” Miranda’s story finishes on a cliff-hanger: the captivity culminates in a serious illness and it is unclear whether she survives. The resolution is given in the final part of the book, as the narration switches back to Clegg.

Project

Strange Narrators and Narratees



“The Book Thief” employs Death as a narrator. Have you ever read other books or short stories where the narrator is unusual or strange? Do you remember unexpected narratees? Research the topic and make a presentation in class. Provide the excerpts before you introduce your chosen narrators / narratees so that other students can make guesses about their identities.



UNIT 6

People in Fiction: Beyond the Stereotype

Lead In

- ❖ Imagine you want to make a book character out of one of your friends. What would you focus on to portray him or her (their appearance, the way they speak, their behaviour, a certain incident from their past, etc.)?
- ❖ Cosplaying fictional characters is very popular nowadays. Would you like to do it? Why / why not? If yes, which character would you choose?



Cosplaying Merida from Disney's "Brave" by Anna Berten

Exploring Characters

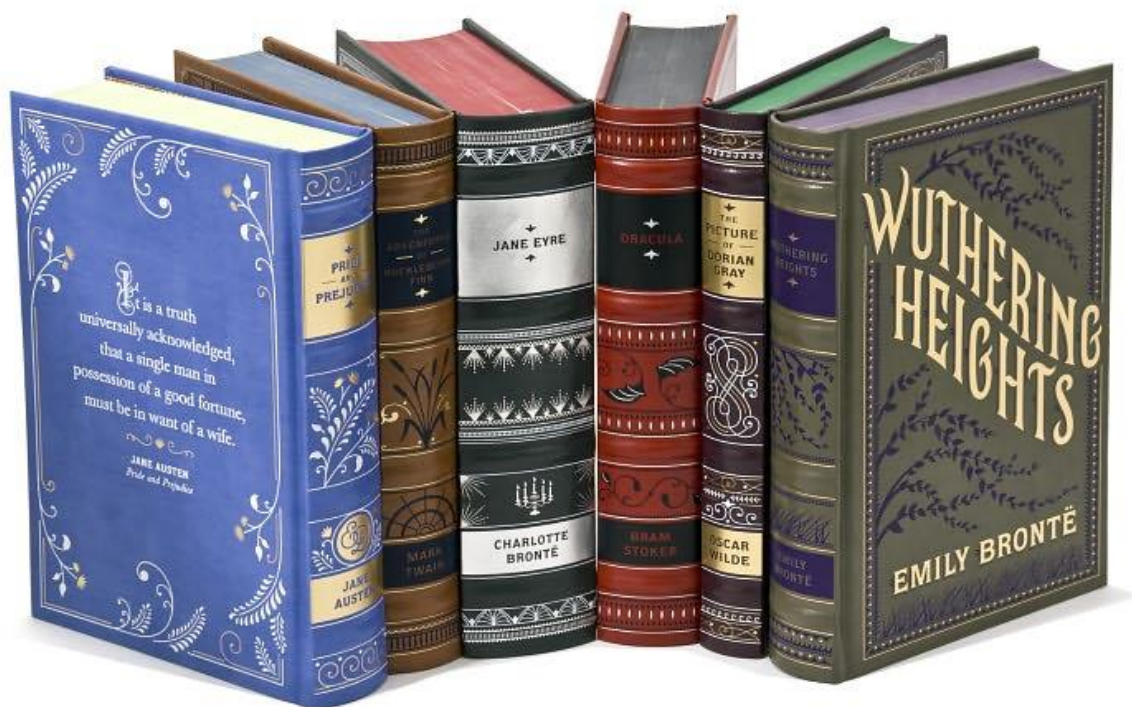
Characters are persons or other entities endowed with personalities who are presented in fiction. Readers perceive characters as possessing certain intellectual and emotional features, as well as a moral profile, which are typically revealed in what they think (interior monologues, thoughts, secret desires, dreams, etc.), what they say (dialogues) and what they do (action). These are cases of **indirect** characterisation. Authors may also do it **directly**, by explicitly stating qualities of a certain personage. The reasons for the character's desires and actions are called **motivation**, a significant factor ensuring their credibility.

A character may be "two-dimensional" or **flat** (in E. M. Forster's terms), that is possessing few distinct features and lacking complexity. These are also

called **types** or **stock** characters, and they usually rely on certain social or genre **clichés**. A more developed character is referred to as **round** or multi-dimensional, and it usually demonstrates complex motivation. When a character remains unchanged in the course of the story, it is stable, but major characters and especially protagonists tend to undergo a significant transformation and acquire a new dimension to their personality.

Task 1

Test your knowledge of famous characters from English-language literature! Can you guess who these entries from “Dictionary of Literary Characters” refer to? All the names and some plot details have been removed from these descriptions.



◆ Handsome, clever, rich, and spoiled heroine, deluded in her matchmaking efforts; she nearly destroys her friend’s romance with a young farmer and believes an attractive young gentleman to be in love with herself when he is really secretly engaged to someone else.

◆ Firefighter who revels in his position as a burner of dangerous books; initially does not understand why one would become a martyr over worthless books; stealing a book and communicating with another character initiate his transformation from scion of authority to intellectual rebel and anarchist; goes to former English professor for advice and instruction; becomes a living book through memorization.

- ◆ Gifted and beautiful actress the protagonist falls in love with; ruins her career by refusing to act on shallow emotions rather than true feeling; cruelly rejected by her lover, she commits suicide.
- ◆ Dynamic but savage hero of the story; thwarted in his love for the heroine, he takes a terrible revenge on those who have thwarted him and on their innocent descendants.
- ◆ Thoughtful and talented yet untested; studied at university before being called back home [...] subsequently displays great courage, intelligence, and imagination in pursuit of justice, yet is killed before he can achieve his full potential.
- ◆ Main character of the story and a miserly, shrewd businessman whose only love is money; hoards his money and despises the friendly overtures of his clerk and nephew; [...] and becomes a more humane, generous, and joyful employer, uncle, and citizen.
- ◆ One of the main characters in the book, the second-oldest of four sisters. Awkward, straightforward tomboy who aspires to be a writer.
- ◆ Arrogant and patronizing creature, who sits on a mushroom, smoking a hookah; after his interrogation of the protagonist he requires her to recite a poem as a test of her memory and then advises her to use the mushroom to control her size.
- ◆ Apparently insignificant middle-aged Jewish advertising man who suffers the prejudice of Roman Catholic citizens in his city, avoids confronting the infidelity of his wife, and rescues an artist from British soldiers in the brothel district.
- ◆ Strong-willed and verbally abusive in an effort to defend herself from those who gossip about her; meets her intellectual match when she is introduced to the main hero, who convinces her to marry him; when her husband embarrasses her with his behaviour on their wedding day she fears she has made a mistake in her marriage; [...] ultimately becomes an obedient wife.

Task 2

Which characters in **Task 1** undergo a transformation? What prompts these changes? Are they all for the better?

Name other fictional characters that undergo a significant change.

Task 3

Showing vs. Telling

Two distinct narrative techniques known as *showing* and *telling* are frequently compared and contrasted. Different scholars have offered their understanding of these modes, although there is no universal agreement about their exact implementation. In general terms, the **telling** mode presupposes the evoking of the impression that the story is told, while in the **showing** mode the illusion is created that



events are witnessed by the reader. Although it is more natural for literature to *tell*, since it is rooted in storytelling, while in drama and cinema events are *shown*, it is quite common to hear the following tip for writers: “*Show, don't tell!*” It can be exemplified by direct and indirect characterisation: rather than *telling* the reader that the protagonist is brave and intelligent (direct), the author may *show* situations in which his or her courage and wits are manifested (indirect). It should be stated, however, that showing vs. telling dichotomy is applied not only to characters: it is viewed in connection with descriptions, action and narrative point of view.

Brainstorm



Work in groups of 3 or 4 students. Choose one character based on a friend you have discussed in the beginning of the lesson. Pick one of his or her qualities (smart, witty, gorgeous, morose, vengeful, etc.) and brainstorm ideas how you can show it in a story.

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciation Tips

Adjectives ending in *-ous* are commonly mispronounced, as learners tend to articulate both vowels rather than using the schwa sound /ə/. Practise saying the adjectives below paying special attention to the /ə/ in the end.

Dangerous, famous, generous, gorgeous, zealous, humorous, fabulous, enormous, prodigious, obvious, ambiguous, jealous, incredulous, furious, gracious, luxurious

Which of the words from the first group can be used to describe fictional characters? Make several short sentences as in the example below and practise saying them.

- Hamlet is a very ambiguous character.
- Elinor Dashwood is portrayed as a sensible and gracious person.

Task 2: Spelling and Pronunciation

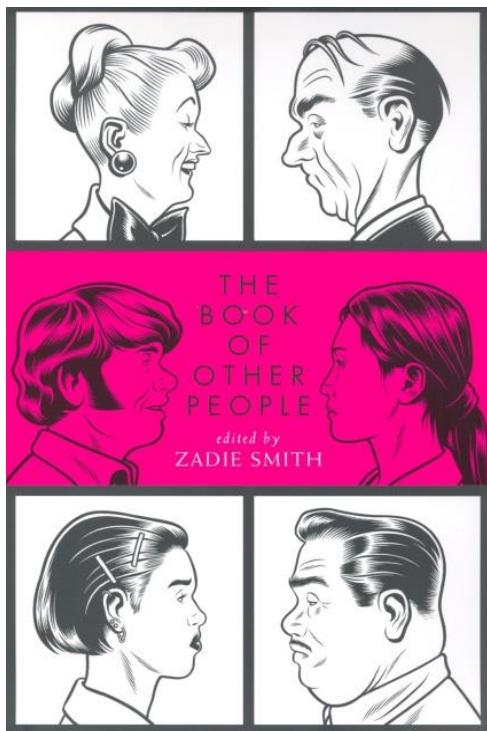
The digraph *ch* is pronounced as the aspirated /k/ sound in a number of English words of Greek origin. Practise the pronunciation of the words below.

Character, archetype, orchestra, scheme, choir, synecdoche, technical, chemical, chorus, headache, architect, technique, machination, monarchy, archive, chaos, echo, hierarchy, mechanic, chord, chemistry, stomach.

Which of the words from this list can be combined with the adjectives above? Make several funny pairs as in the example:

- Jealous orchestra, dangerous synecdoche, luxurious headache.

Meeting Other People



“The Book of Other People” is a collection of short stories, selected and edited by Zadie Smith and published in 2008. The book contains 23 stories written by different authors, including Nick Hornby, David Mitchell, ZZ Packer, Colm Tóibín, A. L. Kennedy, as well as Zadie Smith herself. The collection focuses entirely on character: the authors’ instruction was just to “make somebody up”, without any rules about gender, race or species. Each story is named after its character. The editor explains the idea behind this collection in the following way: “The book has no particular thesis or argument to convey

about fictional character. Nor is straight ‘realism’ or ‘naturalism’ – if such things exist – the aim. The hope was that the finished book might be a lively demonstration of the fact that there are as many ways to create ‘character’ (or deny the possibility of ‘character’) as there are writers. It is striking to see how one simple idea plays out in individual minds, the ‘character’ of the prose itself being as differentiated as the ‘other people’ with which these stories are nominally populated”.

Read one of the stories from “The Book of Other People” and see how the character of Rhoda is developed in it.

Rhoda

Jonathan Safran Foer

Have a cookie. It’s good for you. You know what your problem is? The problem with you is that your wife is a little too, let me put it this way, she’s intelligent. I hope you don’t mind me saying that. I’m not telling you you should be married to someone ignorant, which has been my experience. I’m only telling you it’s better to have a life partner who is somewhat unintelligent. I know things. She doesn’t feed you because she’s too intelligent. It’s none of my business.

It’s good to see you, from what my eyes can make out. You could be a super-model! It brings a smile to my heart. Your brother is growing a bosom, but you still have all of your hair. Lemme touch it. That beautiful, thick hair. You’re so handsome! So gorgeous! My joy! It doesn’t matter. You should be healthy. That beautiful, Kennedy hair. Enjoy your hair in good health.

Have a drink. Lemme get you a soda from the basement. Go get a soda from the basement. Drink something. Please. For me. I have some orange juice in the freezer. I could warm it up for you. A slice of bread? What would make you happy? You’re gorgeous, I’m telling you. Gorgeous! Just looking at you, I’m forgetting everything. I got a tea bag I used last night that’s still good.

I don’t want to take your time, but I’ll tell you about my heart scan, and then we’ll do your business. I’ll tell you about your cousin Daniel. The machine is recording? Your cousin Daniel called from Brown University last night. The machine heard that? He’s making A’s in all of his classes, and two B’s, and he’s going with a girl, not a schwartze¹. She’s studying – how do you call it? I

can't remember the American word. Anyway, I don't know what are her grades, but her family lives in Philadelphia and belongs to Congregation Beth David, which is Reform², but that's none of my business. Her father is a lawyer, and I don't know what is her mother. This girl, she's a little overweight, but otherwise very nice. They've been on four dates. Over there there's a picture of her on the refrigerator.

I'll tell you about the first schwartze I ever saw. Because I was thinking about Daniel, I was thinking about schwartzes, from the one he went with briefly. Remember that one? It was his life, and that's why I didn't say anything, but it was my death. I told him, You can fall in love with anyone if you have to, so why mix blood?

When we came over, in 1950, I didn't even know there was such a thing as a schwartze. Nobody told me. Nobody sat me down and said, By the way, there's schwartzes. I got off the boat, and I'm holding your mother, and your grandfather, your real grandfather, was looking for our bags, and the first person I saw was a schwartze. I thought maybe he had a disease. What did I know from schwartzes? And then I saw another schwartze, and then another schwartze. It was like seeing green people to me, only with longer arms and bigger lips and, you know, the schwartze-hair. Then, when we opened the grocery store on K Street, that was in a neighborhood that was full of schwartzes. Only schwartzes, I'm telling you, because that was all we could afford at the time. If there had been coins smaller than pennies we would have saved those, too. Money can't buy you happiness, but happiness isn't everything. My only point is I don't have any problem with schwartzes, but I'm happy for Daniel that he found a nice girl, even Reform. Lemme give you a piece of free advice: if you have to wash your hands after going to the bathroom, you did something wrong. I'm talking about number one only.

We knew all the schwartzes that robbed us, and this will be the last thing that I say about schwartzes. They would come in with masks on, and once I said, 'Jimmy, if you need money, just ask. You don't have to make a scene.' And so he asked, 'Can I have some money, Rhoda?' I told him not over my dead body. He made to put the gun at my head. I told him I had to refrigerate some cold items, so if he was gonna shoot me he should do it already. He said, 'I'm not messing around, Rhoda.' I said, 'Who's messing around?' The schwartzes loved us, to tell you the truth.

I'll tell you about my heart scan. Have a cookie. I'm not gonna take your time. I got a popsicle in the basement. Your father told me they didn't find anything. I'm begging you, drink a little Coke for me. I'm not gonna push. I didn't ask him to double-check. Not even a sip for your grandmother? When the news is that your heart scan is OK, you believe it. I hope you don't mind me saying that. You're perfect, but I know things. I told Dr Horowitz that I've had the kind of life that Spielberg could make a pretty good movie about. He said he was honored to know me. I'm gonna make to send him a card. I wonder when he'll be fifty, 'cause I got one of those cards around. Can you drive me to the bank when we're done with this? And then to the supermarket? And then to the other supermarket? And then to the bakery? There's a nice Oriental girl there who gives me a discount. She has an ugly face, but that's her business. Your father would put me in a taxi. He thinks I'm cheap, but he's the cheap one, because he won't come out here to get me. It's good to hold your money in a fist. If you don't believe me, no one will.

And anyway – you wanna fresh sliced tomato? – some mornings I don't feel any pain. I'm not complaining. There are worse things than pain. How could I be unhappy with that hair of yours! You probably didn't appreciate this, but when you were a baby I used to sing you to sleep with the American alphabet. By the time you were two you could speak better than me. That was my Nobel Prize! You were my diamonds and pearls! My revenge!

But then I have pains, I gotta tell you. They start at the ends of my fingernails, almost like little animals biting me. Eventually they spread somewhat. And in the chest. The scan said nothing is wrong, but you think that makes any difference to my chest? Who do you trust? My body isn't good anymore. What did I expect? With my hemorrhoids it's OK to be sitting or standing. But even sitting is difficult when I'm making a number two. Can I ask you a personal question? Do you have a list of the serial numbers of your savings bonds? I know it's none of my business.



How's your brother? He's doing great. I think he's great. I think he's somewhat lonely. He calls me every day. He thinks I'm lonely. When's he gonna get married? He needs to meet a nice girl. Such a brain! There's nothing he can't do. He's losing his hair, but that doesn't matter. Everyone gets older. Whenever I think about you I go crazy. You're so gorgeous! I'm

somewhat lonely in this house. I've taken your time. The machine's working? You think I'm dying. It's OK. You don't have to say anything. I know. I know you all have been lying to me. When they bring out the tape recorder, it's either because of a school project or because you're dying. And you graduated from Princeton University nine years ago.

So I need you to promise me something. Come close. Somewhat closer. You know that your grandmother never asks anything of you, but this is one thing. I beg you, no matter what happens, no matter where you go in life or how many millions you make, no matter anything, I beg you: never buy a German car. So wha'd'ya wanna talk about?

Notes

1. Schwartze is American Jewish slang word for black people with a derogatory connotation.
2. Reform – Reform Judaism (also known as Liberal Judaism or Progressive Judaism) is a major Jewish denomination that represents a more progressive direction of Judaism with more openness to non-Jewish mindsets and a lesser stress on ritual and personal observance.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who is Rhoda? Who is she talking to? 2. What is her health condition? 3. What “machine” does she mention? 4. What was her reaction when she saw Afro-American people for the first time? 5. What do we learn about her family?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kind of character is Rhoda (flat and stereotypical or round and complex)? Support your answer with quotes. 2. How did the author approach the task of “making someone up”? Did he decide to <i>tell</i> or <i>show</i>? 3. What is “you” in this story (in narrative terms)? Do you personally sympathise with this “you”? 4. Do you know anyone like Rhoda? Describe him or her.

Language Practice

Task 1: Other



Learners of English often confuse different forms of the pronoun **other**. Study the table below and say which cases might be problematic.

Adjective

Another book (is)
Other books (are)

The other book (is)
The other books (are)

Pronoun

Another (is)
Others (are)

The other (is)
The others (are)

How is **another** different from **other**? When do we use **the other**?

Find the correct answers in the table below:

<p>The meaning of another is one more in addition to the one(s) already mentioned or implied. Another is also used with expressions of time, money and distance, even if they contain plural nouns.</p>	<p>Can I have another apple? I need another six months to finish the book (another 10 pounds, another 20 miles). The class is very diverse. One student is from China, another is from New Zealand and another is from Greece.</p>
<p>The meaning of other(s) is several more in addition to the one(s) already mentioned or implied.</p>	<p>Other students are from Poland. Others are from Ukraine. It is hard to understand other people.</p>
<p>The meaning of the other(s) is all that remains from a given number or in a specific group.</p>	<p>The protagonist is Catherine Morland and her suitor is Henry Tilny, but I don't remember the other characters (the others).</p>

*Fill the gaps below with **another, other, others, the other** or **the others**.*

1. My aunt always goes out of her way to help ... people.
2. You're so self-absorbed – as if you didn't have a family! Make it a point to ask ... for their opinion before you make ... important decision.
3. John has already come up with a plan, but it's not viable. Does anyone have ... ideas?
4. It's just ... crime mystery. Unexpected plot twists are its only saving grace. Can I borrow a couple of ... books?
5. The teachers in this school work in tandem. If one of the pair falls ill, ... has to step in.
6. It seems like only you appreciate my dark sense of humour: my jokes are totally lost on ...
7. I don't feel rested at all. I need ... 10 days of holiday, at least.

Look at the two T-shirts below. Which one would you wear and why?



Task 2: Choosing Tenses

Revise the Present Perfect / Present Perfect Continuous tenses. Both tenses deal with recent events or processes relevant for the present. The Present Perfect is more focused on the **result** or **permanent state**, while the Present Perfect Continuous emphasises the **process** and **its duration**. Neither can be used with past time markers (last night, yesterday, in 2017, etc.) since the actions they describe occupy the “**up till now**” time zone. Both are frequently used with **for** and **since**, as in:

- We have lived in Chicago for 5 years.
- He has been working on his novel since January.

Rewrite the sentences below using the Present Perfect or the Present Perfect Continuous. If possible, use both tenses. Add the following words and expressions if necessary:

**Constantly, recently, already, always, seriously,
definitely, several times, since, for**

Example:

➤ He often alludes to the events of the Second World War. He has already alluded to the events of the Second World War twice. He has been constantly alluding to the events of the Second World War.

1. I am partial to freshly ground coffee.
2. What triggers such violent responses?
3. A lot of viewers refer to the webinar as enlightening in their comments.
4. Your blind spot concerning technologies hinders your professional development.
5. The orchestra has a very diverse make-up. No wonder the musicians often argue.
6. Clare calls me a flippant and self-indulgent person.
7. I keep my mind off unpleasant and tragic things to stay happy and focused.
8. It's not hard to work out what troubles her.
9. My friend is working on a study of sitcoms. She uses notes to keep plotlines straight in her head.
10. Did he make you cry? Don't take things he says to heart.

Writing



Choose one of the plot summaries you wrote for previous units and add a few paragraphs describing characters from these stories. Use Task 1 in the beginning of this Unit as an example.

Make sure to employ some of the vocabulary you have already learnt in this course (a blind spot, diverse, flat, flippant, mindset, nondescript, rounded, partial, self-absorbed, self-indulgent, self-reliant, (un)sympathetic, two-dimensional, zealous, etc.).

Project

Which Literary Character are You?



You can find a lot of such tests online. How about creating your own? Choose several fictional characters (from one story or from different ones) and devise a set of questions to sort people into the corresponding categories.

Run the test on your class (the teacher including!) Analyse the results and explain your choice of questions and characters.

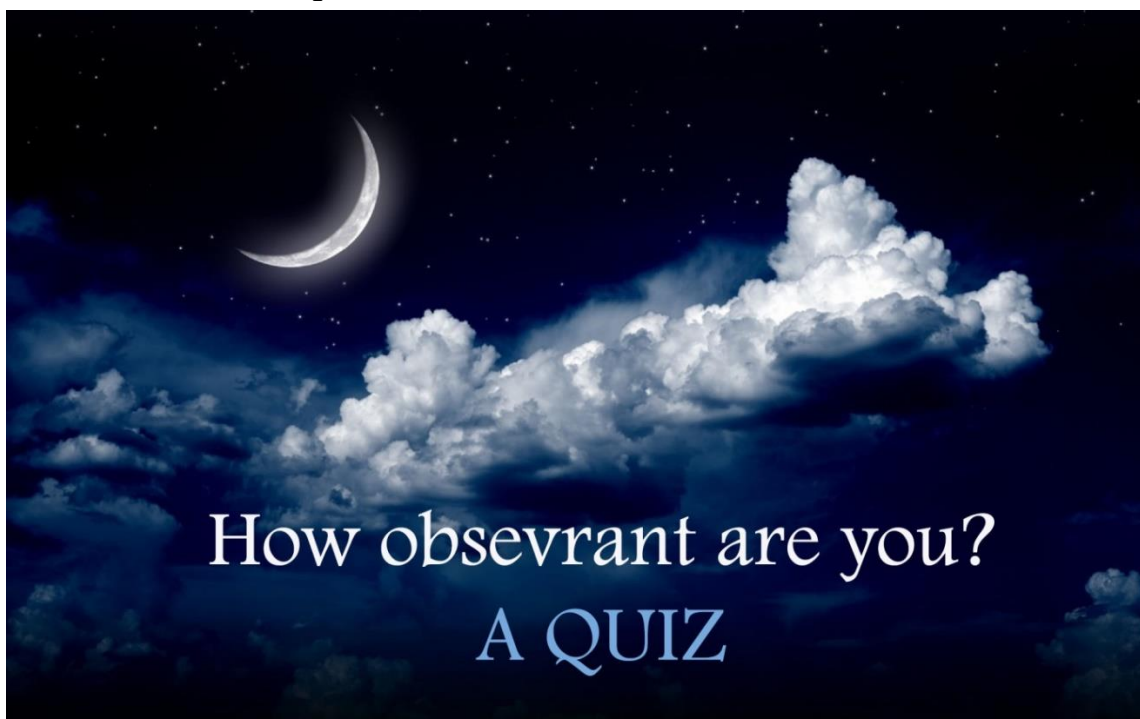


UNIT 7

The Art of Observation: Never Miss a Detail

Lead In

- ❖ Think of an iconic fictional character (Sherlock Holmes, Mary Poppins, Harry Potter, etc.). What details do you associate with this character?
- ❖ Do you have an eye for details in real life? How observant do you think you are? Take the quiz below to find out.



1. How is the smaller horizontal strip of the cross of the Orthodox Christian church located?
 - a) inclined left down
 - b) inclined right down
 - c) without inclination
2. What is the order of the colours on the flag of France?
 - a) red blue white
 - b) blue red white
 - c) red white blue
 - e) blue white red
3. What shape is yield (give way) traffic sign?
 - a) triangular
 - b) square
 - c) round
 - d) hexagon

4. Which side are the buttons on a lady's blouse?
- a) left
 - b) right
5. The moon in the picture on the previous page is...
- a) waxing
 - b) waning
 - c) full
6. Have you noticed the typo in the word "observant" in the picture?
- a) yes
 - b) no

Score 5-7	Score 3-4	Score 0-2
You are truly observant, on a par with Sherlock Holmes. Make the most of your skills in the art of noticing things around you.	You have an eye for detail, but some important things might slip by. Discover where your blind spots are to notice more.	You should develop your observation skills. Make it a point to notice three new things in the world around you every day.



Details in art can tell you a lot. Look at the picture of an old woman by Anton Pieck. What story do the details tell?

Discussion




Work in small groups.

Discuss whether the clothes tell much about people who wear them.

If yes, what exactly do they tell?

Look at the clothes you are wearing today. Decipher the messages these clothes send to other people. Which details are particularly important?



Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy, For the apparel oft proclaims the man, And they in France of the best rank and station Are of a most select and generous chief in that.

(William Shakespeare)

izquotes.com

Exploring artistic details

Details in fiction are explicit characteristics of places, objects and people portrayed in literary texts, ensuring the **verisimilitude** of fiction. Artistic details often depict a minor, inconspicuous characteristic of a complex and multifaceted phenomenon since it is impossible to describe phenomena in their entirety. There is always a necessity to “balance the impulse towards universality against the impulse towards individuality, which is an equally important factor in the artistic choice of detail”³.

Authors resort to details not only to convey certain messages about the fictional world, but also to activate the reader’s attention and associative thinking. Artistic details contribute greatly to the imagery of the text, as well as to the reader’s individual perception of it. Different readers may “decode” details in a variety of ways, depending on their own background, observation skills, creativity and other factors.

³ Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, “Style in Fiction”, p. 125.

Depicting details reflect physical characteristics of landscapes, people, etc., evoking tangible presence of the depicted object. **Authenticity** (or authenticating) details refer to certain facts and phenomena of the real world with which readers are supposed to be familiar in order to create the illusion of authenticity and enhance the credibility of the text. **Characterological** details reveal the personages' traits and habits, giving insights into their psychological profiles and relationships with others. **Implicit** details are external characteristics that hint at certain processes that are hidden from view. In some cases, a detail may perform several functions at once and even acquire a **symbolic** meaning.



Task 1

Synecdoche represents the whole through its part. What, in your opinion, is the difference between synecdoche and artistic detail?

Task 2

Read an excerpt from “The Jane Austen Book Club” by Karen Joy Fowler describing how the characters were dressed for another Book Club meeting. Do you think some of the details can be regarded as implicit? If so, which ones? Say how do you visualise...

✓ Sylvia

✓ Allegra

- ✓ Jocelyn
- ✓ Bernadette
- ✓ Grigg

Sylvia was looking uncommonly elegant tonight. She had cut her hair as short as Allegra's and was dressed in a long skirt with a Chinese-red fitted top. Applied a plummy lipstick and had her eyebrows shaped. We were pleased to see that she'd reached that drop-dead stage of the divorce proceedings.

She was on her feet and dressed to kill.

Allegra was, as always, vivid. Jocelyn was classic. Grigg was casual – corduroys and a green rugby shirt. Bernadette had already spilled hummus on her yoga pants.

The pants were spotted with olive and blue flowers, and now there was a hummus-coloured spot as well on the ledge of her stomach. You could go a long time without noticing the stain, however. You could go a long time without looking at her pants. This was because she'd broken her glasses sometime after our last meeting and patched them together with a startling great lump of paper clips and masking tape.

It was possible they weren't even broken. It was possible she'd merely lost the little screw.

Task 3

Read four more excerpts from “The Jane Austen Book Club” and find examples of **depicting**, **authenticity** and **characterological** details in them. *Are there any implicit details?*

There was a rug by the couch that many of us recognized from the Sundance catalogue as something we ourselves had wanted, the one with poppies on the edges. The sun glanced off a row of copper pots in the kitchen window. Each pot held an African violet, some white, some purple, and you have to admire a man who keeps his houseplants alive, especially when they've been transferred into pots with no holes for drainage. It made us begrudge him the rug less. Of course, the violets could all have been new, bought just to impress us. But then again, who were we that we needed impressing?

Grigg had grown up in Orange County, the only boy in a family with four children, and the youngest. His oldest sister, Amelia, was eight when he was born, Bianca was seven, and Caty, who was called Catydid when she was little and Cat when she was older, was five.

He was always way too easy to tease. Sometimes they told him not to be such a boy and sometimes not to be such a baby. It didn't seem to leave a whole lot of things for him to be.

If Grigg had been a girl, his name would have been Delia. Instead he was named after his father's father, who'd died just about the time Grigg was born and already no one seemed to remember him very well. "A man's man," Grigg's father said, "a quiet man," which was a movie Grigg had seen on television and so he always pictured his grandfather as John Wayne.

Grigg was the only one of the children with his own bedroom. This was a continual source of resentment. The room was so tiny the bed barely fit and his chest of drawers had to be put in the hall. Still, it was all his. The ceiling slanted; there was a single window, and wallpaper with yellow rosebuds, which Amelia had picked because the room had been hers until Grigg came along. If he'd been a girl she would have gotten to keep the room.

When the wind blew, a branch tapped against the glass like fingers, but that surely wouldn't have scared Amelia. Grigg would lie in the dark, all by himself, and the tree creaked and tapped. He would hear his sisters laughing down the hall. He knew when it was Amelia laughing and when it was Bianca and when it was Cat, even if he couldn't hear the words. He guessed they were talking about boys, a subject on which they had nothing pleasant to say.

Grigg's father couldn't stand up to them at all. They hated the smell of his pipe, so he smoked only in his tool shed. They hated sports, so he went out to his car to listen to games on the radio. When they wanted money, they flirted for it, straightening his tie and kissing his cheek until, helpless as a kitten, he pulled his wallet from his back pocket. Once Grigg did the very same thing, blinked his heavy lashes and pouted his lips. Cat laughed so hard she choked on a peanut, which could have killed her. Amelia had heard of that happening to someone, and how would Grigg have felt then?

Task 3



Watch the TED talk given by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie at TED Global 2009 entitled “**The Danger of a Single Story**” and comment on the following details she mentions:

- ✓ ginger beer
- ✓ a well-crafted basket
- ✓ a tape of Mariah Carey

❖ Do you think these details acquire symbolic meaning in this talk? What do they represent?

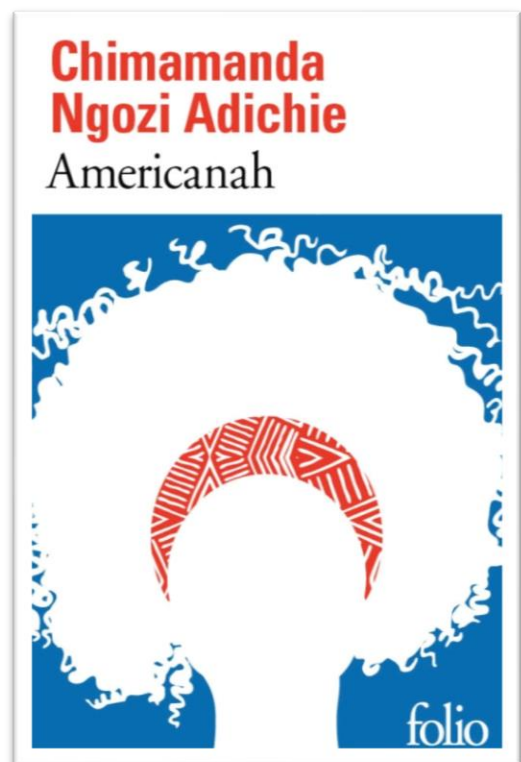
- ❖ What is the message of the talk? How do the details mentioned above reinforce it?
- ❖ Do you think your own country has a “single story”?

Details in Stories

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (born in 1977) is a Nigerian writer. She has lived both in Nigeria and the USA and published several novels, short stories, poems and essays in English. Adichie is also famous for her feminist activity: her “We should all be feminists” TEDx talk has been viewed by millions of people and it inspired Beyoncé’s song “Flawless”.

The novel “**Americanah**” (2013), which explores experiences of a young Nigerian woman in America, was selected by the New York Times as one of “The 10 Best Books of 2013”. Ifemelu, the story’s protagonist,

immigrates to the USA to attend university and discovers what it really means to be black in contemporary America.



Read the opening episode of “Americanah” and say what role artistic details play in it.

Princeton, in the summer, smelled of nothing, and although Ifemelu liked the tranquil greenness of the many trees, the clean streets and stately homes, the delicately overpriced shops, and the quiet, abiding air of earned grace, it was this, the lack of a smell, that most appealed to her, perhaps because the other American cities she knew well had all smelled distinctly. Philadelphia had the musty scent of history. New Haven smelled of neglect. Baltimore smelled of brine, and Brooklyn of sun-warmed garbage. But Princeton had no smell. She liked taking deep breaths here. She liked watching the locals who drove with pointed courtesy and parked their latest model cars outside the organic grocery store on Nassau Street or outside the sushi restaurants or outside the ice cream shop that had fifty different flavors including red pepper or outside the post office where effusive staff bounded out to greet them at the entrance. She liked the campus, grave with knowledge, the Gothic buildings with their vine-laced walls, and the way everything transformed, in the half-light of night, into a ghostly scene. She liked, most of all, that in this place of affluent ease, she could pretend to be someone else, someone specially admitted into a hallowed American club, someone adorned with certainty.

But she did not like that she had to go to Trenton to braid her hair. It was unreasonable to expect a braiding salon in Princeton – the few black locals she had seen were so light-skinned and lank-haired she could not imagine them wearing braids – and yet as she waited at Princeton Junction station for the train, on an afternoon ablaze with heat, she wondered why there was no place where she could braid her hair. The chocolate bar in her handbag had melted. A few other people were waiting on the platform, all of them white and lean, in short, flimsy clothes. The man standing closest to her was eating an ice cream cone; she had always found it a little irresponsible, the eating of ice cream cones by grown-up American men, especially the eating of ice cream cones by grown-up American men in public. He turned to her and said, “About time,” when the train finally creaked in, with the familiarity strangers adopt with each other after sharing in the disappointment of a public service. She smiled at him. The graying hair on the back of his head was swept forward, a comical arrangement to disguise his bald spot. He had to be an

academic, but not in the humanities or he would be more self-conscious. A firm science like chemistry, maybe. Before, she would have said, “I know,” that peculiar American expression that professed agreement rather than knowledge, and then she would have started a conversation with him, to see if he would say something she could use in her blog. People were flattered to be asked about themselves and if she said nothing after they spoke, it made them say more. They were conditioned to fill silences. If they asked what she did, she would say vaguely, “I write a lifestyle blog,” because saying “I write an anonymous blog called *Raceteenth* or *Various Observations About American Blacks (Those Formerly Known as Negroes) by a Non-American Black*” would make them uncomfortable. She had said it, though, a few times. Once to a dreadlocked white man who sat next to her on the train, his hair like old twine ropes that ended in a blond fuzz, his tattered shirt worn with enough piety to convince her that he was a social warrior and might make a good guest blogger. “Race is totally overhyped these days, black people need to get over themselves, it’s all about class now, the haves and the have-nots,” he told her evenly, and she used it as the opening sentence of a post titled “Not All Dreadlocked White American Guys Are Down.” Then there was the man from Ohio, who was squeezed next to her on a flight. A middle manager, she was sure, from his boxy suit and contrast collar. He wanted to know what she meant by “lifestyle blog,” and she told him, expecting him to become reserved, or to end the conversation by saying something defensively bland like “The only race that matters is the human race.” But he said, “Ever write about adoption? Nobody wants black babies in this country, and I don’t mean biracial, I mean black. Even the black families don’t want them.”

He told her that he and his wife had adopted a black child and their neighbors looked at them as though they had chosen to become martyrs for a dubious cause. Her blog post about him, “Badly-Dressed White Middle Managers from Ohio Are Not Always What You Think,” had received the highest number of comments for that month. She still wondered if he had read it. She hoped so. Often, she would sit in cafes, or airports, or train stations, watching strangers, imagining their lives, and wondering which of them were likely to have read her blog. Now her ex-blog. She had written the final post

only days ago, trailed by two hundred and seventy-four comments so far. All those readers, growing month by month, linking and cross-posting, knowing so much more than she did; they had always frightened and exhilarated her. SapphicDerrida, one of the most frequent posters, wrote: I'm a bit surprised by how personally I am taking this. Good luck as you pursue the unnamed "life change" but please come back to the blogosphere soon. You've used your irreverent, hectoring, funny and thought-provoking voice to create a space for real conversations about an important subject. Readers like SapphicDerrida, who reeled off statistics and used words like "reify" in their comments, made Ifemelu nervous, eager to be fresh and to impress, so that she began, over time, to feel like a vulture hacking into the carcasses of people's stories for something she could use. Sometimes making fragile links to race. Sometimes not believing herself. The more she wrote, the less sure she became. Each post scraped off yet one more scale of self until she felt naked and false.

The ice-cream-eating man sat beside her on the train and, to discourage conversation, she stared fixedly at a brown stain near her feet, a spilled frozen Frappuccino, until they arrived at Trenton. The platform was crowded with black people, many of them fat, in short, flimsy clothes. It still startled her, what a difference a few minutes of train travel made. During her first year in America, when she took New Jersey Transit to Penn Station and then the subway to visit Auntie Uju in Flatlands, she was struck by how mostly slim white people got off at the stops in Manhattan and, as the train went further into Brooklyn, the people left were mostly black and fat. She had not thought of them as "fat," though. She had thought of them as "big," because one of the first things her friend Ginika told her was that "fat" in America was a bad word, heaving with moral judgment like "stupid" or "bastard," and not a mere description like "short" or "tall." So she had banished "fat" from her vocabulary. But "fat" came back to her last winter, after almost thirteen years, when a man in line behind her at the supermarket muttered, "Fat people don't need to be eating that shit," as she paid for her giant bag of Tostitos¹. She glanced at him, surprised, mildly offended, and thought it a perfect blog post, how this stranger had decided she was fat. She would file the post under the tag "race, gender and body size." But back home, as she stood and faced

the mirror's truth, she realized that she had ignored, for too long, the new tightness of her clothes, the rubbing together of her inner thighs, the softer, rounder parts of her that shook when she moved. She was fat.

She said the word "fat" slowly, funneling it back and forward, and thought about all the other things she had learned not to say aloud in America. She was fat. She was not curvy or big-boned; she was fat, it was the only word that felt true. And she had ignored, too, the cement in her soul. Her blog was doing well, with thousands of unique visitors each month, and she was earning good speaking fees, and she had a fellowship at Princeton and a relationship with Blaine – "You are the absolute love of my life," he'd written in her last birthday card – and yet there was cement in her soul. It had been there for a while, an early morning disease of fatigue, a bleakness and borderlessness. It brought with it amorphous longings, shapeless desires, brief imaginary glints of other lives she could be living, that over the months melded into a piercing homesickness. She scoured Nigerian websites, Nigerian profiles on Facebook, Nigerian blogs, and each click brought yet another story of a young person who had recently moved back home, clothed in American or British degrees, to start an investment company, a music production business, a fashion label, a magazine, a fast-food franchise. She looked at photographs of these men and women and felt the dull ache of loss, as though they had prised open her hand and taken something of hers. They were living her life. Nigeria became where she was supposed to be, the only place she could sink her roots in without the constant urge to tug them out and shake off the soil. And, of course, there was also Obinze. Her first love, her first lover, the only person with whom she had never felt the need to explain herself. He was now a husband and father, and they had not been in touch in years, yet she could not pretend that he was not a part of her homesickness, or that she did not often think of him, sifting through their past, looking for portents of what she could not name.

The rude stranger in the supermarket – who knew what problems he was wrestling with, haggard and thin-lipped as he was – had intended to offend her but had instead prodded her awake.

She began to plan and to dream, to apply for jobs in Lagos. She did not tell Blaine at first, because she wanted to finish her fellowship at Princeton, and

then after her fellowship ended, she did not tell him because she wanted to give herself time to be sure. But as the weeks passed, she knew she would never be sure. So she told him that she was moving back home, and she added, “I have to,” knowing he would hear in her words the sound of an ending.



“Why?” Blaine asked, almost automatically, stunned by her announcement. There they were, in his living room in New Haven, awash in soft jazz and daylight, and she looked at him, her good, bewildered man, and felt the day take on a sad, epic quality. They had lived together for three years, three years free of crease, like a smoothly ironed sheet, until their only fight, months ago, when Blaine’s eyes froze with blame and he refused to speak to her. But they had survived that fight, mostly because of Barack Obama, bonding anew over their shared passion. On election night, before Blaine kissed her, his face wet with tears, he held her tightly as though Obama’s victory was also their personal victory. And now here she was telling him it was over.

“Why?” he asked. He taught ideas of nuance and complexity in his classes and yet he was asking her for a single reason, the cause. But she had not had a bold epiphany and there was no cause; it was simply that layer after layer of discontent had settled in her, and formed a mass that now propelled her. She did not tell him this, because it would hurt him to know she had felt that way for a while, that her relationship with him was like being content in a house but always sitting by the window and looking out.

“Take the plant,” he said to her, on the last day she saw him, when she was packing the clothes she kept in his apartment. He looked defeated, standing slump-shouldered in the kitchen. It was his houseplant, hopeful green leaves rising from three bamboo stems, and when she took it, a sudden crushing loneliness lanced through her and stayed with her for weeks. Sometimes, she still felt it. How was it possible to miss something you no longer wanted? Blaine needed what she was unable to give and she needed what he was unable to give, and she grieved this, the loss of what could have been.

Notes

1. Tostitos is a brand producing snacks, mostly crisps.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did Ifemelu write about in her blog? Why did she decide to finish this project? 2. Is Ifemelu an observant person? What does she pay a lot of attention to? 3. How does the comment of a rude stranger in the supermarket affect her? 4. Who is Obinze? Do you think he is still important to the protagonist? 5. Who is Blaine? What kind of person is he?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What artistic details have you spotted in the excerpt? What effect did they have on you? 2. How do you visualise Ifemelu? Describe the way you see her in your mind' eye. Did the cover of the book given above influence your perception? 3. Do you identify with this character? Why / why not? 4. If such blog really existed, would you like to read it? Do you read blog that focus on burning political and social issues? 5. Do you use the word “fat” when talking about people or do you avoid it? Explain how you feel using this word or when others use it.

Language Practice

Task 1: Quantifiers



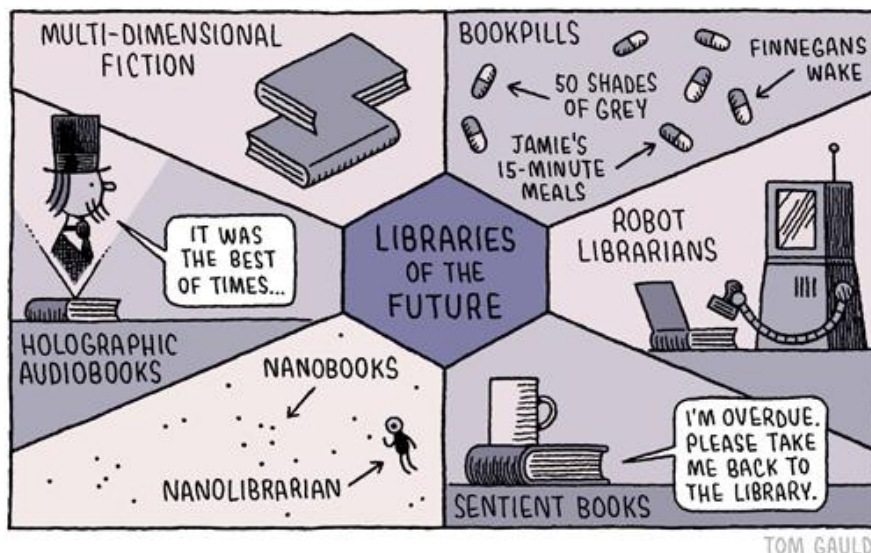
Compare the following two sentences taken from the text above. Explain the difference between **a few** and **the few** in these examples.

<p>The few black locals she had seen were so light-skinned and lank-haired she could not imagine them wearing braids.</p>	<p>A few other people were waiting on the platform, all of them white and lean, in short, flimsy clothes.</p>
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Quantifiers **a few** / **few** / **the few** are used with countable nouns. A few means some, several, while few means “not many” (often implying “not enough”). The definitive article may be added before few in a specifying context. The comparative form of few is fewer.

- There are **a few** students in the library (several).
- There are **few** students in the library (not many, not enough).
- **The few** students who still visit the library are mainly attracted by the free WiFi. (specified context).
- Nowadays **fewer** students visit the library than 10 years ago (comparison).

Comment on the image by Tom Gauld depicting the future of libraries. Use a few / few / the few / fewer in your speech.



Respond to the sentences below using a few / few / the few / fewer + the suggested word.

1. I don't want to offend anyone by calling them “fat”, but what can I say? (acceptable)
2. Who should we choose to represent our faculty in the competition? We don't seem to have a perfect candidate. (impeccable)
3. So what do you think of the sequel so far? (longwinded)
4. Why are you reading this blog about vegetarian diet? You're not a vegetarian, are you? (convincing)
5. Which books have really captivated you recently? (enthraling)
6. I need to find some material about poems and songs with interesting settings. Can I pick your brain on that? (vibrant)

Task 2: Vocabulary for Book Discussions

Look at the table with words and expressions below. Make sure you are familiar with all of them. Use the dictionary if necessary.

When the story is plot-driven...	Not just the plot...	When we are captivated...	When we are disappointed...
<p>I couldn't put the book down.</p> <p>It's a real page-turner.</p> <p>The film kept us on the edge of our seats from start to finish.</p> <p>The show is utterly gripping / riveting.</p> <p>We waited for the final episode with bated breath.</p> <p>The storyline was too complicated: it took a long time to work out what was going on.</p>	<p>A book / film has slow pacing / is slow-paced and the story is rather character-driven.</p> <p>The characters come to life with the witty dialogue.</p> <p>The imagery is bizarre, but compelling.</p> <p>The sense of magic came across very powerfully.</p> <p>The book is beautifully written and completely authentic in detail.</p>	<p>The book / film is captivating / enthralling / impressive / superb / brilliant.</p> <p>It draws you in from the first page.</p> <p>My immersion into the storyworld was complete.</p> <p>The show was out of this world.</p> <p>I've never been so engrossed in a book before.</p> <p>It's an entirely fascinating and heartwarming tale.</p>	<p>The story was too long drawn out.</p> <p>The protagonist behaviour at the end was out of character.</p> <p>The series is definitely over-hyped.</p> <p>The surprise ending didn't work.</p> <p>It was a bit of an anticlimax.</p> <p>This episode put me off watching any more from this series.</p> <p>The book didn't live up to its promise.</p> <p>The author had an ambitious aim, but he just didn't pull it off.</p>

Work in pairs. Make up dialogues discussing a book / a film / a TV series you've recently watched.

Writing

Task 1



Do you often recommend books or films to friends? Which of the words and idioms above would you use in a recommendation?

Watch a book review of “Casual Vacancy” by J.K. Rowling⁴ and answer the questions:

- ✓ Why didn't the reviewer enjoy the book as much as she had hoped?
- ✓ How did she feel after reading the book?
- ✓ Who does she recommend to?

Write a paragraph recommending a story to a friend who is fond of plot-driven fiction.

Task 2

A common mistake in writing is using run-on sentences and comma splices. A **run-on** sentence consists of two or more clauses that are not joined properly by a connecting word or not separated by a proper punctuation mark. When two independent clauses are separated by a comma without a proper conjunction the sentence turns into a **comma splice**. Both cases should be avoided in formal writing. This error can also be fixed by changing the two clauses into two separate sentences or by substituting the comma to a semicolon. Consider the examples below:

➤ *Incorrect:* I enjoyed the story enormously, its plot is utterly gripping.

➤ *Correct:* I enjoyed the story enormously. Its plot is utterly gripping.

I enjoyed the story enormously; its plot is utterly gripping.

I enjoyed the story enormously because its plot is utterly gripping.

Consider the following sentence from the excerpt above. Is it a run-on sentence / a comma splice?

➤ The man standing closest to her was eating an ice cream cone; she had always found it a little irresponsible, the eating of ice cream cones by grown-up American men, especially the eating of ice cream cones by grown-up American men in public.

⁴<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFH48jVRMOk>

Check the plot summaries and other written tasks you have done previously for run-on sentences and comma splices. If you find any, correct their punctuation.

Project

Devil is in the Detail



Do you remember stories where a seemingly innocuous detail played a pivotal role? What was that detail? How was it introduced in the beginning and when did it become apparent that it was more than it seemed? Explain the role of this detail in the plot, character development and your own perception of the story.



In the film “The Shawshank Redemption” (1994) a crucial detail is a poster on the wall of the protagonist’s cell.

UNIT 8

The Poetry of Life: Choosing the Right Image

Lead In

- ❖ Do you often read poetry? Why / why not?
- ❖ Do poetic lines (in poems and song lyrics) always trigger visualisation? Explain with examples.

Look at the two images below. What stories do you think they tell?



The lines below are taken from famous poems in English. Can you recognise them? Two of them correspond to the images above. Which ones?



And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;



I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.



Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try:
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy.



And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?



Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.



Which images from these lines do you find most striking?
The illustrations above are respectively by Gustave Doré and Omar Rayyan.
Do you think it conveys the imagery of the poems well?

Exploring Imagery

Imagery is one of the most wide-spread terms you find in literary criticism and reviews. According to “A Glossary of Literary Terms”, this notion is frequently used in the following three situations (the common ground among them being that imagery adds **concreteness** to the work of fiction):

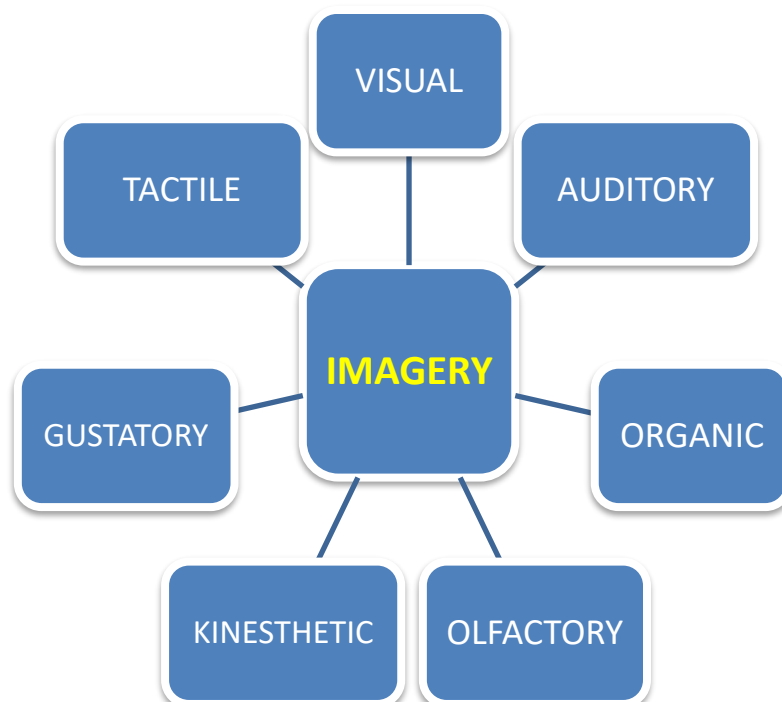
1. “Imagery” comprises all the “images”, that is all the objects and qualities perceived through **senses** in the fictional work. These images can be

rendered by literal description, allusion or figures of speech (similes, metaphors, etc.). Imagery in this understanding includes not only **visual** sense qualities, but also qualities that are **auditory** (sound), **tactile** (touch), **olfactory** (smell), **gustatory** (taste), **kinesthetic** (movement) and **thermal** (hot and cold). The latter is sometimes included in a larger group of imagery – **organic** (relating to such internal feelings such as pain, hunger, thirst, fatigue, lust, etc.).

2. “Imagery” in a narrower sense is used to refer to **vivid** and **descriptive** portrayals of objects and scenes. In this sense the term is often combined with an adjective linking it to a particular genre or style: **gothic**, **macabre**, **bizarre**, **romantic**, etc., as in “This poem is full of macabre and supernatural imagery” or “The novel draws heavily on gothic imagery”.
3. “Imagery” is also used to signify **figurative** language, especially metaphors and similes. It has been particularly emphasised as the essential component in poetry, being a major factor in creating **effect** and generating **meaning**.

Task 1

Look again at the lines from the poems in Lead In. What types of imagery do you find there? Which type do you come across more often in fiction and why?




Task 2

Read the excerpt from “Howl’s Moving Castle” by Diana Wynne Jones and comment on the imagery used in it. What role does figurative language play in the passage? What is the effect produced?

Meanwhile a certain amount of moaning and groaning was coming from upstairs. Sophie kept muttering to the dog and ignored it. A loud, hollow coughing followed, dying away into more moaning. Crashing sneezes followed the coughing, each one rattling the window and all the doors. Sophie found those harder to ignore, but she managed. Poot-pooooot! went a blown nose, like a bassoon in a tunnel. The coughing started again, mingled with moans. Sneezes mixed with the moans and the coughs, and the sounds rose to a crescendo in which Howl seemed to be managing to cough, groan, blow his nose, sneeze, and wail gently all at the same time. The doors rattled, the beams in the ceiling shook, and one of Calcifer’s logs rolled off onto the hearth.

"All right, all right, I get the message!" Sophie said, dumping the log back into the grate.

Discussion

 *Work in pairs. Discuss diverse effects that some types of imagery have on you. Think not only of fiction, but of all spheres where you are likely to encounter this imagery. You may focus on some of the suggested issues below:*



- ✓ Graphic descriptions of violence
- ✓ Abstract art
- ✓ Beautiful nature and landscape depictions
- ✓ Portrayals of funny and cute animals
- ✓ Visual effects (such optical illusions)
- ✓ Erotic imagery
- ✓ “Food porn” in fiction, film and everyday life

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciation Tips

There are a lot of words in English that are spelt with “o”, but pronounced with /ʌ/ in the British RP. Look at the list of words below and pronounce only the ones with /ʌ/.

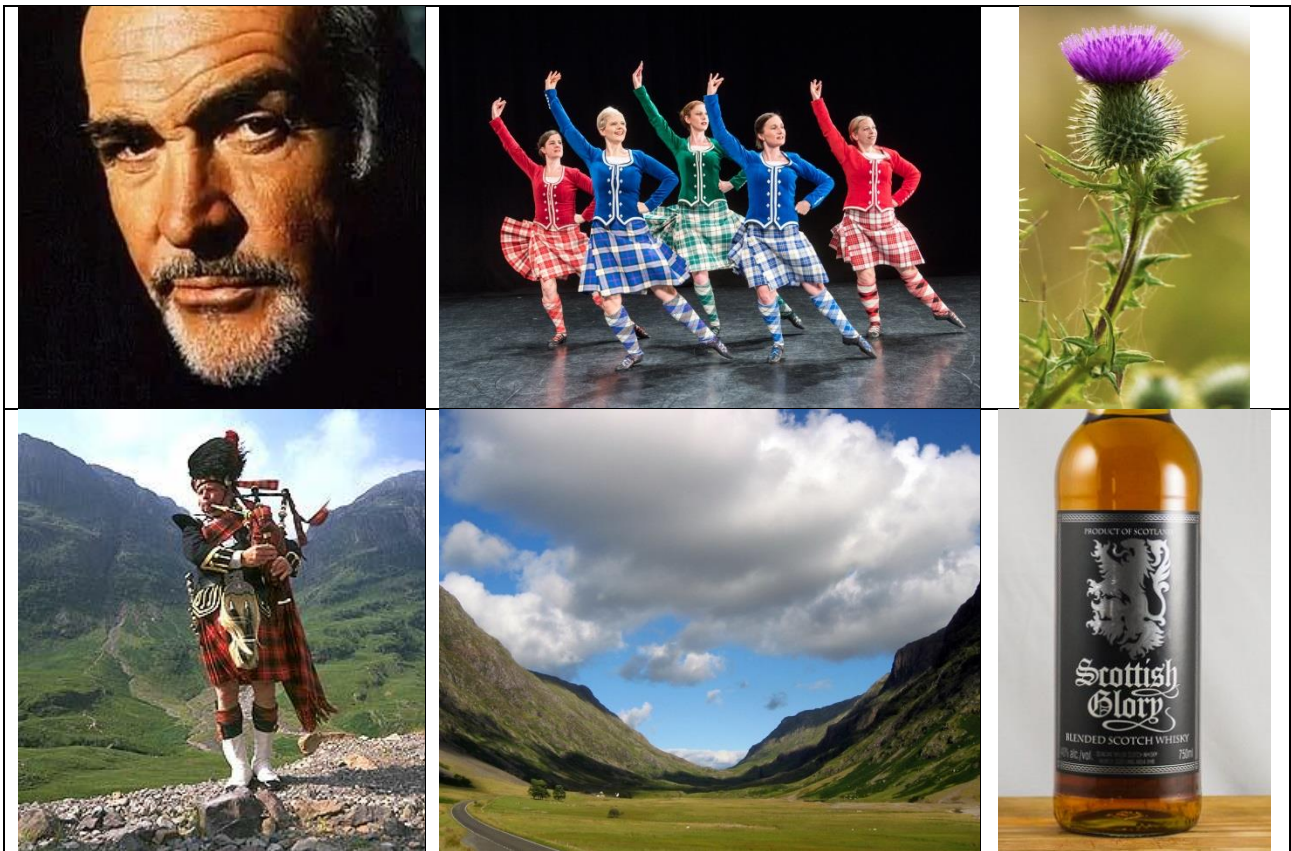
London, gone, son, Donne, front, sonnet, lovely, among, provocative, company, money, novel, honey, engrossing, modern, done, won, Scotland, government, above, oven, wonder, glove, Monday, focus, nothing, accomplish, another, story, shovel

How are these words pronounced in other varieties of English (American, Australian, Scottish, etc.)?

Imagery in Poetry

What images do you associate with Scotland?

Think of all types of imagery (visual, auditory, gustatory, etc.) that might represent Scotland.



What do you think contemporary Scottish poets are likely to write about?

Jackie Kay (born in 1961) is a Scottish poet and writer. She was born in to a Scottish mother and a Nigerian father and she was adopted as a baby by a white Scottish couple. In her poetry and prose she has written a lot about identity, race, nationality, gender and sexuality. She is openly lesbian and had a 15-year-long relationship with another famous Scottish poet, Carol Ann Duffy. Kay has received numerous awards for her poetry and in 2016 she was announced the third modern Scots Makar (the national poet of Scotland). Jackie Kay started her post as Scotland’s Makar by writing a long poem for the opening of the Scottish Parliament in July 2016. The poem is called “Threshold” and she delivered it in person with the help of two other people, who recited the lines in different languages (the poem repeats its main message in dozens of languages). The full version of the poem is available online, while an excerpt is given below.



Read the excerpt paying attention to the imagery the poet uses to represent contemporary Scotland. You may also read the full version of the poem at <http://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poetry/poems/threshold> and watch the recital at the opening of the Parliament on YouTube.

Threshold (excerpt)

Here – rising out of the sloping base of Arthur’s Seat¹
Straight into this City, a city that must also speak

For the banks and the braes, munros, cairns, bothies²
Songs, art, poems, art, stories,

(And don’t forget the ceilidhs³ – who doesnie love a ceilidh? Heuch!)
A city that remembers the fiddlers of Shetland and Orkney

The folk of Colonsay, Bute, and Tiree⁴
The Inner and Outer Hebrides, the glens and the Bens

The trees and the rivers and the burns and the lochs and the sea lochs
(And Nessie!)

The Granite City and Dumfries and Galloway
The Dear green place and Dundee...

Across the stars and the galaxy,
The night sky’s tiny keys, the hail clanjamfarie!⁵

Find here what you are looking for:
Democracy in its infancy: guard her

Like you would a small daughter
And keep the door wide open, not just ajar,

And say, in any language you please, welcome, welcome
To the world’s refugees.

Scotland’s changing faces – look at me!!
Whose birth mother walked through the door

Of a mother and baby home here
And walked out of Elsie Inglis hospital without me.
My Makar, her daughter, Makar
Of Ferlie Leed and gallus tongues.

And this is my country says the fisherwoman from Jura.
Mine too says the child from Canna and Iona.

Mine too say the Brain family.
And mine! says the man from the Polish deli

And mine said the brave and beautiful Asid Shah.
Me too said the Black Scots and the red Scots

Said William Wallace and Mary Queen of Scots.
Said both the Roberts and Muriel Spark.

Said Emile Sande and Arthur Wharton.
Said Ali Smith and Edwin Morgan.

Said Liz Lochhead, Norman and Sorley
And mine said the Syrian refugee.

Here we are in this building of pure poetry
On this July morning in front of her Majesty.

Good Day Ma'am, Ma'am Good Day.
Good morning John and Helen Kay -

Great believers in democracy.
And in gieing it laldy.⁶

Our strength is our difference.
Dinny fear it. Dinny caw canny.⁷

歡迎 (Cantonese)

Welcome

Witamy (Polish)

It takes more than one language to tell a story

एक कहानी सुनाने के लिए, एक से अधिक भाषाएं लगती हैं (Hindi)

Welcome

ਜੀ ਆਇਆ ਤੂੰ (Punjabi)

One language is never enough

Une seule langue n'est jamais suffisante (French)

Welcome

Fàilte (Gaelic)

[...]

Ci vuole più di una lingua per raccontare una storia.

Benvenuto.

Una sola lingua non è mai abbastanza.

Benvenuto. (Italian)

Cal més d'un idioma per explicar una història.

Benvingudes.

Un idioma mai no és prou.

Benvingudes. (Catalan)

Ne samo jedan jezik je dovoljno je ispricati priču.

Dobrodošli.

Jedan jezik nikad nije dovoljno.

Dobrodošli. (Serbian)

Щоб розповісти історію потрібно більше, ніж одна мова
 Ласкаво просимо
 Однієї мови ніколи не достатньо
 Ласкаво просимо (Ukrainian)

Notes

1. Arthur's Seat is the main peak of the group of hills in Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland.
2. Braes, munros, cairns, bothies are words in Scots English, meaning respectively: slopes, mountains, mounds, cottages.
3. Ceilidh is a traditional gathering with folk dancing. The phrase "who doesnie love a ceilidh? Heuch!" means "Who doesn't like a folk dance? Hey!"
4. Colonsay, Bute, and Tiree are the names of some of the Scottish islands.
5. Clanjamfarie is Scottish word for chaotic, disorderly gathering.
6. The Scottish phrase "gieing it laldy" means "singing / giving it loudly / proudly".
7. "Dinny fear it. Dinny caw canny" means "Do not fear it. Do not go slowly"

Discussion



1. What imagery represents Scotland in "Threshold"?
2. A lot of people are mentioned in this poem. Find out who some of them are and say why they were included, in your opinion.
3. Focus on the image of doors. What do they symbolise? Explain the title of the poem.
4. What other figures of speech are used in the poem?
5. Why do you think some of the lines are repeated in many languages? What is the message of this poem?
6. What imagery would you use to convey an important message about your own country? Describe the imagery to your classmates and let them guess what your message is supposed to be.

Romantic imagery has always been popular in art, poetry and fiction. What is your favourite romantic image (place, object, character, etc.)?

Read the poem “Late Love” by Jackie Kay taken from her 2005 collection “Life Mask”. Who is this poem about?

Late Love

How they strut about, people in love,
how tall they grow, pleased with themselves,
their hair, glossy, their skin shining.
They don't remember who they have been.

How filmic they are just for this time.
How important they've become – secret, above
the order of things, the dreary mundane.
Every church bell ringing, a fresh sign.

How dull the lot that are not in love.
Their clothes shabby, their skin lustreless;
how clueless they are, hair a mess; how they trudge
up and down streets in the rain,
remembering one kiss in a dark alley,
a touch in a changing-room, if lucky, a lovely wait
for the phone to ring, maybe, baby.
The past with its rush of velvet, its secret hush
already miles away, dimming now, in the late day.





Author's note:

“Late Love” is the opening poem in my collection “Life Mask”, a book that dwells on the various masks we wear. In this poem, I was interested in how people in love differ from people who have fallen out of love and how physically that manifests itself. I was also interested in the idea that when people are madly in love they are in love with the idea of being in love as much as they are with each other, and so the world feels as if it belongs to them, and they feel invincible, forgetting the other, sadder state of not being desired or wanted. I wanted the poem to explore both states – in and out of love – and turn on a line, the way that love can change in a day. And I hoped that the poem might make people laugh with recognition. I wanted to explore the idea that being in love itself can be a kind of a mask, and that there is a certain amount of kidding that must go on – “I’ve never felt like this before” etc – for the crazy state to be entered fully!

Discussion



1. Who do you think this poem is about?
2. The imagery in this poem falls into two distinct groups. What effect is achieved by this?
3. Does this poem resonate with your own feelings? Why / why not?
4. Read the author’s comment above and compare it with your own impression of the poem.
5. Look at the picture “Dance Me to the End of Love” by Jack Vettriano, a self-taught Scottish artist, given on the previous page. What story does the picture tell? What imagery is used to depict the feelings of the people in it?
6. What imagery would you choose to describe the feeling of being in love / out of love? How would you render the contrast between the two states?

The poem “Grandpa’s Soup” by Jackie Kay was originally published in “The Frog Who Dreamed She Was an Opera Singer” collection in 1998. In 2004 it was reproduced on a postcard for National Poetry Day. The postcard was distributed in schools, libraries and other venues. The theme for 2004 National Poetry Day was the food.

Grandpa’s Soup

No one makes soup like my Grandpa’s,
with its diced carrots the perfect size
and its diced potatoes the perfect size
and its wee soft bits –
what are their names?[?]
and its big bit of hough,¹
which rhymes with loch, floating
like a rich island in the middle of the soup sea.

I say, Grandpa, Grandpa your soup is the best soup in the whole world.

And Grandpa says, Och,²
which rhymes with hough and loch,
Och, Don’t be daft,
because he’s shy about his soup, my Grandpa.
He knows I will grow up and pine for it.
I will fall ill and desperately need it.
I will long for it my whole life after he is gone.
Every soup will become sad and wrong after he is gone.
He knows when I’m older I will avoid soup altogether.
Oh Grandpa, Grandpa, why is your soup so glorious? I say
tucking into my fourth bowl in a day.

Barley! That’s the name of the wee soft bits. Barley.

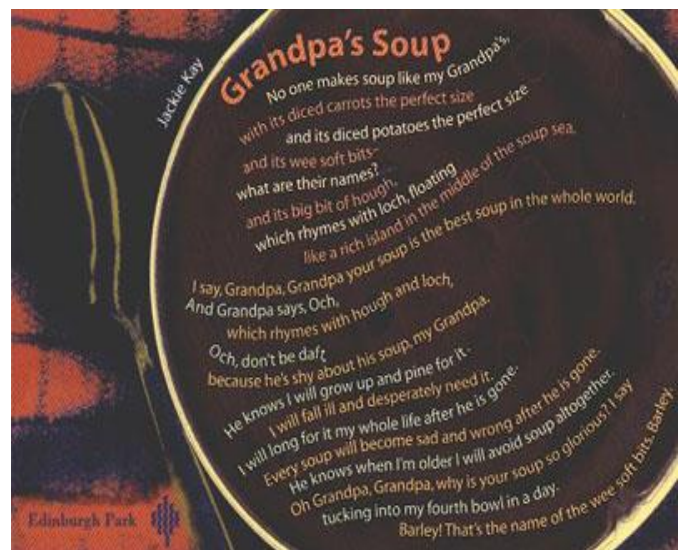
Notes

1. Hough (also known as ham hock or pork knuckle) is a part of pig’s knee used in cooking.

- Och is a general interjection of confirmation, affirmation and often disapproval used chiefly in Scotland and Ireland.

Discussion

- What imagery is used to depict Grandpa's dish?
- What feeling does the poem evoke?
- What role does the language play in conveying the feeling?
- Do you have a favourite dish associated with an older relative? Which imagery would you use to visualise it and to convey your feelings about it?



Language Practice

Task 1: Quantifiers

Quantifiers **a little / little / the little** are used with uncountable nouns. **A little** means a small amount of something, while **little** means “not a lot” (often implying “not enough”). The definitive article may be added before few in a specifying context. The comparative form of little is **less**. **A little** can also be used to modify adjectives and adverbs.

A LITTLE MORE PERSISTENCE, A LITTLE MORE EFFORT, AND WHAT SEEMED HOPELESS FAILURE MAY TURN TO GLORIOUS SUCCESS. - ELBERT HUBBARD

- A little patience is all you need (a small amount).
- They have little concern for future generations (not enough or not at all).
- I am not sure we can work it out in the little time that is available (specified context).
- There is less hand-waving in the sequel than in the first book (comparison).
- Her comments seem a little flippant (modifying an adjective).
- She explained it to me thoroughly, if a little condescendingly (modifying an adverb).

Respond to the sentences below using a little / little / the little / less + the suggested word.

1. The novel must be superb: it gets brilliant reviews. (over-hyped)
2. What put you off watching the series? (sympathy)
3. The story is riveting: I could put the book down. (engrossed)
4. What do you need to become observant? (mindset)
5. The author went to great lengths to make the setting vibrant, but he just didn't pull it off. (diversity)

Fill in the gaps using (a / the) few / little / fewer / less in the sentences below.

1. There is ... demand for printed books nowadays than in the previous century.
2. Every round character needs ... flaws.
3. ... sunshine would definitely cheer me up.
4. They tried to make the most of ... time they could spend together.
5. We've had ... sunshine since October.
6. ... allusions to Shakespeare in his stories are likely to be lost on most readers.
7. I think she was ... incredulous when I told her how you had pulled a rabbit out of the hat in the last minute.
8. You said you had ... mistakes in your test but your score tells a different story.
9. I am relieved that these images trigger ... bad memories than before.

Writing



When giving a book recommendation, we usually start with the summary of the plot (avoiding spoilers), then we single out a few peculiarities of the book (the ones we find most salient) and then we finish with a recommendation itself. The format is not strict; it is possible, therefore, to write your recommendation in a number of ways.

Work in groups of 3 or 4. Choose one of the stories you have already discussed in class this semester. Brainstorm ideas how to recommend it and write a plan. Consider the following issues:

- ✓ Is it going to be formal or informal piece of writing?
- ✓ What structure are you going to use for the recommendation?
- ✓ What is necessary to include in the plot summary?
- ✓ Which peculiarities of the books should be pointed out?
- ✓ Which of your personal impressions are worth mentioning?
- ✓ Who would you recommended it to?

Sum up your ideas and write a plan in your notebooks.

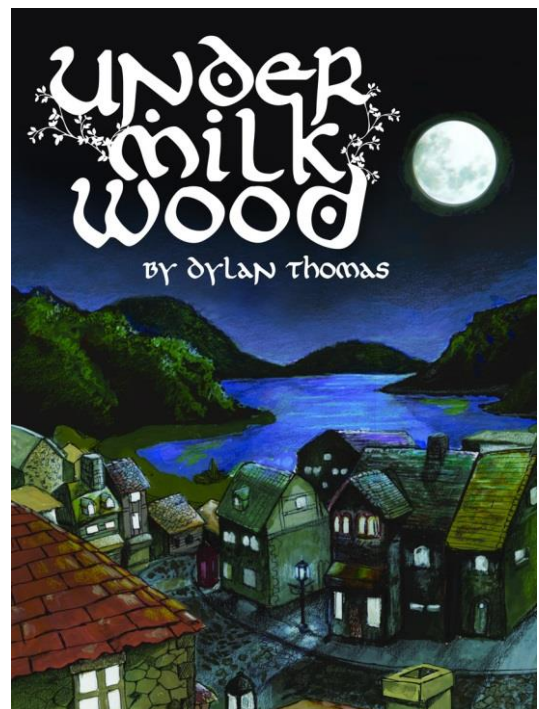
Project

My Heart's in the Highlands



Choose a fictional work that uses vivid imagery to represent a certain English-speaking country or region (Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, etc.) Study the way the author employs this imagery and what effect is elicited with its help. Present your project including the examples of the imagery.

“Under Milk Wood” is a BBC radio drama by Welsh poet Dylan Thomas. An omniscient narrator takes the audience into the dreams and innermost thoughts of the inhabitants of the fictional small Welsh fishing village, Llareggub. The programme uses vivid imagery to depict Wales and its inhabitants. It has been adapted for the stage and cinema several times.

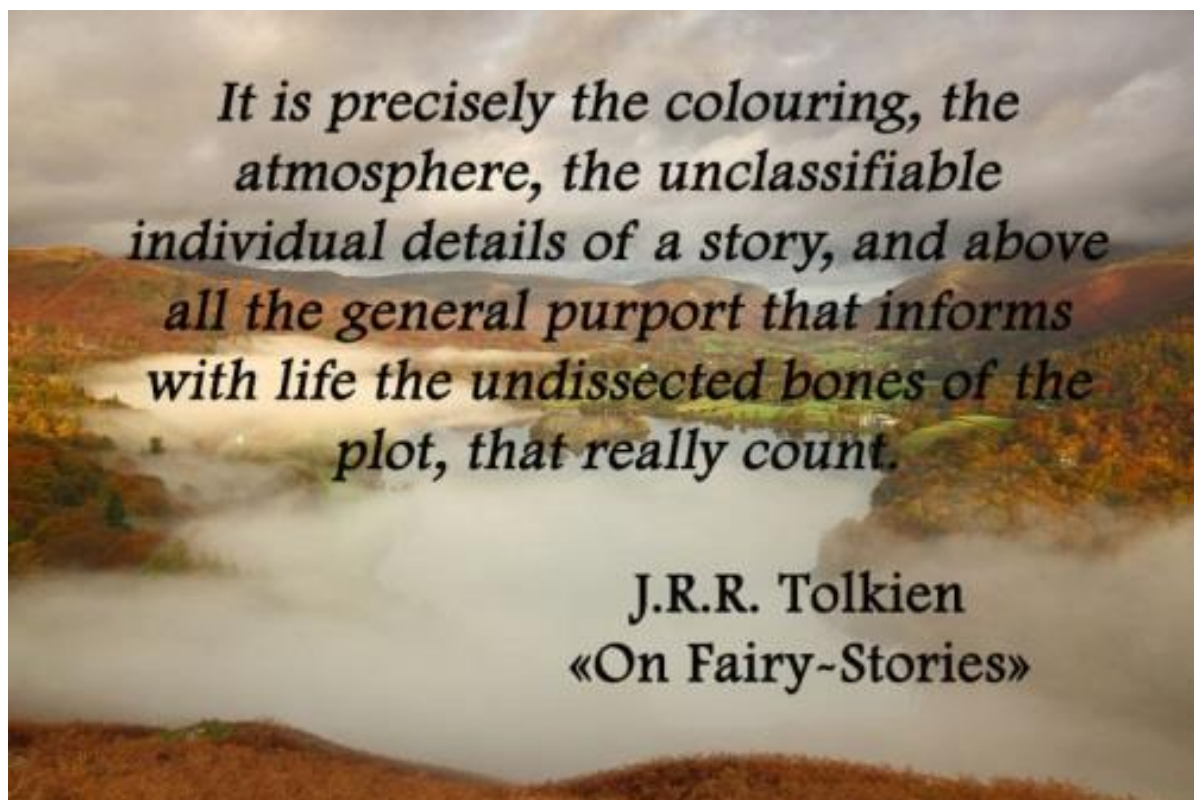


UNIT 9

Are You in the Mood? The Ambience of Fiction

Lead In

- ❖ Does your mood change often? What kinds of events or phenomena affect your mood most? Describe a recent situation in which your mood changed radically. Add important details to your story.
- ❖ Describe a place that has its own atmosphere. Show the photographs of this place if available. Say how being there affects your mood.



Exploring Tone and Atmosphere

Tone in fiction is often described as the **attitude** that the narrator / implied author assumes toward the story, the narratee or the implied reader. In contemporary criticism tone in fiction is regarded as the literary equivalent of the “tone of voice” in everyday speech. The idea behind it is that way people speak give listeners subtle clues about their attitude to the things that are mentioned and to a number of nuances, such as social positions, personal relationships, covert motivation, etc.

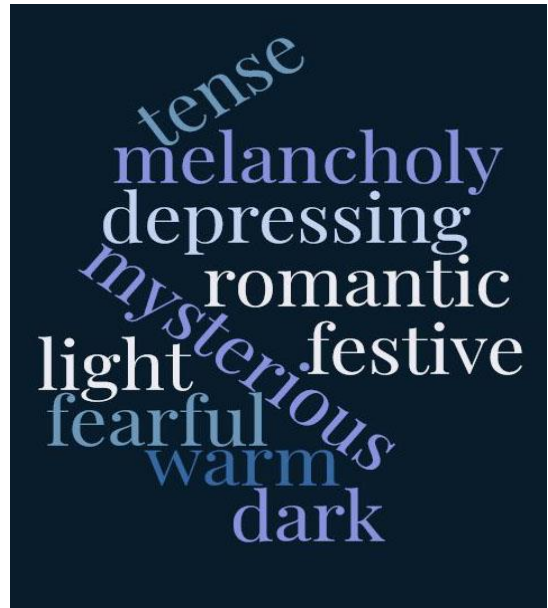
Atmosphere in fiction is a specific mood that the whole text or a particular scene are aimed to evoke. Although atmosphere or mood might depend on the tone, they do not necessarily mirror it, since there is a distance between

the narrator / implied author and the implied reader. Besides, atmosphere is closely connected with the imagery used in the text, as well as artistic details, narrative techniques and plot arrangements. For example, frequent foreshadowings might create a suspenseful and tense atmosphere since the reader expects something unpleasant to happen, even if the tone is generally calm or light-hearted.

Task 1

Look at the adjectives in the wordcloud. Say what imagery can help create these kinds of atmosphere in:

- ❖ fiction
- ❖ art
- ❖ music
- ❖ cinema
- ❖ advertisements
- ❖ computer games
- ❖ political campaigns
- ❖ everyday life



Apart from imagery, what else can contribute to the atmosphere in these situations?

Task 2

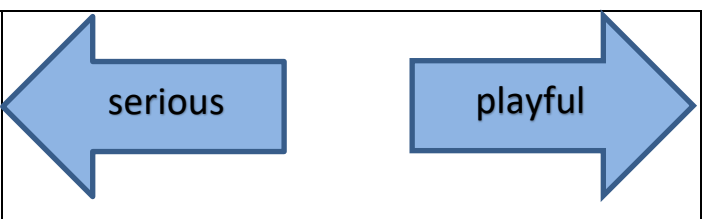
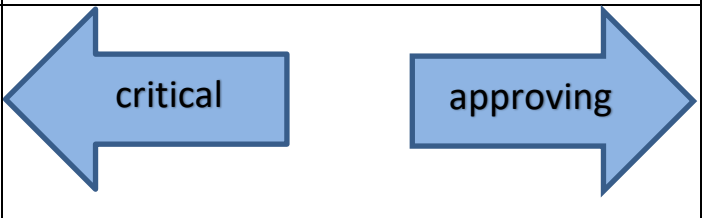
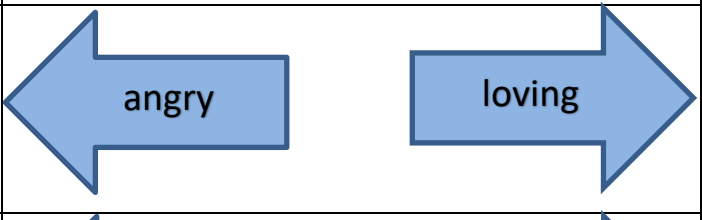
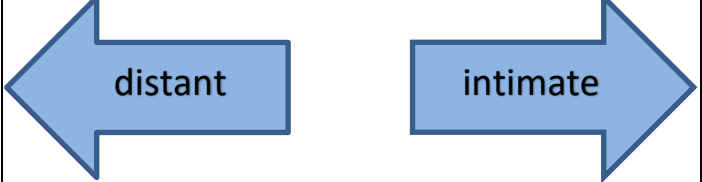
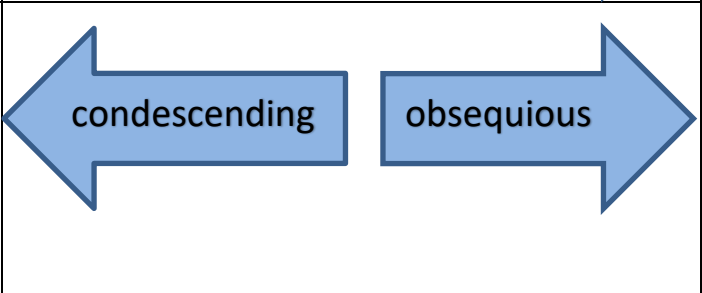
The words in the table below also refer to tone / atmosphere. Study their definitions and translate the examples into your first language. Say which of these words can be used to talk about fiction.

<p>A slant is a certain inclination or direction (in attitudes, opinions, outlooks, biases, etc.)</p>	<p>Our conversation suddenly took a philosophical slant. Professor Moor's lectures sometimes have a moralising slant.</p>
<p>Ambience is a synonym to atmosphere. It is frequently used in restaurant and hotel reviews.</p>	<p>The hotel was advertised as having romantic ambience, so the reality came as a shock: it turned out to be shabby and neglected.</p>

<p>An aura is another synonym to atmosphere, which means a distinctive, though intangible quality of a person or thing.</p>	<p>The new district boasts state-of-the-art architecture with its special aura. She has an aura of authority about her.</p>
<p>A vibe is an extremely popular slang word that refers to a distinctive feeling, mood or atmosphere that is sensed or experienced by someone. It's mostly used in the plural.</p>	<p>I love hanging out with my friends: there's always a lot of laughter and good vibes. I mistrust him: he gives off bad vibes.</p>

Task 3

Study the pairs in the table below. They are different poles of tonality based on the same type of attitude. Can you think of more pairs like these ones?

Attitude based on the level of the narrator's seriousness	
Attitude from the moral standpoint	
Emotional attitude	
Attitude based on assumed distance	
Attitude based on superiority / inferiority	

Attitude based on the level of the narrator's anxiety	← anxious	calm →
Attitude based on the perception of reality (as generally pleasant or unpleasant; moving or dull), etc.	← gritty	lyrical →
Tonality based on the presence / absence of enthusiasm	← lively	monotonous →

Copy the table into your notebook. Distribute the following varieties of tone among the groups, locating them closer to the corresponding pole. Do some of the words below fit into more than one category?

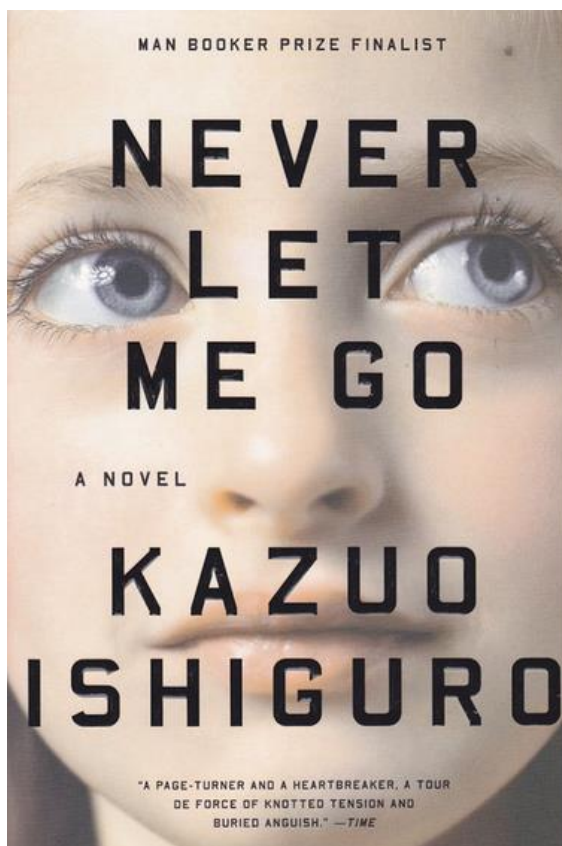
dismissive, sentimental, celebratory, emotional, deferential, heartfelt, confidential, solemn, tongue-in-cheek, indignant, light-hearted, pensive, flippant, contemptuous, ingratiating, moralising, ironic, relaxed, sarcastic, sassy, callous, acerbic, bitter, reticent, patronising, earnest, lulling, intense, facetious, apologetic, belligerent, cynical, mild, detached, laudatory, nostalgic, scathing, whimsical, uneasy, familiar, impassive

Uniqueness of tone and atmosphere

Sir Kazuo Ishiguro (born in 1954) is a famous British writer. He was born in Nagasaki, Japan, but his family moved to the UK when he was five. His unique background (being brought up by Japanese parents within the British culture) has allowed Ishiguro to view and describe things from a different perspective. He has written several novels, short stories and song lyrics. His 2005 novel, "Never Let Me Go", was included in the Time magazine's list of the 100 best English-language novels published between 1923 and 2005. In 2017, Ishiguro was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature. He was described by the Swedish Academy as a writer "who, in novels of great emotional force,

has uncovered the abyss beneath our illusory sense of connection with the world”. In 2018 Ishiguro was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and awarded the Order of the Rising Sun by the Japanese government.

“**Never Let Me Go**” is a dystopian novel set in an alternative universe very similar to ours (particularly to England in the 1980s and 1990s). The difference is that in the story scientific advancements after the Second World War enabled people to create clones and use them as a source of vital organs. The novel traces the lives of three clones, Kathy (the protagonist and the first-person narrator of the story), Ruth and Tommy. They are raised in Hailsham, a boarding school where clones are educated and encouraged to express themselves in a creative way. A large part of the narrative focuses on Kathy’s days at Hailsham and the peculiar atmosphere of this place.



Read the first episode below and describe your response the atmosphere of Hailsham.

Episode 1

There have been times over the years when I’ve tried to leave Hailsham behind, when I’ve told myself I shouldn’t look back so much. But then there

came a point when I just stopped resisting. It had to do with this particular donor I had once, in my third year as a carer¹; it was his reaction when I mentioned I was from Hailsham. He'd just come through his third donation, it hadn't gone well, and he must have known he wasn't going to make it. He could hardly breathe, but he looked towards me and said: "Hailsham. I bet that was a beautiful place." Then the next morning, when I was making conversation to keep his mind off it all, and I asked where he'd grown up, he mentioned some place in Dorset and his face beneath the blotches went into a completely new kind of grimace³. And I realised then how desperately he didn't want reminded. Instead, he wanted to hear about Hailsham.

So over the next five or six days, I told him whatever he wanted to know, and he'd lie there, all hooked up, a gentle smile breaking through. He'd ask me about the big things and the little things. About our guardians, about how we each had our own collection chests under our beds, the football, the rounders², the little path that took you all round the outside of the main house, round all its nooks and crannies, the duck pond, the food, the view from the Art Room over the fields on a foggy morning. Sometimes he'd make me say things over and over; things I'd told him only the day before, he'd ask about like I'd never told him. "Did you have a sports pavilion?" "Which guardian was your special favourite?" At first I thought this was just the drugs, but then I realised his mind was clear enough. What he wanted was not just to hear about Hailsham, but to remember Hailsham, just like it had been his own childhood. He knew he was close to completing⁴ and so that's what he was doing: getting me to describe things to him, so they'd really sink in, so that maybe during those sleepless nights, with the drugs and the pain and the exhaustion, the line would blur between what were my memories and what were his. That was when I first understood, really understood, just how lucky we'd been – Tommy, Ruth, me, all the rest of us.

Driving around the country now, I still see things that will remind me of Hailsham. I might pass the corner of a misty field, or see part of a large house in the distance as I come down the side of a valley, even a particular arrangement of poplar trees up on a hillside, and I'll think: "Maybe that's it! I've found it! This actually is Hailsham!" Then I see it's impossible and I go on driving, my thoughts drifting on elsewhere. In particular, there are those

pavilions. I spot them all over the country, standing on the far side of playing fields, little white prefab buildings with a row of windows unnaturally high up, tucked almost under the eaves. I think they built a whole lot like that in the fifties and sixties, which is probably when ours was put up. If I drive past one I keep looking over to it for as long as possible, and one day I'll crash the car like that, but I keep doing it. Not long ago I was driving through an empty stretch of Worcestershire and saw one beside a cricket ground so like ours at Hailsham I actually turned the car and went back for a second look.

We loved our sports pavilion, maybe because it reminded us of those sweet little cottages people always had in picture books when we were young. I can remember us back in the Juniors, pleading with guardians to hold the next lesson in the pavilion instead of the usual room. Then by the time we were in Senior 2 – when we were twelve, going on thirteen – the pavilion had become the place to hide out with your best friends when you wanted to get away from the rest of Hailsham.

The pavilion was big enough to take two separate groups without them bothering each other – In the summer, a third group could hang about out on the veranda. But ideally you and your friends wanted the place just to yourselves, so there was often jockeying and arguing. The guardians were always telling us to be civilised about it, but in practice, you needed to have some strong personalities in your group to stand a chance of getting the pavilion during a break or free period. I wasn't exactly the wilting type myself, but I suppose it was really because of Ruth we got in there as often as we did. Usually we just spread ourselves around the chairs and benches – there'd be five of us, six if Jenny B. came along – and had a good gossip. There was a kind of conversation that could only happen when you were hidden away in the pavilion; we might discuss something that was worrying us, or we might end up screaming with laughter, or in a furious row. Mostly, it was a way to unwind for a while with your closest friends.

Notes

1. Carer: Clones first spend some time caring for a donor before becoming a donor themselves.
2. Rounders is a bat-and-ball game popular in England.

3. Hailsham was significantly different from other places for clones: in the former the conditions were decent, the staff was friendly and children had happy childhood, while at other places clones were kept in atrocious conditions.
4. “To complete” is the euphemism that donors and carers use for “to die”.



Hailsham in 2010 film adaptation of “Never Let Me Go”

Discussion



Work in pairs Describe your emotional response to the passage you have just read. Why do you think the donor wanted to hear more about Hailsham? Which words in the passage foreground the atmosphere?



Think of your own school. What was the atmosphere like in it? *Put down one-word description in your notebook (e.g. warm, idyllic, inspiring, tranquil, cosy, charged, stressful, depressing, gloomy, etc.). Describe the school to your partner without saying explicitly what the atmosphere was, then ask them to guess which word you have meant.*

Episode 2

Although Madame’s visits¹ were never announced, it was always pretty obvious when she was due. The lead-up to her arrival began weeks before, with the guardians sifting through all our work – our paintings, sketches, pottery, all our essays and poems. This usually went on for at least a fortnight,

by the end of which four or five items from each Junior and Senior year would have ended up in the billiards room. The billiards room would get closed during this period, but if you stood on the low wall of the terrace outside, you'd be able to see through the windows the haul of stuff getting larger and larger. Once the guardians started laying it out neatly, on tables and easels, like a miniature version of one of our Exchanges², then you knew Madame would be coming within a day or two.

That autumn I'm now talking about, we needed to know not just the day, but the precise moment Madame turned up, since she often stayed no longer than an hour or two. So as soon as we saw the stuff getting displayed in the billiards room, we decided to take turns keeping look-out.

This was a task made much easier by the way the grounds were laid out. Hailsham stood in a smooth hollow with fields rising on all sides. That meant that from almost any of the classroom windows in the main house – and even from the pavilion – you had a good view of the long narrow road that came down across the fields and arrived at the main gate. The gate itself was still a fair distance off, and any vehicle would then have to take the gravelled drive, going past shrubs and flowerbeds, before at last reaching the courtyard in front of the main house. Days could sometimes go by without us seeing a vehicle coming down that narrow road, and the ones that did were usually vans or lorries bringing supplies, gardeners or workmen. A car was a rarity, and the sight of one in the distance was sometimes enough to cause bedlam during a class.

The afternoon Madame's car was spotted coming across the fields, it was windy and sunny, with a few storm clouds starting to gather. We were in Room 9 – on the first floor at the front of the house – and when the whisper went around, poor Mr. Frank, who was trying to teach us spelling, couldn't understand why we'd suddenly got so restless.

The plan we'd come up with to test Ruth's theory³ was very simple: we – the six of us in on it – would lie in wait for Madame somewhere, then "swarm out" all around her, all at once. We'd all remain perfectly civilised and just go on our way, but if we timed it right, and she was taken off-guard, we'd see – Ruth insisted – that she really was afraid of us.

Our main worry was that we just wouldn't get an opportunity during the short time she was at Hailsham. But as Mr. Frank's class drew to an end, we could see Madame, directly below in the courtyard, parking her car. We had a hurried conference out on the landing, then followed the rest of the class down the stairs and loitered just inside the main doorway. We could see out into the bright courtyard, where Madame was still sitting behind the wheel, rummaging in her briefcase. Eventually she emerged from the car and came towards us, dressed in her usual grey suit, her briefcase held tightly to herself in both arms. At a signal from Ruth we all sauntered out, moving straight for her, but like we were all in a dream. Only when she came to a stiff halt did we each murmur: "Excuse me, Miss," and separate.

I'll never forget the strange change that came over us the next instant. Until that point, this whole thing about Madame had been, if not a joke exactly, very much a private thing we'd wanted to settle among ourselves. We hadn't thought much about how Madame herself, or anyone else, would come into it. What I mean is, until then, it had been a pretty light-hearted matter, with a bit of a dare element to it. And it wasn't even as though Madame did anything other than what we predicted she'd do: she just froze and waited for us to pass by. She didn't shriek, or even let out a gasp. But we were all so keenly tuned in to picking up her response, and that's probably why it had such an effect on us. As she came to a halt, I glanced quickly at her face – as did the others, I'm sure. And I can still see it now, the shudder she seemed to be suppressing, the real dread that one of us would accidentally brush against her. And though we just kept on walking, we all felt it; it was like we'd walked from the sun right into chilly shade. Ruth had been right: Madame was afraid of us. But she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders.

We hadn't been ready for that. It had never occurred to us to wonder how we would feel, being seen like that, being the spiders. By the time we'd crossed the courtyard and reached the grass, we were a very different group from the one that had stood about excitedly waiting for Madame to get out of her car. Hannah looked ready to burst into tears. Even Ruth looked really shaken. Then one of us – I think it was Laura – said:

"If she doesn't like us, why does she want our work? Why doesn't she just leave us alone? Who asks her to come here anyway?"


No one answered, and we carried on over to the pavilion, not saying anything more about what had happened.


Thinking back now, I can see we were just at that age when we knew a few things about ourselves – about who we were, how we were different from our guardians, from the people outside – but hadn't yet understood what any of it meant. I'm sure somewhere in your childhood, you too had an experience like ours that day; similar if not in the actual details, then inside, in the feelings. Because it doesn't really matter how well your guardians try to prepare you: all the talks, videos, discussions, warnings, none of that can really bring it home. Not when you're eight years old, and you're all together in a place like Hailsham; when you've got guardians like the ones we had; when the gardeners and the delivery men joke and laugh with you and call you "sweetheart."

All the same, some of it must go in somewhere. It must go in, because by the time a moment like that comes along, there's a part of you that's been waiting. Maybe from as early as when you're five or six, there's been a whisper going at the back of your head, saying: "One day, maybe not so long from now, you'll get to know how it feels." So you're waiting, even if you don't quite know it, waiting for the moment when you realise that you really are different to them; that there are people out there, like Madame, who don't hate you or wish you any harm, but who nevertheless shudder at the very thought of you – of how you were brought into this world and why – and who dread the idea of your hand brushing against theirs. The first time you glimpse yourself through the eyes of a person like that, it's a cold moment. It's like walking past a mirror you've walked past every day of your life, and suddenly it shows you something else, something troubling and strange.

Notes

1. A woman who everyone called "Madame" visited Hailsham regularly to collect the best art that students created. Nobody knew exactly why she did that.
2. Exchanges are school exhibitions where students can exchange some of the items they created.
3. Ruth was convinced that Madame was afraid of students at Hailsham.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was the girls' plan? Did it work? What is meant by "a bit of a dare element"? 2. What effect did the incident have on the girls? 3. Explain the "none of that can really bring it home" passage from the excerpt (starting from "Thinking back now..." till "...when the gardeners and the delivery men joke and laugh with you and call you "sweetheart.""). 4. Who kind of "you" is used in this passage?
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<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare your impressions of Hailsham after reading the first and the second episode. Has anything changed in your perception? 2. How would you describe the tone of the excerpt? Does it remain unchanged throughout the passage? 3. Why and in what way was Madame afraid of the girls? Can these feelings and attitude be transferred to other situations, beside clones vs. "normal" people?
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Language Practice

Task 1: Choosing Tenses



Look again at the episode 2 from "Never Let Me Go". The encounter with Madame is narrated mostly in the past, while in the end of the episode the narrator switches to the present. This happens when people relate their personal narratives: events from the past that have had a great impact on them and caused a change of some kind. While the event itself is usually narrated in the past (the Past Simple, the Past Perfect, the Past Continuous), the effect it has produced might be explained in the present (the Present Simple: e.g., I often think about it, the Present Perfect: e.g. I have been a different person since then, etc.).

Read two personal narratives below and find mistakes in the usage of tenses.

1. When I was a child, I have read a lot of fairy stories. I got immersed into magical worlds without trying to analyse anything. One day, when I was about 12, I had noticed that the tone of one of these tales is really patronising and even a bit contemptuous. It has put me off such stories

for a long time. I read only adult literature since then, although I now realise it was just that particular author and his acerbic tone. Surely, not all children's fantasy books are like that.

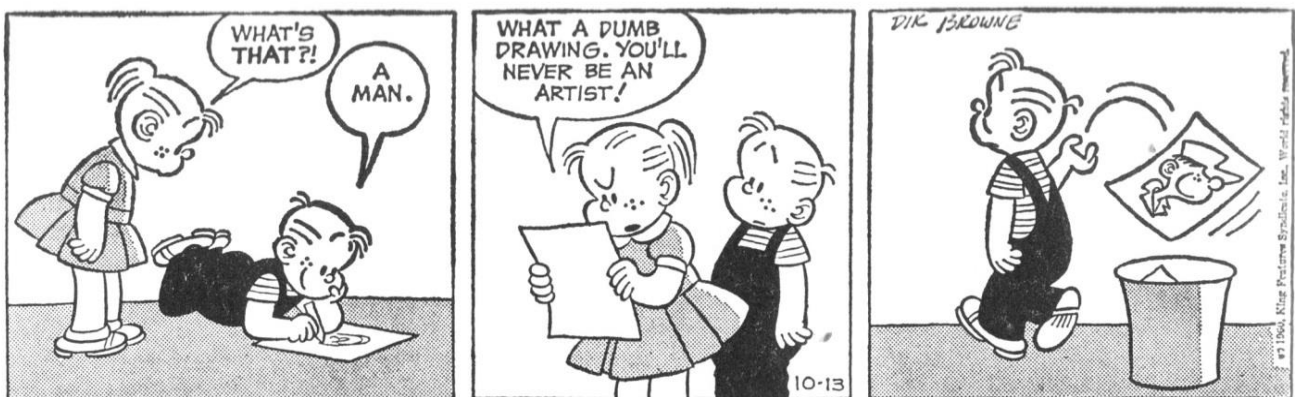
2. When I have started my University studies I decided to take a course in creative writing, since I have been dreaming of becoming a writer. The lecturer who had been teaching the course encouraged us to try our hand at short stories. I have written about a dozen during the course, and the teacher always praises them. But one day she fell ill and another lecturer had stepped in. He didn't have the same attitude and criticise my work harshly, pointing out that the tone is obsequious, as if I am ingratiating myself to the reader. You might think it has made me stop writing, but I only became even more engrossed in it. I guess this is what had turned me into a writer: I wish to prove I can do it, and here I am, a published author!

Task 2: Telling Stories

Work in pairs. Choose an event from your past that has influenced your personality. Say what happened and how it affected you. Be careful in your choice of tenses. When it is your partner's turn to speak, pay particular attention to the usage of past and present tenses.

Task 3: Multimodal Stories

Look at the comic strip below. What story does it tell? Can you turn your own narrative into a three-picture comic strip? Use online tools to help you.



Writing



Go back to the plan you wrote during the previous writing session. Revise your plan and include a paragraph about the tone / atmosphere if you consider it relevant for the chosen book. Check whether the plan meets the following requirements:

- ✓ The plan is eligible and easy to follow. You are certain about each item on your plan.
- ✓ It contains an introduction, a main body and a conclusion.
- ✓ The main body consists of at least two paragraphs.
- ✓ Each paragraph addresses one issue (which will be related in the topic sentence).

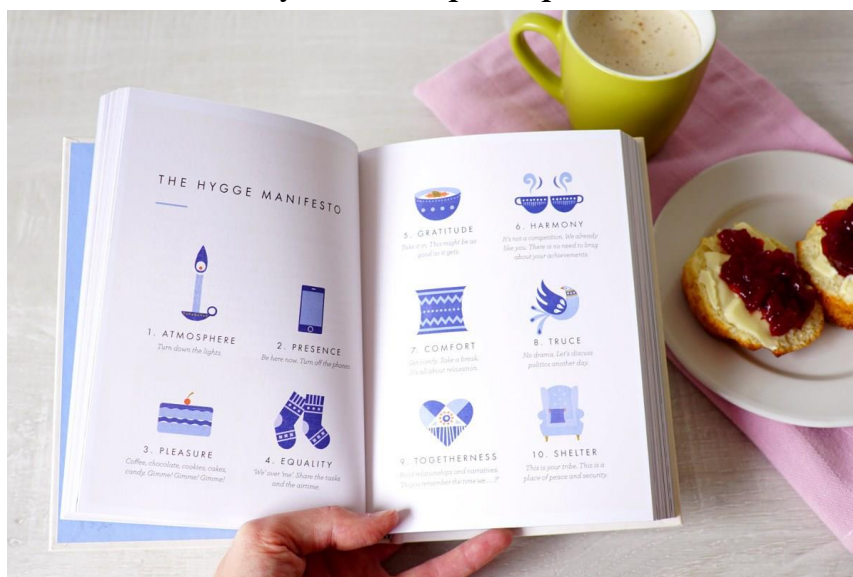
When you have finished revising your plan, write that part of your recommendation that covers the plot summary and the peculiarities of the chosen book.

Project

The Ambience of Comfort



A lot of people appreciate the atmosphere of cosiness and homeliness, although there is no agreement about how it can be achieved. What is your personal idea of domesticity and comfort? What images are associated with a cosy and welcoming home? Research different aspects of this phenomenon and find examples in fiction, poetry or cinema that coincide with your own perception of comfort.



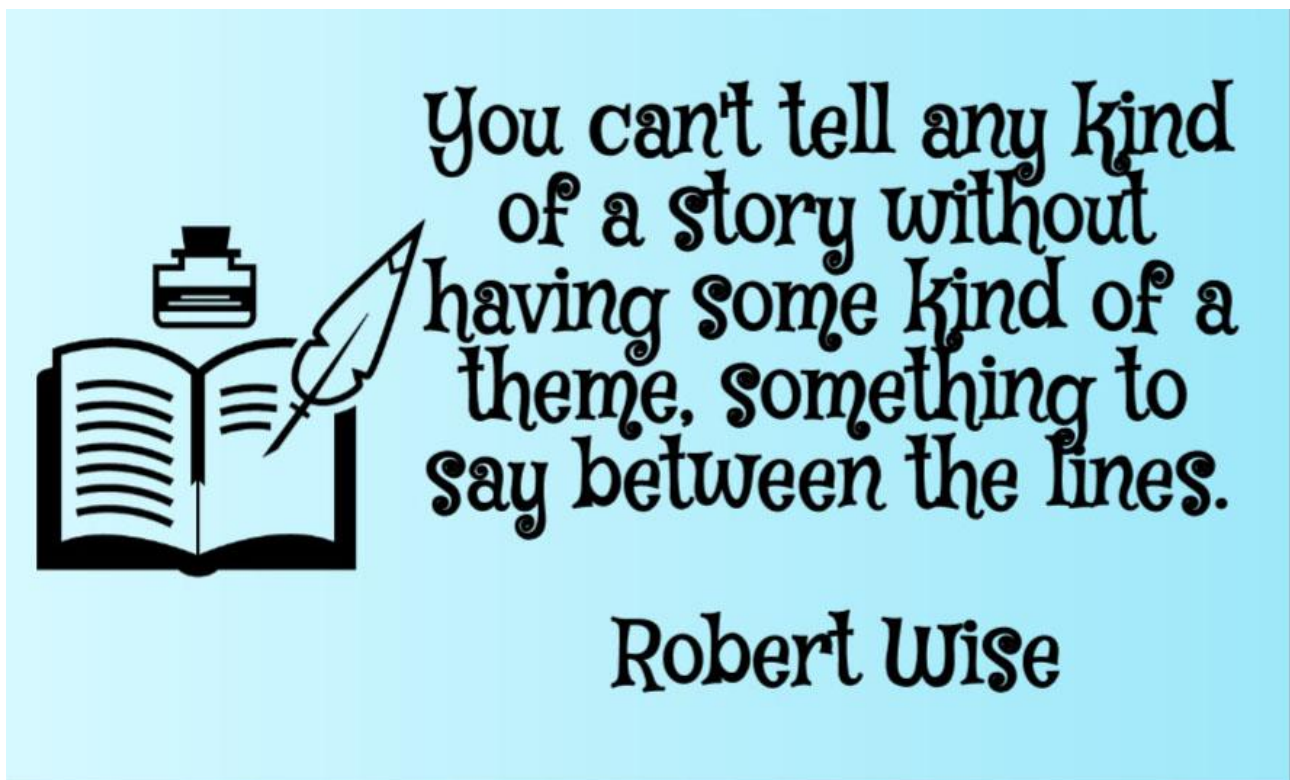
The best-selling book “The Little Book of Hygge” by Meik Wiking, which explores the Danish concept of “hygge”: a lifestyle based on the feeling of cosiness and wellness.

UNIT 10

What is it All About? Getting the Message Across

Lead In

- ❖ What are your most and least favourite topics in fiction? Make a list using one-word topics only, such as “Love”, “Childhood” etc. and compare it to those of your classmates. Compile a “Top Ten” list of your class.
- ❖ Did you enjoy fables about animals when you were a child? Was it easy for you to extract “the moral of the story”?
- ❖ When you read fiction nowadays, do you always see what’s “between the lines”?



Exploring Themes

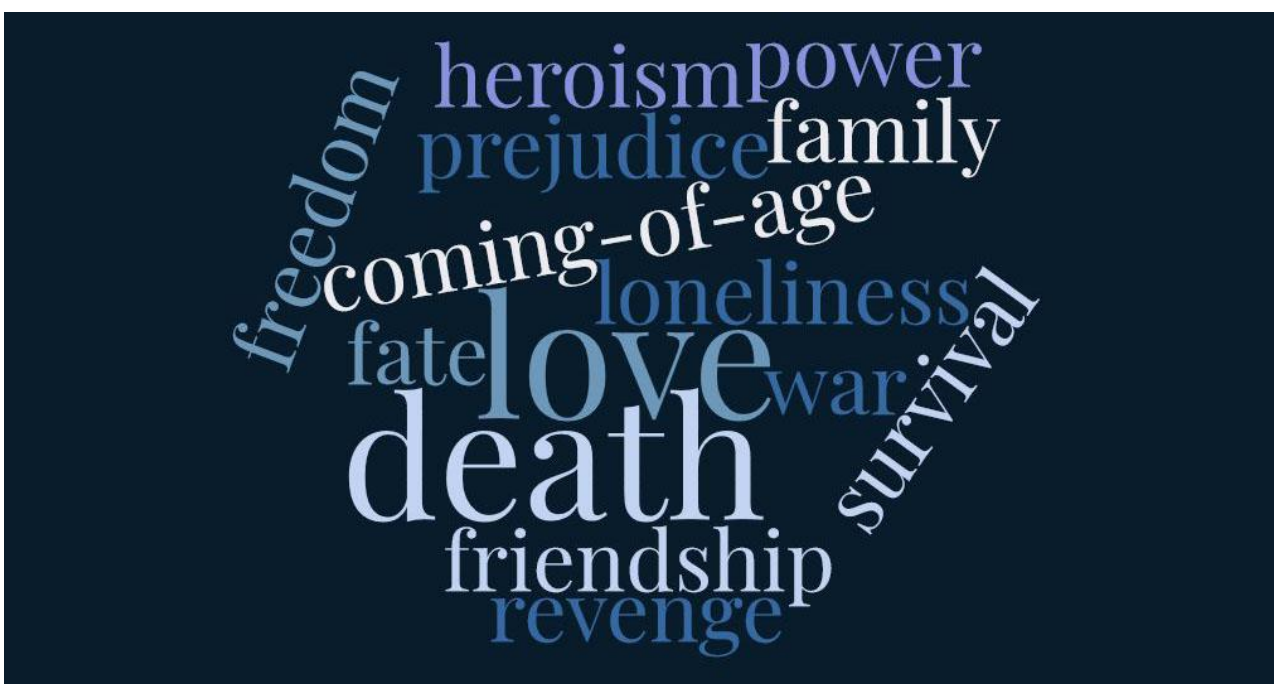
A **theme** in a narrative work is its main topic. Although “theme” is sometimes viewed as the central idea or concept (e.g. “Crime doesn’t pay”), nowadays it is more commonly used as the main subject of the work (what is it about?), expressed in a single word (“Crime”, “Justice”, “Corruption”) or in a phrase (“Justice vs. Corruption”, “Crime and Punishment”). Many themes in fiction are **universal** (“Love”, “Death”, “Coming-of-Age”, etc.) since they reflect experiences familiar to people all around the world. A complex narrative may have **multiple** themes.

Themes are often manifested with the help of literary **motifs**: elements of plot or imagery that are frequently seen in fiction (also referred to as **clichés** or **tropes**). For instance, if the theme of the narrative is “justice”, it may contain such motifs as “framing an innocent person”, “miscarriage of justice” or “escape from prison”. If a motif is repeated and foregrounded within one work or series, it is a **recurring motif** (also known as a **leitmotif**).

If themes address the question “what is the text about?”, then **messages** are “what the text says about the subject”. Traditionally referred to as “the moral of the story”, messages are explicit or implicit statements or concepts that narratives offer to the reader. Messages can be expressed through the characters’ speech and / or actions, as well as through the events of the plot. In most cases, these statements relate to the human condition, the nature of society, morality and other general issues of human existence. If the narrative offers two consistent levels of meaning, a primary (literal), meaning and a secondary (abstract or historical), then we are dealing with an **allegory**, and some extra effort is required on the part of the reader to decipher its message.

Task 1

Look at several universal themes presented in the wordcloud below. Which ones have you got on your Top Ten list? Which books and films centered on these theme can you remember?



What themes based on binary oppositions can you think of? Continue the line below:

Good vs. evil, life vs. death...

Task 2

Study the words and phrases in the table below. Which of them relate to the theme, the message and the impact they may have on the reader? Translate the examples.

When something is thought-provoking , it intellectually stimulates and challenges us.	Due to the highly charged atmosphere of the setting, “The Handmaid’s Tale” is not a comfortable read, but it is certainly thought-provoking.
Insight enables clearer and deeper understanding of a phenomenon. The adjective insightful is also frequently used in criticism.	Atwood’s fiction gives many insights into Canadian history and mentality. She has been named among the most insightful authors of our times.
Originally a biblical term, epiphany is used in criticism to describe a moment of sudden insight and revelation.	The film kept me on the edge of my seat and when the hero experienced his final epiphany, I had my own catharsis as well.
A premise is a foundation, a basis, a core statement or assumption. It can be used in connection with the plot, the theme and the message of a story.	A solid premise ensures the story’s verisimilitude and draws in the reader. The premise of “The Robber Bride” is that there are three female characters united by one common enemy: a woman who has stolen their loved ones.
To make others understand our message, we try to put it across or to convey it to someone.	The story deals with universal themes and conveys the idea of the fragility of human life. Atwood convincingly puts across her feminist views.
When the message is hard or impossible to understand, we say that we don’t know what to make of it or that we can’t make head of tail of the story.	Have you read the famous “Animal Farm”? It’s supposed to be an allegory, but I couldn’t make head or tail of it. This collection of stories is perplexing: I don’t know what to make of it.

Work in pairs. Make up dialogues discussing the stories you have recently read or watched using the vocabulary above. Which of these lexical units can also be used in everyday life? Think of situations where they can come in handy.

Task 3

Work in pairs.

Think of a story about animals (a fable, a poem, a cartoon, etc.) which has an allegorical meaning and which you are both familiar with. Extract the moral of the allegory and put in down in your notebook without telling your partner. After that compare it with the one your partner came up with. If there are significant differences, discuss their possible source.



A 2016 Disney cartoon “Zootopia” which allegorically portrays discrimination

Task 4: Fables



Now work on your own. Think of a statement regarding human nature (e.g., “people tend to be afraid of those who are different”, “people laugh at other’s troubles, but become very anxious when it concerns themselves”, etc.). Think of an animal character (or several characters) that can be used to convey this message through allegorical imagery. Compile a short story that puts this message across.

When your own fable is done, present it to the class and see whether they can decipher your message.

Reading Between the Lines



Margaret Atwood (born in 1939) is a Canadian novelist, poet, critic, educator and environmental activist. She has been a prolific and diverse author, and her work has gained a wide recognition and won several awards, including The Man Booker Prize. The themes she has explored include gender and national identity, religion and myth, climate change and environmental threats, as well as politics and the power of language. Atwood has published numerous novels, short stories, children's

books, poetry collections and non-fiction books. Her most famous works include such novels as “Cat’s Eye”, “The Robber Bride”, “Alias Grace”, “The Blind Assassin” and others. Atwood’s dystopian “The Handmaid’s Tale” is widely popular in the light of the current political climate in the USA and Canada. Inspired by the necessity to sign a lot of books, Atwood also invented and contributed to the developing of the LongPen and associated technologies that enable remote robotic writing.

“**The Tent**” (2006) is a collection of mini-fictions which serves as a striking example of Atwood’s diversity. A lot of pieces in this collection take on an experimental slant and come across more like “fictional essays”. The volume abounds in allusions, allegories and reworkings of mythological and literary motifs. The book features such themes as women discrimination and misogyny, environmental and political concerns, social responsibility and the burdens of fame. Deeply personal at times, it gives insights into what being a writer feels like. The collection also incorporates line drawings by Atwood.

Read the three pieces from the collection given below and identify their themes.

Voice

I was given a voice. That's what people said about me. I cultivated my voice, because it would be a shame to waste such a gift. I pictured this voice as a hothouse plant, something luxuriant, with glossy foliage and the word tuberous in the name, and a musky scent at night. I made sure the voice was provided with the right temperature, the right degree of humidity, the right ambience. I soothed its fears; I told it not to tremble. I nurtured it, I trained it, I watched it climb up inside my neck like a vine.

The voice bloomed. People said I had grown into my voice. Soon I was sought after, or rather my voice was. We went everywhere together. What people saw was me, what I saw was my voice, ballooning out in front of me like the translucent greenish membrane of a frog in full trill.

My voice was courted. Bouquets were thrown to it. Money was bestowed on it. Men fell on their knees before it. Applause flew around it like flocks of red birds.


Invitations to perform cascaded over us. All the best places wanted us, and all at once, for, as people said – though not to me – my voice would thrive only for a certain term. Then, as voices do, it would begin to shrivel. Finally it would drop off, and I would be left alone, denuded – a dead shrub, a footnote. It's begun to happen, the shriveling. Only I have noticed it so far. There's the barest pucker in my voice, the barest wrinkle. Fear has entered me, a needful of ether, constricting what in someone else would be my heart.

Now it's evening; the neon lights come on, excitement quickens in the streets. We sit in this hotel room, my voice and I; or rather in this hotel suite, because it's still nothing but the best for us. We're gathering our strength together. How much of my life do I have left? Left over, that is: my voice has used up most of it. I've given it all my love, but it's only a voice, it can never love me in return.

Although it's begun to decay, my voice is still as greedy as ever. Greedier: it wants more, more and more, more of everything it's had so far. It won't let go of me easily.

Soon it will be time for us to go out. We'll attend a luminous occasion, the two of us, chained together as always. I'll put on its favourite dress, its favourite

necklace. I'll wind a fur around it, to protect it from the drafts. Then we'll descend to the foyer, glittering like ice, my voice attached like an invisible vampire to my throat.

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What imagery does the author use to depict the “voice”? 2. The “voice” is an allegory. What does this image stand for? 3. How can we interpret the story? What is its message? 4. One of the story’s themes is fame. How is it presented in the text? 5. Would you like to be famous? Why / why not? What are your own associations with fame and celebrity lifestyle?
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Chicken Little Goes Too Far

Chicken Little read too many newspapers. He listened to the radio too much, and he watched too much television. One day something snapped. What was the final straw? Hard to say, but whatever it was it shouldn't have made him hysterical. Most folks take such things in stride because whining is so unattractive, but not Chicken Little. He always had a short fuse. He went running down the street, cheeping at the top of his lungs. The sky is falling! he cheeped.

Oh for heavens' sakes, said Henny Penny, who was loading groceries into her four-wheel-drive supervan. Chicken Little, this is a public place. You're making a nuisance of yourself.

But the sky is falling! said Chicken Little. I'm sounding the alarm.

You sounded the exact same alarm last year, said Henny Penny, and the sky is still in place. Last time I looked, she added, with heavy irony.

“The sky is falling” is a metaphor, said Chicken Little huffily. It's true that the sky really is falling, but the falling of the sky represents all sorts of other things that are falling as well. Falling down, and falling apart. You should wake up!

Go home, have a beer, do some meditation, said Henny Penny. Whatever. You'll feel better tomorrow.

But the next day came and Chicken Little did not feel better. He dropped in on his old friend Turkey Lurkey, who taught at an institution of higher learning.

The sky is falling, said Chicken Little.

That's one analysis, said Turkey Lurkey. But there's data to show it isn't the sky that's falling. It's the earth that's rising. The rising of the earth is simply displacing the sky. It's due to natural geocyclical causes and is not the result of human activity, and therefore there is nothing we can do about it.

I don't see that it makes a blind bit of difference whether the earth is rising or the sky is falling, said Chicken Little, as the end result in either case will be that we are minus a sky.

That is a simple-minded view, said Turkey Lurkey, with offensive condescension.

Chicken Little slammed Turkey Lurkey's office door, causing Turkey Lurkey's corkboard decorated with clever newspaper cartoons to fall onto the floor. Then he took himself off to Goosey Loosey, his old roommate, who was now the editor of a major newspaper.

The sky is falling, said Chicken Little. It's your duty to write an editorial about it!

If you'd said, "The stock market is falling," that would be news, said Goosey Loosey. Granted the sky is falling, in parts. We're not unaware of it, but the experts are working on it. They'll have a fix very soon. Meanwhile, no need to trigger a panic.

Chicken Little went away, disconsolate. He took refuge in a bar. He had a few drinks.

Drowning your sorrows? said the bartender, whose name was Skunky Punky.

The sky is falling, said Chicken Little.

They all say that, said Skunky Punky. The bitch not treating you right? So get a different chick, if you want my opinion. Play some golf. Work off some energy. Do you good.

Golf greens have toxic chemicals on them that will give you cancer of the gonads, said Chicken Little.

What sort of bullshit tree-hugging crapola you giving me? said Skunky Punky, who was tired of his job and wanted to pick a fight.

Excuse me, said Ducky Lucky, who'd been eavesdropping. I couldn't help overhearing. I'm the president of a lobby group dedicated to solving the very same sky-oriented deficiencies that appear to be disturbing you. It's not something you can take on alone. Together we can make a difference! Got your chequebook handy?

Chicken Little rejected this kind offer of assistance. He formed a group of his own, called tsif – an acronym for The Sky Is Falling, as he had to explain carefully to journalists, at first. He launched a Web site. Soon he had a dedicated pack of disciples. They were mostly woodchucks and muskrats, but who cared? They picketed political gatherings. They blocked highways. They disrupted summit conferences. They carried big signs: Take Back the Sky! No Sky, No Pie, No Sweet Bye and Bye! The Sky's Our Limit!

This is getting serious, said Hoggy Groggy, who was head of a large development company that sold retirement-home properties in the sky. He himself lived in a bunker designed to protect him from the large chunks of sky that were now falling at random intervals and in unpredictable locations. He called in Foxy Loxy. Foxy Loxy moved in the shadow world. He did nasty things for a price, and was a devotee of zero accountability. Guy's gotta put food on the table, was his motto. Not that he bothered much with tables. As far as he was concerned they were a frill.

This Chicken What's-his-name twerp is making a dent, Hoggy Groggy told Foxy Loxy. He's giving me a headache. He's against progress. You should put him out of his misery.

I eat guys like that for breakfast, said Foxy Loxy. It's the best method. There's no mess except maybe a couple of feathers, and they never find the body. What'll you pay me?

The sky's the limit, said Hoggy Groggy.

And so it was.

Discussion



1. What is the theme of the story? Are there more than one?
2. What type of citizen does each animal character represent? Do any of them remind you of real people or even of yourself?
3. Interpret the story and say which message it conveys.
4. Is environmental awareness important? How probable is an ecological crisis, in your opinion?

But It Could Still

Things look bad: I admit it. They look worse than they've looked for years, for centuries. They look the worst ever. Perils loom on all sides. But it could still turn out all right. The child fell from the eighth-floor balcony, but there was a sheepdog underneath that leapt up and caught it in mid-air. A bystander took a picture, it was in the paper. The boy went under for the third time, but the mother – although she was reading a novel – heard a gurgling sound and ran down to the dock, and reached into the water, and pulled the boy up by his hair, and there was no brain damage. When the explosion occurred the young man was underneath the sink, fixing the plumbing, and so he was not injured. The girl survived the avalanche by making swimming motions with her arms. The father of two-year-old triplets who had cancer in every one of his organs watched a lot of comedy films and did Buddhist meditation and went into full remission, where he remains to this day. The airbags actually worked. The cheque did not bounce. The prescription drug company was not lying. The shark nudged the sailor's naked, bleeding leg, then turned away. The rapist got distracted in mid-rape, and his knife and his penis both retracted into him like the soft and delicate horns of a snail, and he went out for a coffee instead. The copy of Darwin's *Origin of Species* the soldier carried next to his heart stopped the oncoming machine-gun bullet. When he said, *My darling, you are the only woman I will adore forever*, he really meant it. As for her, despite the scowling and the cold shoulder and the unanswered phone, it turned out she'd loved him all along. At this dim season of the year we hunger for such tales. Winter's tales, they are. We want to huddle round them, as if around a small but cheerful fire. The sun sets at four, the temperature plummets, the wind howls, the snow cascades down. Though you nearly froze your fingers off, you did get the tulips planted, just in time. In four months they'll come up, you have faith in that, and they'll look like the picture in the catalogue. In the brown earth there were already hundreds of small green shoots. You didn't know what they were – some sort of little bulb – but they were intending to grow, despite everything. What would you call them if they were in a story? Would they be happy endings, or happy beginnings? But they aren't in a story, and neither are you. You tucked them back under the mulch and the dead leaves, however. It was the right thing to do on the darkest day of the year.

Discussion



1. What is the cumulative effect of the stories mentioned in the first part of the story? What kind of tales are “winter tales”?
2. What message is conveyed through the image of tulip-planting? Who is “you” that plants them?
3. Explain the title of the story. What does it contribute to the general message?
4. Compare your impressions of the three stories you’ve read. Say which one impressed you most and why? Which was the most thought-provoking?

Language Work

Task 1: Confusing Pairs



There are a lot of words in English that non-native speakers tend to confuse. Common pairs like this are:

adapt / adopt

affect / effect

beer / bear / bare

imaginary / imaginative

flair / flare

human / humane

literal / literary

lose / loose

model / modal

moral / morale

serial / cereal

tell / say

Read these pairs and say where the confusion may come from.

Example:

► “Tell” may be confused with “say” because they often mean exactly the same thing, but are used in different collocations. “Tell” is used when a direct object follows it (tell me, don’t tell the children) and in the expressions like “tell the truth”, “tell a joke”, “tell a story”, etc.

Offer your own activity aimed at preventing errors in the usage of the words above. Divide the class into several groups and try out the activities you have come up with.

➤ **Example:**

Offer images to your classmates prompting them to describe them, using the words above.

The painting by Norman Rockwell “The Spirit of Education” tells a story of a boy forced to participate in a pompous public event and impersonate “education”. The artist seems to say, in an allegorical way, that teachers and officials often glorify the system of education and pretend to feel the enthusiasm which is not really there (symbolised by the woman’s false smile in the painting). You can easily guess what she is saying at the moment. The boy’s sulky expression tells us exactly how he feels about the insincerity of the whole situation.



Task 2: Vocabulary

Check your memory. Rephrase the sentences below using the vocabulary you have learnt since the beginning of the course.

1. I find it hard to believe the story the author is telling.
2. The setting is very lively, but the characters are dull and they do not move me.
3. The show was unbelievable! It was like a sudden discovery of truth.
4. Music helps me forget about my troubles. I just get inside each song I hear.
5. You notice everything! I think you’ve work hard to acquire this skill.
6. The plot is not dynamic at all, and I find some of the imagery really strange.
7. Atwood has a true talent: when you start reading her book, you just can’t stop.

8. I don't know how to end my story: I don't want to force a happy ending on it without proper explanation. I think I just need to start from the beginning.
9. I know the narrator's voice sounds superior at times, but it's what you'd expect.
10. Your progress is slowed down by the way you think about your project: you always want to get it exactly right. Remember: no one had to be perfect.

Writing



Go back to the plan of your book recommendation and the part you have already written. Revise what you have done and add a paragraph with a recommendation itself. Use the following words and expressions in it:

I recommend it to anyone who is interested in...

It is a must-read for those who...

It has changed my understanding of... made me think of... made me realise that...

This story will be thoroughly enjoyed by...

I would recommend it to those who appreciate insights into...

It's a good choice for anyone who...

It's a perfect / extraordinary / excellent read for...

It makes for a unique reading experience because...

The book is a rare treat for...

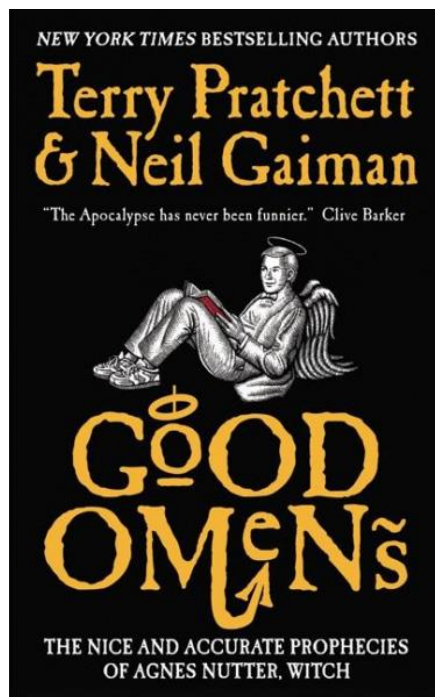
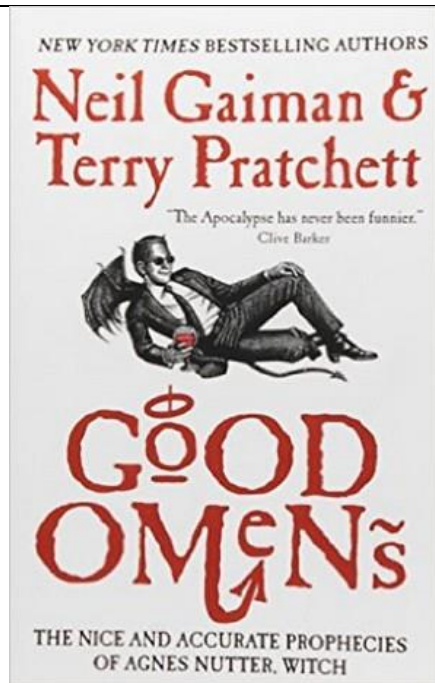
Being creative in recommendations

It is important to remember that book recommendations do not rely on a strict format. You can choose what to include in it and how to express your thoughts. What matters is that...

- ✓ You are familiar with the narrative work you are recommending.
- ✓ You have formed an opinion about its theme(s) and message.
- ✓ You appreciate its style and imagery and can provide relevant examples.
- ✓ You can express your thoughts in a coherent, logical and grammatically correct way, choosing appropriate vocabulary.

You can also be creative! Study the example below and say which technique is used to liven up the recommendation.

In 2018, millions of people were looking forward to watching a new TV series, “Good Omens”, based on the much loved novel by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett. Read an excerpt from the article by American journalist Meghan Ball, in which she encourages people to reread the novel before the premiere of the show in 2019.



Just what makes *Good Omens* so special, you may ask? It's hard to say. What makes macaroni and cheese so special? It's just some cheddar and some noodles but somehow when you stick them together and hurl some bread crumbs on top, it becomes the best food in the entire world. *Good Omens* is like that. It's sharp British humor and some awful/wonderful puns mixed together with delightful characters and smart plotting (the toasted bread crumbs on top in this case is, of course, the music of Queen). Put everything together and you get a story that's beautiful, whimsical, and sharp as a tack. It's ostensibly about the looming apocalypse, but it's really about friendship, family, tradition, and humanity. The deepest truths are told with comedy, and Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett are soothsayers par excellence. They wield a clever turn of phrase like an expert fencer wields a foil (and their words can cut sharper and deeper than any sword, when it serves the story).

It's a rollicking tale about a demon and an angel who like the world too much to watch it be destroyed. They're aided by the collected 17th-century prophecies of Agnes Nutter, a witch of some small renown who foresaw exactly what's going to happen before her untimely demise. They must stay one step ahead of Heaven and Hell in order to stop the Antichrist from triggering the end of the world. Thankfully, the Antichrist isn't a being on the side of good or evil (yet). He's a young boy with a solid group of friends who has no idea what he's capable of, but has a very active imagination.

The players are assembled. This is where we begin. Time to get your copy of *Good Omens* and join me as we delve into this wonderful novel.

Project

Winter Tales



What kind of stories do you like to read or watch in the darkest and coldest time of the year? What kind of music do you listen to?

Stories that are associated with winter festivities (Advent, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Yule, Christmas, New Year, etc.) are frequently heartwarming and centred on moral transformation (as in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"). Some of them are allegorical, and some often have a sentimental or nostalgic slant. Choose a "winter tale" that has had a strong effect on you and explore its imagery, tone, atmosphere and message. Present this story in class and compare your response to it with that of your classmates.



Tim Minchin, an Australian musician and stand-up comedian, shares his experience of Australian Christmas in his "White Wine in the Sun", which he calls "a sentimental song about Christmas". It was written shortly after the birth of his daughter, so parental love is an important motif in it. Every year, all proceeds from the sale of this song during the months of November, December and January, go to the National Autistic Society (NAS).

UNIT 11

Insiders and Outsiders: Meeting Strangers in Fiction

Lead In

- ❖ How much can you infer about someone by the way they speak? Can you guess where they are from / what their profession is / what kind of personality they've got?
- ❖ Does the way you speak change a lot in different social situations? What exactly changes about it? Do you think you have different identities / personalities depending on the social role?



Exploring Dialogue

The main method of communication between characters in a fictional work is **dialogue**. It is the **direct speech** uttered by characters and singled out with the help of **punctuation** within the text. Authors use different strategies to **embed** dialogue in their texts and combine it with their chosen point of view perspective.

Characters' background, education, social status, profession and personal qualities are reflected in dialogue. Dialogues in fiction often tend to imitate real-life oral speech and spontaneous communication, although it is seldom an accurate imitation. Fictional speech is often stylized, "purified" and more concise (devoid of numerous repetitions, errors and fillers). In some cases, authors illustrate characters' background by reproducing phonetic, grammatical and lexical peculiarities of a dialect or a sociolect. A character's individual manner of speaking is referred to as **idiolect**.

Task 1

Read the two excerpts below and compare the ways dialogues are incorporated in them. The first excerpt is narrated by a boy who attends a magical University in a fantasy novel. The second excerpt is taken from a short story about a small boy's first day in an Irish school. The boy is a refugee from Botswana.

1.

Another boy hurried in clutching a hardback. He was young, by which I mean he looked to be no more than two years older than me. Hemme stopped him before he could make it into a seat. "Hello there," he said in an over-courteous tone. "And you are?"

"Basil, sir," the boy stood awkwardly in the aisle. [...]

"Basil, you wouldn't happen to be from Yll, would you?" Hemme asked, smiling sharply.

"No sir."

"Ahhh," Hemme said, feigning disappointment. "I had heard that Yllish tribes use the sun to tell time, and as such, have no true concept of punctuality. However, as you are not Yllish, I can see no excuse for being late. Can you?" Basil's mouth worked silently for a moment, as if to make some excuse, then apparently decided better of it. "No sir."

"Good. For tomorrow, you can prepare a report on Yll's lunar calendar compared to the more accurate, civilized Aturan calendar that you should be familiar with by now. Be seated."

Basil slunk wordlessly into a nearby seat like a whipped dog.

(from "The Name of the Wind" by Patrick Rothfuss)

2.

He sits.

He sits in the classroom. It is his first day.

He is late.

He is five years late.

And that is very late, he thinks.

He is nine. The other boys and girls have been like this, together, since they were four. But he is new.

– We have a new boy with us today, says the teacher-lady.

– So what? says the boy who is behind him.

Other boys and some girls laugh. He does not know exactly why. He does not like this.

– Now, now, says the teacher-lady.

She told him her name when he was brought here by the man but he does not now remember it. He did not hear it properly.

– Hands in the air, she says.

All around him, children lift their hands. He does this too. There is then, quite quickly, silence.

– Good, says the teacher-lady. – Now.

She smiles at him. He does not smile. Boys and girls will laugh. He thinks that this will happen if he smiles.

The teacher-lady says his name.

– Stand up, she says.

Again, she says his name. Again, she smiles. He stands. He looks only at the teacher-lady.

– Everybody, this is Joseph. Say Hello.

– Hello!

– HELLO!

– HELL-OHH!

– Hands in the air!

The children lift their hands. He also lifts his hands. There is silence. It is a clever trick, he thinks.

– Sit down, Joseph.

He sits down. His hands are still in the air.

– Now. Hands down

Right behind him, dropped hands smack the desk. It is the so-what boy.

– Now, says the teacher-lady.

She says this word many times. It is certainly her favorite word.

– Now, I'm sure you'll all make Joseph very welcome. Take out your *Maths Matters*.

– Where's he from, Miss?

It is a girl who speaks. She sits in front of Joseph, two desks far.
– We'll talk about that later, says the teacher-lady. But maths first.
(from "New Boy" by Roddy Doyle)



"New Boy" by Roddy Doyle was made into a short film in 2007. The role of Joseph is played by Olutunji Eburn-Cole. The film received an Academy Award nomination for Best Live Action Short Film.

Task 2

Divide into three groups: each will work with one of the excerpts below. Read your excerpt from "The Name of the Wind" by Patrick Rothfuss. Say what is revealed about characters through dialogue.

1. After listening to a love ballad performed by the protagonist

"You'll have to promise me," a red-eyed Simmon said seriously, "That you will never play that song again without warning me first. Ever."

"Was it that bad?" I smiled giddily at him.

"No!" Simmon almost cried out. "It's... I've never – " He struggled, wordless for a moment, then bowed his head and began to cry hopelessly into his hands.

Wilem put a protective arm around Simmon, who leaned unashamedly against his shoulder. "Our Simmon has a tender heart," he said gently.

"I imagine he meant to say that he liked it very much."

I noticed that Wilem's eyes were red around the edges too.

2. Meeting a local swineherd

“Oi taut Oi heard sommat daen tae water aways,” he said, his accent so thick and oily you could almost taste it. My mother referred to it as a deep valley accent since you only found them in towns that didn’t have much contact with the outside world. Even in small rural towns like Trebon, folk didn’t have much of an accent these days. Living in Tarbean and Imre for so long, I hadn’t heard a dialect this thick in years. The fellow must have grown up in a truly remote location, probably tucked far back into the mountains.

He came up to where we stood, his weathered face grim as he squinted at us. “Wat are the tae o’ yeh daen oot here?” he said suspiciously. “Oi taut Oi heard sengen.”

“At twere meh coosin,” I said, making a nod toward Denna. “Shae dae have a loovlie voice far scirlin, dain’t shae?” I held out my hand. “Oi’m greet glad tae meet ye, sar. Y’clep me Kowthe.”

He looked taken aback when he heard me speak, and a good portion of the grim suspicion faded from his expression. “Pleased Oi’m certain, Marster Kowthe,” he said, shaking my hand. “Et’s a rare troit tae meet a fella who speks propper. Grummers round these ports sound loik tae’ve got a mouth fulla wool.”

3. Meeting an arrogant student from a rich family

Ambrose turned back to me, his smile bright, brittle, and by no means friendly. “Listen, I’m going to give you a little advice for free. Back home you were something special. Here you’re just another kid with a big mouth. So address me as Re’lar, go back to your bunk, and thank whatever pagan God you pray to that we’re not in Vintas. My father and I would chain you to a post like a rabid dog.”

He shrugged. “Or don’t. Stay here. Make a scene. Start to cry. Better yet, take a swing at me.” He smiled. “I’ll give you a thrashing and get you thrown out on your ear.” He picked up his pen and turned back to whatever he was writing.

I left.

Language Practice

Task 1: Reported Speech



When we change direct speech into indirect (**reported speech**), it might be necessary to change the tenses as well. To report statements, we use the verbs **to say** and **to tell**, as well as **to inform**, **to remark**, **to promise** and so on. Study the examples in the table below. Which tenses have changed and which haven't? Where do we have alternative variants and why?

Direct statement	Reported statement
"I will never play that song again", he said.	He promised he would never play that song again.
"I have never encountered such rude people", she said to me.	She told me she had never encountered such rude people.
"I wasn't paying much attention", the student conceded.	The student conceded that he wasn't paying much attention.
"We were planning to go out but then it started to rain", she said.	She explained that they had been planning to go out but then it started to rain.
"I am cooking a chicken curry tonight", my brother said.	My brother said he is cooking a chicken curry tonight / was cooking a chicken last tonight
"I'm going to run for presidency".	He informs us he is going to run for presidency.

Transform the sentences below using the prompts, as in the example. Explain which cases allow for alternative variants.

➤ **I was making the most of my last day in Spain. (She told me...) – She told me she was making the most of her last day in Spain.**

1. Things are getting out of hand at the office. (She told me...)
2. I won't try to second-guess your decisions in the future. (He promised...)
3. These are just nondescript pop songs. (He complains that...)
4. Your son is quite self-reliant for his age (The teacher remarked that...)
5. I am simply procrastinating. (She conceded...)
6. We are having a party tonight. (They said...)

Discussion



Work in pairs.

Do you always keep your promises? Discuss with a partner something that you have promised someone to do. Do you keep promises made to yourself?

Social movement “**Because I said I would**” started by Alex Sheen is trying to make the world a better place with the help of Promise cards.

Find out how this system works and express your attitude to it.



Dialogues in Stories



Patrick Rothfuss (born in 1973) is an American writer who is famous for his epic fantasy books. He is also an active gamer and podcaster. His series “The Kingkiller Chronicle” won several awards, including the 2007 Quill Award for his debut novel, “The Name of the Wind”, which he composed during his nine-year advance toward his B.S. in English. Rothfuss drew inspiration from diverse college courses he explored, as well as from other sources.

“**The Name of the Wind**” is set in an imaginary world of Temerant, abundant in lands and cities. The protagonist is Kvothe, a hero skilled in various spheres, including magic (called “sympathy” in the story) and music. The plot comprises two timelines: one is third-person narration in which Kvothe meets Chronicler, a gatherer of stories, in an inn, while the other is a first-person

account of Kvothe's life (Chronicler is the narratee in this arch). As it is often the case in epic fantasy, the language is stylised, especially the characters' speech. The episode below features Kvothe's encounter with Fela, a fellow student who he has rescued from the fire.

Read the episode paying attention to the way dialogue is used to reveal the characters' qualities, wishes and motivation.

"Your timing's good today," Deoch¹ said as I approached the Eolian. "We've got someone waiting for you."

I felt a foolish grin spread to my face and clapped him on the shoulder as I headed inside.

Instead of Denna² I spotted Fela sitting at a table by herself. Stanchion³ stood nearby, chatting with her. When he saw me approaching, he waved me over and wandered back to his usual perch at the bar, clapping me affectionately on the shoulder as he walked by.

When she saw me, Fela came to her feet and rushed toward me. For a second I thought she was going to run into my arms as if we were reunited lovers in some overacted Aturan tragedy⁴. But she pulled up short of that, her dark hair swinging. She was lovely as always, but with a heavy, purpling bruise darkening one of her high cheekbones.

"Oh no," I said, my hand going to my face in sympathetic pain. "Is that from when I dropped you? I'm so sorry."

She gave me an incredulous look, then burst out laughing. "You're apologizing for pulling me out of a fiery hell?"

"Just the part where I passed out and dropped you. It was sheer stupidity. I forgot to hold my breath and sucked down some bad air. Were you hurt anywhere else?" "Nowhere I can show you in public," she said with a slight grimace, shifting her hips in a way I found most distracting.

"Nothing too bad, I hope."

She put on a fierce expression. "Yes, well. I expect you to do a better job next time. A girl gets her life saved, she expects gentler treatment all-round."

"Fair enough," I said, relaxing. "We'll treat this as a practice run."

There was a heartbeat of silence between us, and Fela's smile faded a bit. She reached out halfway to me with one hand, then hesitated and let it fall back to her side. "Seriously, Kvothe. I... that was the worst moment of my whole life. There was fire everywhere..."

She looked down, blinking. “I knew I was going to die. I really knew it. But I just stood there like... like some scared rabbit.” She looked up, blinking away tears and her smile burst out again, dazzling as ever. “Then you were there, running through the fire. It was the most amazing thing I’ve ever seen. It was like... have you ever seen *Daeonica*?”

I nodded and smiled.

“It was like watching Tarsus bursting out of hell. You came through the fire and I knew everything was going to be alright.” She took a half step toward me and rested her hand on my arm. I could feel the warmth of it through my shirt. “I was going to die there – ” she broke off, embarrassed. “I’m just repeating myself now.”

I shook my head. “That’s not true. I saw you. You were looking for a way out.”

“No. I was just standing there. Like one of those silly girls in those stories my mother used to read me. I always hated them. I used to ask, ‘Why doesn’t she push the witch out the window? Why doesn’t she poison the ogre’s food?’” Fela was looking down at her feet now, her hair falling to hide her face. Her voice grew softer and softer until it was barely louder than a sigh. “‘Why does she just sit there waiting to be saved? Why doesn’t she save herself?’”

I lay my hand on top of hers in what I hoped was a comforting way. When I did, I noticed something. Her hand wasn’t the delicate, fragile thing I had expected. It was strong and calloused, a sculptor’s hand that knew hard hours of work with hammer and chisel.

“This isn’t a maiden’s hand,” I said.

She looked up at me, her eyes luminous with the beginning of tears. She gave a startled laugh that was half sob. “I... what?” I flushed with embarrassment as I realized what I’d said, but pushed ahead.

“This isn’t the hand of some swooning princess who sits tatting lace and waiting for some prince to save her. This is the hand of a woman who would climb a rope of her own hair to freedom, or kill a captor ogre in his sleep.”

I looked into her eyes. “And this is the hand of a woman who would have made it through the fire on her own if I hadn’t been there. Singed perhaps, but safe.”

I brought her hand to my lips and kissed it. It seemed like the thing to do.

“All the same, I am glad I was there to help.” I smiled. “So... like Tarsus?” Her smile dazzled me again. “Like Tarsus, Prince Gallant, and Oren Velciter all rolled into one,” she said laughing. She gripped my hand. “Come see. I have something for you.”

Fela pulled me back to the table where she’d been sitting and handed me a bundle of cloth. “I asked Wil and Sim what I could get you as a gift, and it seemed somehow appropriate...” She paused, suddenly shy.

It was a cloak. It was a deep forest green, rich cloth, fine cut. It hadn’t been bought off the back of some fripperer’s cart, either. This was the sort of clothing I could never hope to afford for myself.

“I had the tailor sew a bunch of little pockets into it,” she said nervously. “Wil and Sim both mentioned how that was important.”

“It’s lovely,” I said.

Her smile beamed out again. “I had to guess at the measurements,” she admitted. “Let’s see if it fits.” She took the cloak out of my hands and stepped close to me, spreading it over my shoulders, her arms circling me in something very near to an embrace.

I stood there, to use Fela’s words, like a scared rabbit. She was close enough that I could feel the warmth of her, and when she leaned to adjust the way the cloak lay across my shoulders, one of her breasts brushed my arm. I stood still as a statue. Over Fela’s shoulder I saw Deoch grin from where he leaned in the doorway across the room.



Fela stepped back, eyed me critically, then stepped close again and made a small adjustment to the way the cloak fastened across my chest. “It suits you,” she said. “The color brings out your eyes. Not that they need it. They’re the greenest thing I’ve seen today. Like a piece of spring.”

As Fela stepped back to admire her handiwork, I saw a familiar shape leaving the Eolian through the front door. Denna. I only caught a brief glimpse of her profile, but I recognized her as surely as I know the backs of my own hands. What she had seen, and what conclusions she had drawn from it, I could only guess.

Notes

1. Deoch is a doorkeeper at a tavern called the Eolian, where talented musicians to exhibit their skill.

2. Denna is a mysterious girl Kvothe is on love with.
3. Stancheon is the owner of the Eolian.
4. Kvothe was raised in a troupe of wandering actors (his parents being actors and musicians), so he is a talented actor himself and he is well-versed in dramatic art of Temerant. *Daeonica* mentioned later in the episode is one of major plays in this world.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does Fela feel about having been rescued by Kvothe? 2. Why do Kvothe and Fela mention several fictional characters? 3. What does the gift Fela gives to Kvothe characterize her? 4. What does Kvothe feel when he spots Denna?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we learn about Kvothe from the way he speaks? 2. What does Fela's speech reveal about her? 3. How does the author convey strong emotions and spontaneity of conversation in this dialogue? 4. Do you sympathise with Kvothe or with Fela? Do you think you'd say similar things if you were him / her? 5. Look at the illustrations Echo Chernik made for a card deck featuring characters from "The Name of the Wind". Do you like such style? Why / why not?



Left to right: young Kvothe, Fela, Ambrose

Language Practice

Task 2: Vocabulary



The sentences below are taken from the website *Goodreads* where readers write reviews about all kinds of literature. This is a selection from reviews about “*The Name of the Wind*”. Translate the sentences into your first language, paying special attention to the words in bold.

1. The narration is **extremely engaging** but there are probably only around 20 pages of action scenes in total.
2. The part that **captivated** me more than anything else in the book was its depiction of music.
3. Kvothe is one of the most **compelling** characters I’ve ever come across in literature. This is how an unreliable narrator is supposed to be **crafted**. I have no idea how much of his story I’m supposed to believe, but I choose to believe the vast majority because he’s just so **convincing**.
4. The Arcanum is a **vibrant** setting, well conceptualized and easy to see in your mind’s eye as you read. The portrayal of music is **impeccable**.
5. Action and plot aren’t used as a **blatant** hook to force you to keep reading.
6. While some reviewers have complained of **slow pacing**, I had no problem at all. If I had to point to a **weakness**, it would be that some of Rothfuss’ antagonists feel a bit **two-dimensional**. Kvothe’s foes at the University are nasty, petty, and often a little dim.
7. This book (audiobook) was so **enthralling** that I could barely put it down and managed to listen to 27 hours of audio in just ten days! The narrator for the audiobook Nick Podehl was excellent. He had a great array of voices and accents. He even managed to squeeze in an **acceptable** Scottish accent for one character!
8. I think in all, while I liked the ambition to the story and it is a favorite type of **longwinded** not-too-demanding story, I do not have much respect for the mechanics of the storytelling here.



Task 3: Discussion



Work in pairs. Choose a book you have recently read and describe your impressions using some of the words in the word cloud above.

Writing: Book Recommendations



Watch “**My Top 10 Favorite Fiction Books**” (a YouTube video by a popular American vlogger Thomas Frank). While watching, put down some words and expressions that may be useful for your own book recommendations.

In the end Thomas asks the audience for book recommendations. Write a script and then record a short video recommending one book that you think Thomas might like.

Project

People with Many Voices



There are fictional characters who have several identities, each with his or her own idiolect. In cinema, actors may play several different roles within one film, completely transforming into new personalities. In audiobooks, narrators often impersonate a range of characters by changing their voices and putting on various accents. Choose one of such works and analyse how dialogues are presented in it. Make sure to provide examples during your presentation.



“Split” is a 2016 American psychological thriller starring James McAvoy, who plays a man with 23 different personalities.

UNIT 12

Multilingualism:

Do we choose languages or do they choose us?

Lead In

- ❖ How many languages are you familiar with (including those that you know only a little)?
- ❖ Group them according to the level of your competence and compare the list to those of your classmates.
- ❖ Work in groups of 3 and 4. Discuss whether you know more or fewer languages than you parents / grandparents. What are your predictions for the future? Will your children speak more or fewer languages at the same age as you are now?



Exploring Multilingualism

We live in the age of increased immigration, multiculturalism, globalisation and striking linguistic diversity. Millions of children across the world are born and raised in multilingual environments. **Multilingual** speakers (those who can speak more than one language) begin to outnumber monolingual ones. The impact of multilingualism on society is profound and poses a lot of challenges for governments, institutions and educators. The phenomenon of multilingualism has been actively researched in academic circles since the 1990s.

Bilingual people are able to use two languages fluently (but not necessarily with equal degree of competence). Those who acquire two languages from early years are called **simultaneous** bilinguals. Even for them, one of the languages is usually **dominant**. When there is no dominant language, the person is said to be a **balanced** bilingual. **Sequential** bilingualism refers to the process of acquiring one language after another. The ability to alternate effortlessly between languages is called **code-switching**. Bilingual behaviour when people tend to use one language in certain spheres only (e.g. for school or work) and the other in different areas is called **language shifting**. People who can speak a large number of languages are called **polyglots**.

Task 1

Do you know any myths / negative stereotypes regarding multilingualism? Brainstorm all possible myths and ways of debunking them. Use “Myths surrounding multilingualism” on Wikipedia if you do not have any clear ideas of your own.

Task 2

There are many approaches to classifying bilingual people. Watch a TED lesson by Mia Nacamulli⁵ and say what 3 types of bilinguals she distinguishes. Do you personally fit into any of these categories?

Task 3

Several advantages of multilingualism were mentioned in the TED lesson. What are they? Can you add anything to this list?



⁵ https://www.ted.com/talks/mia_nacamulli_the_benefits_of_a_bilingual_brain#t-291825

Multilingual Speakers in Fiction

Marina Lewycka (born is 1946) is a British author of Ukrainian origin. She was born in a refugee camp in Kiel, Germany, after World War II. Her parents were brought as labour slaves by the Nazi and after the war it was not safe for them to return back to Ukraine. They subsequently moved to England where Lewycka has lived ever since. She graduated from Keele University in 1968 and worked as a lecturer in media studies at Sheffield Hallam University until her retirement in 2012.

Lewycka has written several novels and short stories. Her debut novel, “A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian”, in which she explored the struggles of Ukrainian immigrants in Britain, won a prize for comic writing in 2005. The novel has been translated into many languages. Her second novel “Two Caravans” (2007) was short-listed for the 2008 Orwell Prize for political writing. It was published under the title “Strawberry Fields” in the USA and Canada.

“Two Caravans” tells the story of migrant workers from Ukraine, Poland, China, Malawi and other countries: they all meet on a small strawberry-picking farm in Kent. The story unfolds soon after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, so two of the main characters are young Ukrainians who support the opposite political camps.



Read the excerpts below and say how the characters’ speech and mindsets are presented.

Episode 1

At Dover I was met off the boat by Vulk, waving a bit of card with my name on it – Irina Blazkho. Typical – he'd got the spelling wrong. He was the type Mother would describe as a person of minimum culture, wearing a horrible black fake-leather jacket, like a comic-strip gangster – what a *koshmar* – it creaked as he walked. All he needed was a gun.

He greeted me with a grunt. “Hrr. You heff passport? Peppers?”

His voice was deep and sludgy, with a nasty whiff of cigarette smoke and tooth decay.

This gangster-type should brush his teeth. I fumbled in my bag, and before I could say anything he grabbed my passport and Seasonal Agricultural Worker papers and stowed them in the breast pocket of his *koshmar* jacket.

“I keep for you. Is many bed people in England. Can stealing from you.”

He patted the pocket, and winked. I could see straightaway that there was no point in arguing with a person of this type, so I hoisted my bag onto my shoulder and followed him across the car park to a huge shiny black vehicle that looked like a cross between a tank and a Zill, with darkened windows and gleaming chrome bars at the front – a typical mafia-machine. These high-status cars are popular with primitive types and social undesirables. In fact he looked quite like his car: overweight, built like a tank, with a gleaming silver front tooth, a shiny black jacket, and a straggle of hair tied in a ponytail hanging down his back like an exhaust pipe. Ha ha.

He gripped my elbow, which was quite unnecessary – stupid man, did he think I might try to escape? – and pushed me onto the back seat with a shove, which was also unnecessary. Inside, the mafia-machine stank even more of tobacco. I sat in silence looking nonchalantly out of the window while he scrutinised me rudely through the rear-view mirror. What did he think he was staring at? Then he lit up one of those thick vile-smelling cigars – mother calls them New Russian cigarettes – what a stink! – and started puffing away. Puff. Stink.

I didn't take in the scenery that flashed past through the black-tinted glass – I was too tired – but my body registered every twist in the lane, and the sudden jerks and jolts when he braked and turned. This gangster-type needs some driving lessons.

He had some potato chips wrapped in a paper bundle on the passenger seat beside him, and every now and then he would plunge his left fist in, grab a handful of chips and cram them into his mouth. Grab. Cram. Chomp. Grab. Cram. Chomp. Not very refined. The chips smelt fantastic, though. The smell of the cigar, the lurching motion as he steered with one hand and stuffed his mouth with the other, the low dragging pain from my period – it was all making me feel queasy and hungry at the same time. In the end, hunger won out. I wondered what language this gangster type would talk. Belarusian? He looked too dark for a Belarus. Ukrainian? He didn't look Ukrainian. Maybe from somewhere out east? Chechnya? Georgia? What do Georgians look like? The Balkans? Taking a guess, I asked in Russian, "Please, Mister Vulk, may I have something to eat?"

He looked up. Our eyes met in the rear-view mirror. He had real gangster-type eyes – poisonous black berries in eyebrows as straggly as an overgrown hedge. He studied me in that offensive way, sliding his eyes all over me.

"Little flower wants eating?" He spoke in English, though he must have understood my Russian. Probably he came from one of those newly independent nations of the former Soviet Union where everyone can speak Russian but nobody does. OK, so he wanted to talk English? I'd show him.

"Yes indeed, Mister Vulk. If you could oblige me, if it does not inconvenience you, I would appreciate something to eat."

"No problema, little flower!"

He helped himself to one more mouthful of chips – grab, cram, chomp – then scrunched up the remnants in the oily paper and passed them over the back of the seat. As I reached forward to take them, I saw something else nestled down on the seat beneath where the chips had been. Something small, black and scary. Shcho to! Was that a real gun?

My heart started hammering. What did he need a gun for? Mamma, Pappa, help me! OK, just pretend not to notice. Maybe it's not loaded. Maybe it's just one of those cigar lighters. So I unfolded the crumpled paper – it was like a snug, greasy nest. The chips inside were fat, soft and still warm. There were only about six left, and some scraps.

I savoured them one at a time. They were lightly salty, with a touch of vinegar, and they were just – mmm! – indescribably delicious. The fat clung to the edges of my lips and hardened on my ringers, so I had no choice but to lick it off, but I tried to do it discreetly.

“Thank you,” I said politely, for rudeness is a sign of minimum culture.

“No problema. No problema.” He waved his fist about as if to show how generous he was. “Food for eat in transit. All vill be add to your living expense.” Living expense? I didn’t need any more nasty surprises. I studied his back, the creaky stretched-at-the-seams jacket, the ragged pony-tail, the thick yellowish neck, the flecks of dandruff on the fake-leather collar. I was starting to feel queasy again.

“What is this, expense?”

“Expense. Expense. Foods. Transports. Accommodations.” He took both hands off the steering wheel and waved them in the air. “Life in vest is too much expensive, little flower. Who you think vill be pay for all such luxury?” Although his English was appalling, those words came rolling out like a prepared speech. “You think this vill be providing all for free?”

So Mother had been right. “Anybody can see this agency is run by crooks. Anybody but you, Irina.” (See how Mother has this annoying habit of putting me down?) “And if you tell them lies, Irina, if you pretend to be student of agriculture when you are nothing of the sort, who will help you if something goes wrong?”

Then she went on in her hysterical way about all the things that go wrong for Ukrainian girls who go West – all those rumours and stories in the papers.

“But everyone knows these things only happened to stupid and uneducated girls, Mother. They’re not going to happen to me.”

Discussion



1. What impression did Vulk produce on Irina? How does the author convey this impression?
2. How do Vulk and Irina speak English?
3. Do you believe that things can go wrong for Irina in Britain? What dangers are connected with illegal work abroad?
4. Would you like to travel to the UK or another European country for seasonal work (like strawberry-picking)? Why / why not?

Language Practice

Task 1. When Things Go Wrong (Idioms)

Study the idioms in the table below and add your own examples.

To bark up the wrong tree is to or pursue a futile course of action, to ask or involve the wrong person or simply to make the wrong choice.	I thought he'd help me come up with some ideas for my research on bilingualism, but I was barking up the wrong tree. If you think I can pull it off, you're barking up the wrong tree.
To have a hard time (doing something) is to have difficulties with something.	He is having a hard time adjusting to the new school.
To get into hot water (over something / with someone) is to face a difficult situation when you are likely to be criticised or punished.	They got into hot water with their parents when they both died their hair purple. It's easy to get into hot water over such thorny issues as religion or politics.
To fall short of something (a standard, a requirement, an expectation, etc.) means not to meet it or to be insufficient.	She failed to get the job because her language skills fell short of the requirements.
To get (hold of) the wrong end of the stick means to misunderstand a situation completely.	You got the wrong end of the stick. I don't speak French fluently: I've only just started learning it.
To put a spoke in (one's) wheel is to deliberately hinder someone or ruin their plans.	I think he has it in for me: he always puts a spoke in my wheel. Was that an accident that the project fell through or did someone put a spoke in our wheel? Anyway, we have to start from scratch now.
A tight spot is a difficult situation.	She is eager to help friends out of tight spots as long as it doesn't cost her anything. I was too naïve back then and often found myself in a tight spot.

<p>A bitter pill to swallow is an unpleasant fact or situation someone has to accept.</p>	<p>He was sure he'd get a high score in IELTS from the first attempt, but he didn't do well in the writing section. It was a bitter pill for him to swallow.</p>
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Work in pairs. Discuss a situation when something went wrong in communicating with foreigners or learning a foreign language, using the expressions above.

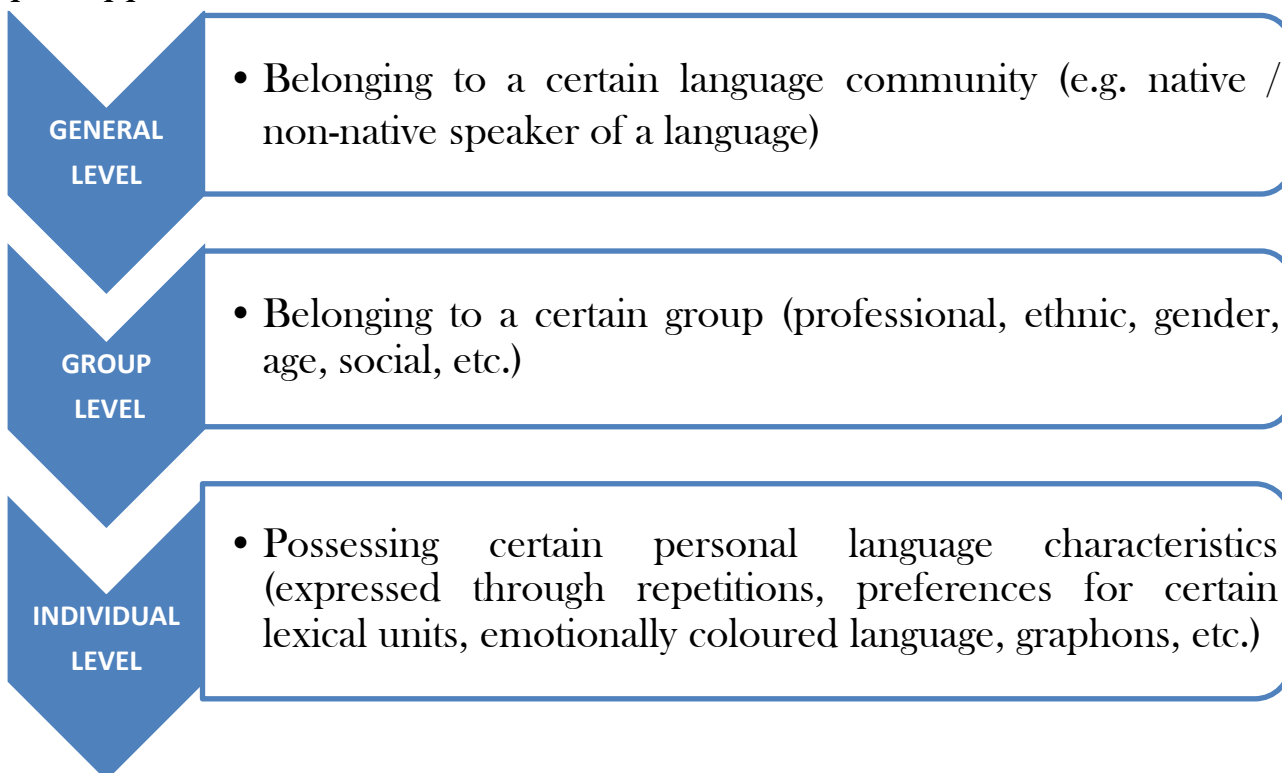
Annie Lennox's song "Bitter Pill" starts with the following words: "Bitter pill to swallow slidin' down my throat, bitter pill to swallow, how it makes me choke. How the hell am I gonna find happiness and peace of mind when I'm losin' all the time?"



What do you think this song is about? Listen to it and say whether you were right.

A Character's Idiolect

When literary characters speak in a fictional text directly, they are presented as linguistic personalities possessing their own **idiolects**. An idiolect is an individual way of speaking and it comprises the following three levels: **general**, **group** and **individual**. Look at the diagram below and say what each level presupposes.



As an example of a character's idiolect, read a letter written by Emanuel Mwere, a character from "Two Caravans". Emanuel comes from Malawi and he learnt English from Catholic nuns.

"Dear sister,

Thank you for the money you sent for with its help I have now journeyed from Zomba to Lilongwe and so on via Nairobi into England. I hope these words will receive you for when I came to the address you gave in London a different name was written at the door and nobody knew of your wherebeing. So being needful of money I came into the way of strawberry-picking and I am staying in a caravan with three mzungus here in Kent. I am striving with all my might to improve my English but this English tongue is like a coilsome and slippery serpent and I am always trying to remember the lessons of Sister Benedicta and her harsh staff of chastisement. So I write hopefully that you will come there and find these letters and unleash your corrections upon them dear sister. And so I will inform you regulally of my adventures within this rainstruck land.

From your believing brother Emanuel!"

The **general level** of Emanuel's idiolect reveals that he is a non-native speaker of English. He is pretty fluent and confident in his writing, but he often confuses grammatical tenses and chooses inadequate lexical units (wherebeing, coilsome, etc.). His **group level** is of an African non-native speaker, signalled by the word "mzungus" - an African word for a white person. Emanuel's **individual level** consists of his frequent use of high-flown vocabulary that he has picked from his Catholic language tutors as well as from religious texts (striving with all my might, unleash, chastisement, rainstruck, etc.). He also resorts to figurative language associating the English language with "a coilsome and slippery serpent".

Go back to Episode 1 and analyse Vulk's and Irina's idiolects using the diagram above. Read Episode 2 below to reveal Andriy's linguistic personality.

Episode 2

The women's caravan is already in sunshine, but the sun hasn't yet reached the bottom of the field, where Andriy is standing at the kitchen end of the men's caravan, trying to light the gas to make some tea. The coarse banter from the sleeping room irritates him, and he doesn't want the other three to

notice the agitation that has come over him since yesterday. He lights another match. It flares and burns his fingers before the gas will catch. Devil's bum! That girl, that new Ukrainian girl – when their eyes met, did she smile at him in a particular way?

He replays the scene like a movie in his head. It is this time yesterday. Farmer Leapish arrives as usual in his Land Rover with the breakfast food, the trays of empty punnets¹ for the strawberries and the key to the prefab². Then someone steps out of the passenger door of the Land Rover, a pretty girl with a long plait of dark hair down her back, and brown eyes full of sparkle. And that smile. She steps into the field, looking around this way and that. He is there standing by the gate, and she turns his way and smiles. But is it for him, that smile? That's what he wants to know.

He made a point of sitting next to her at dinner.

“Hi. Ukrainka?”

“Of course.”

“Me too.”

“I can see.”

“What's your name?”

“Irina.”

He waited for her to ask – “And yours?” – but she didn't.

“Andriy.”

He waited for her to say something, but she didn't.

“From Kiev?” he continued.

“Of course.”

“Donetsk.”

“Ah, Donetsk. Coalminers.”

Did he detect a hint of condescension in her voice?

“You been to Donetsk?”

“Never.”

“I came to Kiev.”

“Oh yes?”

“In December. When demonstrations were going on.”

“You came for demonstrations?” A definite condescending lilt.

“I came to demonstrate against demonstrations.”

“Ah. Of course.”

“Maybe I saw you then. You were there?”

“Of course. In Maidan Square.”

“In demonstration?”

“Of course. It was our Orange Freedom Revolution.”

“I was with the other side. White and blue.”

“The losing side.”

She smiled again. A flash of white teeth, that’s all there was to it. He tries to picture the face, but he can’t get it into focus. No, there was more to it than teeth; there was a crinkling round the nose and eyes, a little lift of the eyebrows and two infuriating dimples winking below the cheeks. Those dimples – he can’t get them out of his mind.

[...]

Sometimes a man must act to bring about a possibility.

But then again, isn’t this wrong time and place, Andriy Palenko, to be involving yourself with another Ukrainian girl? What about the blond-haired Angliska rosa you came all this way to England for, the pretty blue-eyed girl who is waiting for you, though she doesn’t know it yet herself, packed with high-spec features: skin like smetana, pink-tipped Angliski breasts, golden underarm hair like duckling down, etc. And a rich Pappa, who at first may not be too happy about his daughter’s choice, because he wants her to marry a banker in a bowler hat like Mr Brown² – what father would not? – but when he gets to know you will soften his heart and welcome you into his luxurious en-suite bathroom house. For sure, he will find a little nice job for his Ukrainian son-in-law. Maybe even a nice car... Mercedes. Porsche. Ferrari. Etc. Yes, this new Ukrainian girl has some positive features: nice looking, nice smile, nice dimples, nice figure, nicely rounded, plenty to get hold of, not too thin, like those stylish city girls who starve themselves into Western-type matchsticks. But she’s only another Ukrainian girl – plenty of those where you came from. And besides, she’s a bit snobbish. She thinks she’s better than you. She thinks she’s a high-culture type with a superior mentality, and you’re a low-culture type. (And so what if you are? Is that something to be ashamed of?) You can tell by the way she talks, being so stingy with her words, as if it’s money she’s counting out. And the ridiculous plait, like that crow Julia Timoshenko, fake-traditional-Ukrainian. Tied with an orange ribbon. She thinks she’s better than you because she’s from Kiev and you’re from Donbas.

She thinks she's better than you because your dad's a miner – a dead miner, at that.

Poor Dad. Not the life for a dog let alone a man. Underground. Down below the mushrooms. Down with the legions of ghost-miners, all huddled up in the dark, singing their eerie dead-men's songs. No, he can't go down there any more, even if it's the only way he knows how to live, how to put bread on the table. He'll have to find another way. What would his father have wanted him to do? It's hard enough living up to your parents' expectations when you know what they expect. But all Andriy's father ever said to him was, "Be a man." What is that supposed to mean?

When the pit-prop gave way and the roof fell in, Andriy was on one side of the fall and his father was on the other. He was on the living side; his father was on the side of the dead. He heard the roar, and he ran towards the light. He ran and ran. He is still running.



I AM DOG I RUN I RUN FROM BAD MAN CAGE I HEAR DOGS BARK ANGRY DOGS GROWL ANGRY DOGS BARK THEY WILL FIGHT THEY WILL KILL I SMELL DOG-SWEAT MANRAGE MAN OPENS CAGE MAN PULLS COLLAR MEN SIT SMOKE TALK DOGS BARK LIGHT TOO BRIGHT BIG ANGRY DOG SNARLS SHOWS TEETH HAIRS BRISTLE ON HIS BACK HE WILL KILL I AM NOT FIGHTING DOG I AM RUNNING DOG I JUMP I RUN I RUN TWO DAYS I EAT NO MEAT HUNGER PAINS IN BELLY MAKE ME MAD I FEEL HUNGER I FEEL FEAR I RUN I RUN I AM DOG

Notes

1. A punnet is a small light container for fruit or vegetables.
2. Mr Brown is a character in "Let's Speak English" textbook that both Irina and Andriy used to learn the language.



The stamp issued in Ukraine in 2005 to commemorate the Orange Revolution

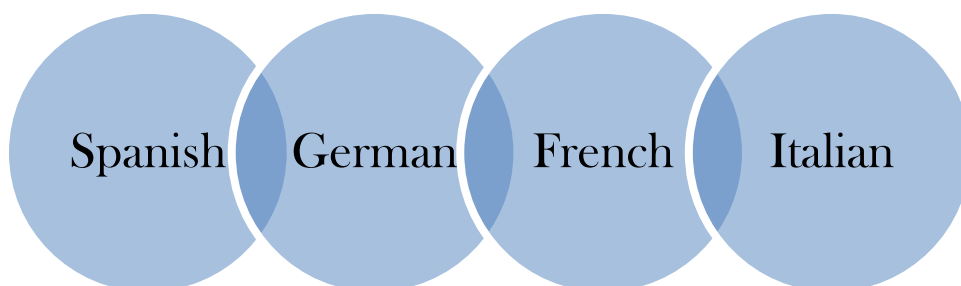
<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does Andriy react to Irina’s arrival? 2. Who is “Angliska rosa”? 3. How did Irina and Andriy participate in the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine? 4. What happened to Andriy’s father? How does he feel about it? 5. What happened to Dog?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we learn about Andriy’s mindset from the way he thinks and speaks? 2. Do you sympathise more with Irina or with Andriy? Why? 3. Compare the idiolects of all the characters you have seen in these episodes: Vulk, Irina, Emanuel, Andriy. Is it easy to tell one from another? How is this achieved? 4. Why do you think the author used an animal as one of her narrators? Is it correct to speak of Dog’s idiolect? 5. Discuss your own idiolects. If you were a book character, how would you represent every level of your idiolect? What about your classmates?

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciation Tips

There are a large number of words in English that are borrowed from other languages. Some of them are assimilated or anglicised, while others retain their original spelling and pronunciation. Sometimes, several variants of pronunciation exist.

Look the words and group them according to their language of origin (draw a diagram in your notebook). As you do so, practise pronouncing them using the transcriptions provided.



zeitgeist /'zait, gaɪst/, oboe /'əʊbəʊ/, canyon /'kæn yən/, tornado /tə:'neɪdəʊ/, quartet /kwɔ:'tɛt/, alligator /'æli, geɪtə/, haute couture / ɔʊt ku'tʊər/, finale /fi'næl i, -'nɑ li/, angst / æŋst, ʌŋkst /, mosquito /mə'ski:təʊ/, gestalt /gə'ʃtalt, -'ʃtɔlt, -'stalt, -'stɔlt/, fiesta /fi'estə/, virtuoso /,vɜ:tʃʊ'əʊzəʊ; -səʊ/, piñata /,pɪn'jɑtə/, tango /'tæŋgəʊ/, bildungsroman /'bɪldʊŋsroma:n/, graffiti /græ'fi:ti:/, guerilla /gə'rilə/, kindergarten /'kɪndə, gɑ:tən /, hors d'oeuvre /ɔ:'dɜ:vɜ:/, renegade /'rɛnɪ, geɪd/, bourgeois / 'bʊəʒwɑ:, bʊə'ʒwɑ:/, déjà vu /'deɪʒə 'vu:/, embargo /ɛm'bɑ:gəʊ/, lingua franca /'lɪŋgwə 'fræŋkə/, bouquet /boʊ-, bu'keɪ/, scenario /sɪ'nɑ:rɪ, əʊ /, burlesque /bɜ:'lɛsk/, wanderlust /'wɒndər, lʌst/, pastiche /pæ'stɪʃ, pɑ-/ , biscuit /'bɪskɪt/, entrepreneur /, ʌntɹəprə'nɜr, -'nʊər, -'nyʊər/, pistachio /pɪ'stɑ:ʃi, əʊ/, fiancé /fi'ɒnsɛɪ/, zucchini /tsu:'ki:nɪ, zu:-/, archipelago /,ɑ:kɪ'pɛli, gəʊ/, tequila /tɪ'ki:lə/, dilettante / 'dɪli, tʌnt, dɪli'tʌnt, -'tʌntɛɪ, -'tæntɪ/, chauffeur /'ʃəʊfə, ʃəʊ'fɜ:/, crescendo / krɪ'ʃɛndəʊ/

- Which of these words are used in your first language? Is the pronunciation different from the English?
- What other foreign borrowings in English do you remember? Test your classmates if they know what these words mean.

Task 2: Body Language

Are you good at understanding “body language”? Go back to the excerpts from “Two Caravans” and say what is implied by the way characters move and use their bodies. Work in group of 3 or 4. What non-verbal signs can you tell you they person...

- ...is lying to you
- ...is nervous or afraid
- ...really likes you
- ...is very bored
- ...is excited / thrilled

Compare your lists to those of the other groups.

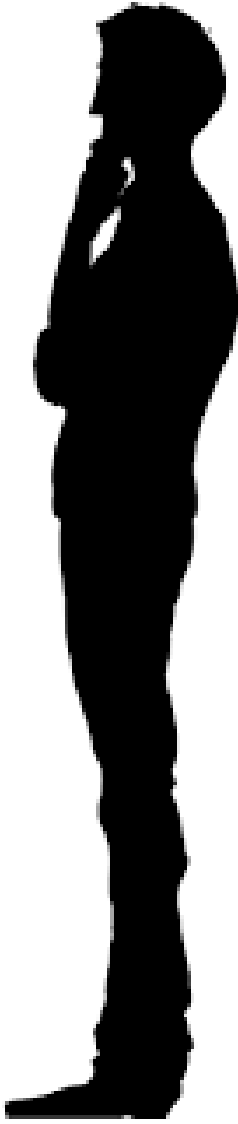
Task 3: Vocabulary

The extracts from “Two Caravans” abound in verbs that relate to physical actions. Why do you think it is the case? Study the words in the table below and work out their collocations. Draw a mind plan in your notebook. Make up sentences, providing minimal context, as in the



example:

➤ She crumpled the letter in her hand and hoisted her backpack onto her back. She was leaving.

to hoist to fumble to grab to wink to creak to gleam to grip to puff to twist to scrutinise to stare to jerk to plunge to lurch to huddle up to cram to chomp to slide to cling to scrunch to crinkle to nestle to hammer to crumple		a backpack a flag / a knife for her keys in the bag / wallet / purse my hand / his arm the handle at me on to the railings her ankle her hair into a bun toward the tree on his popcorn it away from me into the water in her blanket his bag with books / his mouth with chips off the stool to his mother her nose / her brow among the pillows up the paper the wedge into the crack a piece of glass under his foot
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Writing

Read an excerpt from a short summary of “Two Caravans” written by Ralph Blumenau, an online reviewer from the UK.

“Marina Lewycka continues to mine the seam she opened up in “A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian”, of immigrants (mainly from Eastern Europe, but also some from China and Africa) coming to Britain – this time to earn money picking strawberries, working on a chicken farm, in a

restaurant etc. The book shows how these immigrant workers are exploited: passports confiscated by the crooked and violent agents (Eastern European themselves), miserable wages, diminished by extortionate deductions for all sorts of things, including for the rent of the most awful accommodation. Very often migrant workers also cheat compatriots who trust them, and the prejudices that citizens of one East European country have for those of a neighbouring country are also well brought out. Illegal migrants from outside the EU who pretend to be legal immigrants from EU countries (e.g. Brazilians claiming to be Portuguese) are particularly vulnerable, as the gang masters well know. There is a horrific description of the way chickens are treated in battery farms.”

Add a paragraph of recommendation to this text. Imagine your target audience. Who will they be – readers from the UK, the EU or Eastern Europe, including Ukraine? How will it be reflected in your recommendation?



Project

Do You Speak My Language?

Find a story where language problems (having a hard time learning a foreign language, verbal misunderstandings, minority vs. majority language, secret / magic / ancient languages, speech impediments, etc.) play a central role. Analyse the characters of this story as linguistic personalities and explore their idiolects. Share your findings in class.

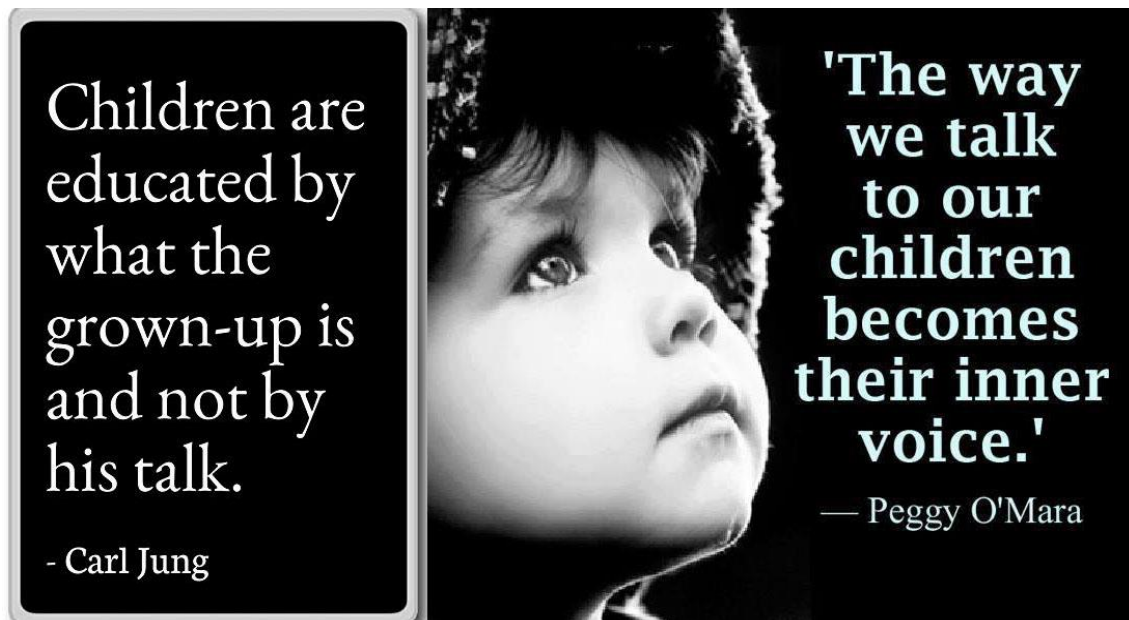


“The King’s Speech” (2010) is a British historical drama. Set before the World War II, it tells the true story of the future King George VI (played by Colin Firth) who worked with a language therapist to cope with his stammer.

UNIT 13

When Your Child Learns to Speak: Parents, Children and Language Lead in

- ❖ Do you remember when you learnt to speak and what (if any) problems did you encounter in the process? If not, interview your parents or other relatives about it and tell your story in class.
- ❖ What problems do contemporary parents face? Are they different from the problems their own parents used to have or are they essentially the same?
- ❖ Consider the quotes below. What messages do they convey? Do they contradict each other? What is your opinion about the influence of what parents say and how they say it on children?



Challenges of Contemporary Parenting

According to Zoe Williams, the author “The Madness of Modern Parenting”, parents in the developed countries make “almighty fuss about everything”. She writes that it looks like madness from outside: “When junior has graduated to eating food and sleeping normally, as all animals are wont, his or her every waking hour has to be filled with education and improvement. His or her progress must be chanted constantly; the boasting is shameless. All considerations of modesty and simple manners are instantly jettisoned, in favour of telling near strangers that you think your five-year-old might have an aptitude for Mandarin. Every hour must be distended to contain more opportunities for growth. It looks weirdly unnatural, lightless, this kind of

parenting; I imagine it producing etiolated children, their knowledge incredibly long and thin.” Indeed, one of the most noticeable changes about contemporary parenting is that it has become more intense and all-encompassing: it is often regarded as one of the most important jobs a person can do. The information, guidance, research and tips that are offered on the subject are bountiful. It is one of the biggest challenges of a modern parent, therefore, to cope with **information overload** and make sensible choices.

Balancing work and family is another serious challenge since the number of stay-at-home parents has considerably decreased in comparison with previous generations. The problem of communication and bridging the **generation gap**, although timeless, is more pronounced today due to the fact that the progress is very rapid and the differences between generations are numerous. Psychological aspects of parenting should also be mentioned: the feelings of guilt and disappointment are common problems that parents have to learn to cope with.

Fiction has always been sensitive to this theme: the drama of family life has been in the limelight since the times of Ancient Greece. Contemporary authors address a wide range of issues apart from the generation gap and psychological pitfalls: dysfunctional families, child abuse, childhood traumas, different patterns of parenting, sibling rivalry, etc. The Victorian vision of childhood as pure and innocent has been questioned and reconsidered, and new insights into parent-children relationships have been sought and offered.

Task 1

Read an excerpt from “Deaf Sentence” by David Lodge. The story is narrated by a retired professor of linguistics who is going deaf. His grandchild Daniel is learning to speak. Compare the protagonist’s attitude with that of Daniel’s mother, Marcia.

I thought about watching the News at Ten but the news is so depressing these days – bombings, murders, atrocities, famines, epidemics, global warming – that one shrinks from it late at night; let it wait, you feel, till the next day’s newspaper and the cooler medium of print. So I came back into the study and checked my email – ‘No New Messages’; and then I decided to write an account of my conversation, or rather non-conversation, with the

woman at the ARC private view, which in retrospect seemed rather amusing, though stressful at the time. First I did it in the usual journal style, then I rewrote it in the third person, present tense, the kind of exercise I used to give students in my stylistics seminar. First person into third person, past tense into present tense, or vice versa. What difference does it make to the effect? Is one method more appropriate to the original experience than another, or does any method interpret rather than represent experience? Discuss.

In speech the options are more limited – though my step-grandson Daniel, Marcia’s child, hasn’t learned this yet. He’s two years old, two and a half, and has quite a good vocabulary for his age, but he always refers to himself declaratively in the third person, present tense. When you say it’s time for bed, he says, ‘Daniel isn’t tired.’ When you say, ‘Give Grandad a kiss,’ he says, ‘Daniel doesn’t kiss granddads.’ Pronouns are tricky for kids, of course, because they’re shifters, as we say in the trade, their meaning depends entirely on who is using them: ‘you’ means you when I say it, but me when you say it. So mastery of pronouns always comes fairly late in the child’s acquisition of language, but Daniel’s exclusive use of the third person at his age is rather unusual. Marcia is anxious about it and asked me if I thought it was possibly a symptom of something, autism for instance. I asked her if she referred to herself in the third person when speaking to Daniel, like ‘Mummy is tired’, or ‘Mummy has got to make the dinner’, and she admitted that she did occasionally. ‘You mean, it’s my fault?’ she said, a little resentfully. ‘I mean he’s imitating you,’ I said. ‘It’s quite common. But he’ll soon grow out of it.’ I told her that Daniel’s sentences were remarkably well-formed for his age, and that I was sure he would soon learn to use pronouns. I actually find it charming, the way he says, ‘Daniel is thirsty,’ ‘Daniel doesn’t tidy up,’ ‘Daniel is shy today,’ with a perceptible pause for thought before he speaks. It has an almost regal gravity and formality, as if he were a little prince or dauphin. Dauphin Daniel I call him. But young parents, educated middle-class ones anyway, are very jumpy these days, they get so much information from the media about all the things that could be wrong with their child – autism, dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, allergies, obesity and so on – they’re in a constant state of panic, watching their

offspring like hawks for warning signs. And it's catching: I'm far more anxious about the baby Anne is expecting than I was about any of Maisie's pregnancies. Thirty-seven is late to give birth for the first time.

Which of the challenges of modern parenting are discussed in this excerpt? Do you have small children among your relatives? Describe their language acquisition and their parents' reaction to it.

Task 2

Read an excerpt from "The Casual Vacancy" by J.K. Rowling. One of the many families portrayed in the novel is a family of Indian origin: the parents are doctors and their three children are at school. Sukhvinder is very unhappy: unlike her siblings, she is not good at studies and unpopular at school (she is constantly bullied by some of her peers). Read the excerpt and comment on Sukhvinder's relationship with her mother.

Hairy, heavy and stupid. Plain and clumsy. Lazy, according to her mother, whose criticism and exasperation rained down upon her daily. A bit slow, according to her father, who said it with an affection that did not mitigate his lack of interest. He could afford to be nice about her bad grades. He had Jaswant and Rajpal, both top of every class they took.

'Poor old Jolly,' Vikram would say carelessly, after glancing through her report.

But her father's indifference was preferable to her mother's anger. Parminder did not seem able to comprehend or accept that she had produced a child who was not gifted. If any of the subject teachers made the slightest hint that Sukhvinder might try harder, Parminder seized upon it in triumph.

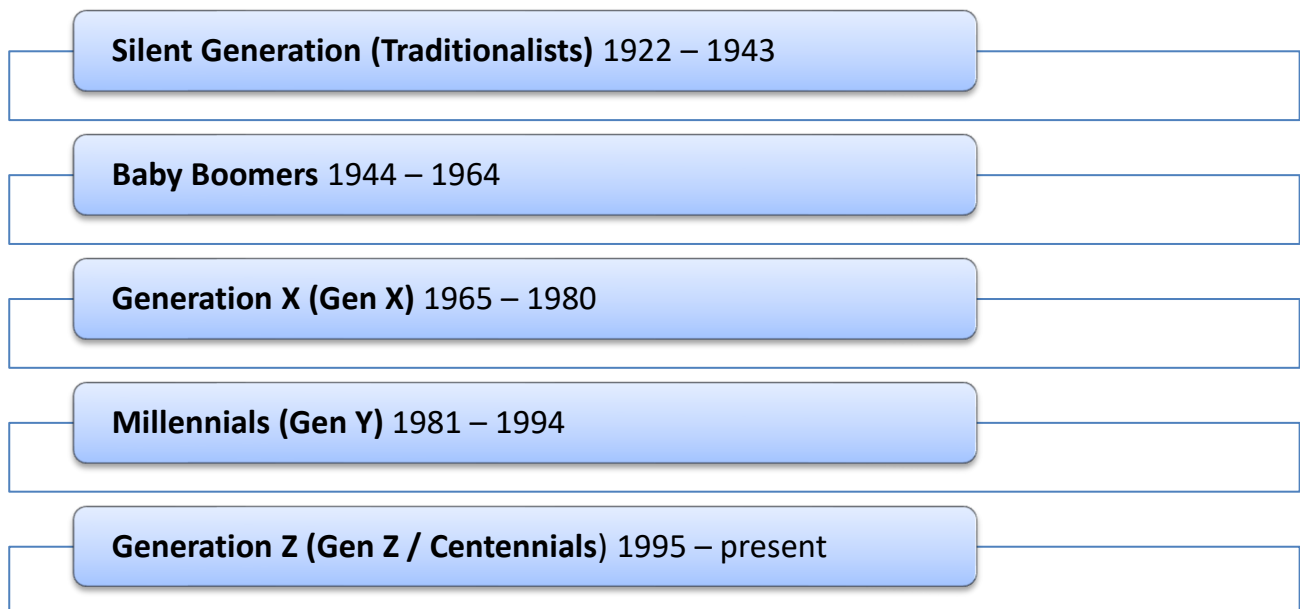
"Sukhvinder is easily discouraged and needs to have more faith in her abilities." There! You see? Your teacher is saying you don't try hard enough, Sukhvinder.' Of the only class in which Sukhvinder had reached the second set, computing – Fats Wall was not there, so she sometimes dared put up her hand to answer questions – Parminder said dismissively, "The amount of time you children spend on the internet, I'm surprised you're not in set one.'

Compare Sukhvinder's father's and mother's attitude to their daughter. Why did she feel her mother's attitude was worse?

What would you do, if one of your children didn't do as well in school as the others? Role play the situation in class.

Exploring Generation Gap

It is hard to establish when one generation ends and another begins. Yet it is widely accepted nowadays to speak of 5 generations, living in the world today, although the age boundaries between them may differ from source to source. The year classification below is given according to “Cultural Perspectives on Millennials” (2018):



People born before 1922 are sometimes called “the Greatest generation”. It is Millennials, however, who are considered to be the most influential generation today: they are often viewed as “trailblazers” and trendsetters for other generations. Marketers extensively use the Millennial mindset and behaviour for advertising and predicting the behaviour of other generations. The following features are typically associated with Millennials:

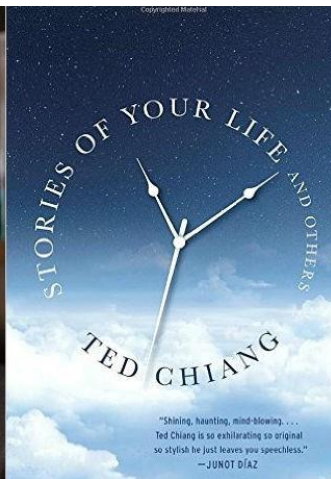
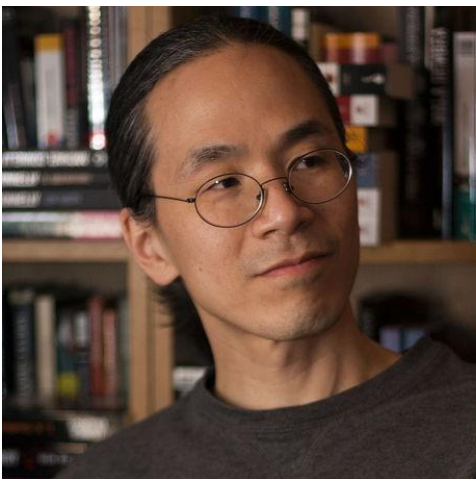
- ✓ They embrace technology and diversity.
- ✓ They are more educated and affluent than other generations.
- ✓ They are obsessed with their careers.
- ✓ They give up on traditional marriage.
- ✓ They prefer to dress well and care about their appearance.
- ✓ They are often self-absorbed and narcissistic.

Discussion.

Work in groups. Discuss which generation you belong to:

- ❖ If you belong to Millennials, do you recognise yourself in these characteristics? Browse the Internet to add more information on the Millennial mindset.
- ❖ If you belong to a different generation, find out what characteristics are associated with it. Compare and contrast them with those of Millennials.
- ❖ What generation do your parents belong to? Describe the generation gap between them and yourself.

How to Tell the Story of One's Life



Ted Chiang (born in 1967) is an American science fiction writer of Chinese origin. Chiang has written several short stories and novellas and he has won numerous science fiction awards for them, including Nebula, Hugo and Locus

awards. His novella “Story of Your Life”, published in the 2002 collection “Stories of Your Life and Others”, was adapted into the film “Arrival” (2016), which gained critical and commercial success. In his stories Chiang makes extensive use of science, including mathematics, physics and linguistics.

“**Story of your life**” centres on Dr. Louise Banks, a linguist who was recruited by the U.S. army to establish contact with the aliens (heptapods) that had arrived on Earth. Louise studies both the sounds heptapods make and their written speech and makes several important discoveries about them, the most important of which is that these two modes of speech are not interconnected. She masters their Heptapod B, written speech, which consists of complex chains of semagrams that do not follow any linear order. As she uses the language, she starts thinking in the same way: in directionless trains of thought, where causes are consequences are interchangeable. This affects her perception of time: she can now “remember the future”, in particular her daughter’s whole life. The story is narrated in the first person, while the

daughter is the second-person “you”. The story of her daughter’s life is narrated with the help of future tenses, while the plotline of Louise’ contact with heptapods and learning their language is given in the past tenses. Before he attempted to write this story, Chiang spent five years studying linguistics.


Read the episodes from the story and say which effect the use of the future narration produces in them.

Episode 1

It’ll be when you first learn to walk that I get daily demonstrations of the asymmetry in our relationship. You’ll be incessantly running off somewhere, and each time you walk into a door frame or scrape your knee, the pain feels like it’s my own. It’ll be like growing an errant limb, an extension of myself whose sensory nerves report pain just fine, but whose motor nerves don't convey my commands at all. It’s so unfair: I’m going to give birth to an animated voodoo doll of myself. I didn’t see this in the contract when I signed up. Was this part of the deal?

And then there will be the times when I see you laughing. Like the time you’ll be playing with the neighbor’s puppy, poking your hands through the chain-link fence separating our back yards, and you’ll be laughing so hard you’ll start hiccuping. The puppy will run inside the neighbor’s house, and your laughter will gradually subside, letting you catch your breath. Then the puppy will come back to the fence to lick your fingers again, and you’ll shriek and start laughing again. It will be the most wonderful sound I could ever imagine, a sound that makes me feel like a fountain, or a wellspring.

Now if only I can remember that sound the next time your blithe disregard for self-preservation gives me a heart attack.

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is meant by the “asymmetry” in the relationship between the mother and the daughter? Do you think it is always present in parenting?2. What imagery is used to convey of idea of a parent’s love for their offspring?3. How does the tone of the passage change in the last sentence?
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Language Practice

Task 1: Expressing Future

Since there are several ways of expressing future in the English language, they are sometimes confused.

Look at the table below and explain the difference between these future situations. Match the examples below with the situations in the table.

will / won't	(not) going to	The Present Continuous
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future predictions• Willingness / promises	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future predictions• Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future arrangements

- Watch out! You are going to fall!
- I am meeting Sue after the class.
- She is going to graduate in May.
- I think she'll be shocked by this story.
- Don't worry, I won't disturb you.
- He says he is going to learn Korean.



Work in pairs. Think about what kind of parent you are going to be in the future (if you already have children, think how your parenting strategy will change in 5 years-time) and tell your partner about it.



Episode 2

In 1770, Captain Cook's ship Endeavour ran aground on the coast of Queensland, Australia. While some of his men made repairs, Cook led an

exploration party and met the aboriginal people. One of the sailors pointed to the animals that hopped around with their young riding in pouches, and asked an aborigine what they were called. The aborigine replied, “Kanguru.” From then on Cook and his sailors referred to the animals by this word. It wasn’t until later that they learned it meant “What did you say?”

I tell that story in my introductory course every year. It’s almost certainly untrue, and I explain that afterwards, but it’s a classic anecdote. Of course, the anecdotes my undergraduates will really want to hear are ones featuring the heptapods; for the rest of my teaching career, that’ll be the reason many of them sign up for my courses. So I’ll show them the old videotapes of my sessions at the looking glass, and the sessions that the other linguists conducted; the tapes are instructive, and they’ll be useful if we’re ever visited by aliens again, but they don’t generate many good anecdotes.

When it comes to language-learning anecdotes, my favorite source is child language acquisition. I remember one afternoon when you are five years old, after you have come home from kindergarten. You’ll be coloring with your crayons while I grade papers.

“Mom,” you’ll say, using the carefully casual tone reserved for requesting a favor, “can I ask you something?”

“Sure, sweetie. Go ahead.”

“Can I be, um, honored?”

I’ll look up from the paper I’m grading. “What do you mean?”

“At school Sharon said she got to be honored.”

“Really? Did she tell you what for?”

“It was when her big sister got married. She said only one person could be, um, honored, and she was it.”

“Ah, I see. You mean Sharon was maid of honor?”

“Yeah, that’s it. Can I be made of honor?”

Discussion



1. Why does Louise prefer anecdotes from child language acquisition than from her contacts with the aliens?
2. Why did her daughter want to be “honoured”?
3. Do you know any other examples of children confusing / misunderstanding certain words or phrases (in English or your first language)?

Language Practice

Task 2: The Future Continuous

The Future Continuous tense is used to express an action that will be in progress at a definite time in the future.

▶ **Juan has a very close-knit family. When he arrives in Buenos Aires tomorrow, his whole family will be waiting for him at the airport.**

Work in pairs. Tell your partner what you will be doing at certain times the next day.

Episode 3

I remember one day during the summer when you're sixteen. For once, the person waiting for her date to arrive is me. Of course, you'll be waiting around too, curious to see what he looks like. You'll have a friend of yours, a blond girl with the unlikely name of Roxie, hanging out with you, giggling.

"You may feel the urge to make comments about him," I'll say, checking myself in the hallway mirror. "Just restrain yourselves until we leave."

"Don't worry, Mom," you'll say. "We'll do it so that he won't know. Roxie, you ask me what I think the weather will be like tonight. Then I'll say what I think of Mom's date."

"Right," Roxie will say.

"No, you most definitely will not," I'll say.

"Relax, Mom. He'll never know; we do this all the time."

"What a comfort that is."

A little later on, Nelson will arrive to pick me up. I'll do the introductions, and we'll all engage in a little small talk on the front porch. Nelson is ruggedly handsome, to your evident approval. Just as we're about to leave, Roxie will say to you casually, "So what do you think the weather will be like tonight?"

"I think it's going to be really hot," you'll answer.


Roxie will nod in agreement. Nelson will say, "Really? I thought they said it was going to be cool."

"I have a sixth sense about these things," you'll say. Your face will give nothing away. "I get the feeling it's going to be a scorcher. Good thing you're dressed for it, Mom."

I'll glare at you, and say good night.

As I lead Nelson toward his car, he'll ask me, amused, "I'm missing something here, aren't I?"

"A private joke," I'll mutter. "Don't ask me to explain it."

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe how Louise feels during this conversation. How would you feel if you were in a similar situation?2. What role does the dialogue play in this episode?3. How is non-verbal communication rendered in this passage?
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Sharing In-Jokes

An in-joke (an inside joke or a private joke) is a joke that is understandable only for the member of a small group. The equivalent of an in-joke in video games, TV series and cinema is called "an Easter egg". As the name suggests, sometimes they are well hidden.


- ❖ Are there any in-jokes in your class?
How did they start?
- ❖ How do "outsiders" typically react to inside jokes?



Episode 4

I remember a picture of you taken at your college graduation. In the photo you're striking a pose for the camera, mortarboard stylishly tilted on your head, one hand touching your sunglasses, the other hand on your hip, holding open your gown to reveal the tank top and shorts you're wearing underneath. I remember your graduation. There will be the distraction of having Nelson and your father and what's-her-name there all at the same time, but that will be minor. That entire weekend, while you're introducing me to your classmates and hugging everyone incessantly, I'll be all but mute with amazement. I can't believe that you, a grown woman taller than me and beautiful enough to make my heart ache, will be the same girl I used to lift off the ground so you could reach the drinking fountain, the same girl who used to trundle out of my bedroom draped in a dress and hat and four scarves from my closet.

And after graduation, you'll be heading for a job as a financial analyst. I won't understand what you do there, I won't even understand your fascination with money, the preeminence you gave to salary when negotiating job offers. I would prefer it if you'd pursue something without regard for its monetary rewards, but I'll have no complaints. My own mother could never understand why I couldn't just be a high school English teacher. You'll do what makes you happy, and that'll be all I ask for.

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does Louise feel about her daughter's graduation? Which images help convey this feeling? 2. Do you sympathize with Louise's attitude to her daughter's life choices? In your opinion, should parents try to steer their children's future or should they leave their offspring to their own devices?
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Episode 5

I practiced Heptapod B at every opportunity, both with the other linguists and by myself. The novelty of reading a semasiographic language made it compelling in a way that Heptapod A wasn't, and my improvement in writing it excited me. Over time, the sentences I wrote grew shapelier, more cohesive. I had reached the point where it worked better when I didn't think about it too much. Instead of carefully trying to design a sentence before writing, I could simply begin putting down strokes immediately; my initial strokes almost always turned out to be compatible with an elegant rendition of what I was trying to say. I was developing a faculty like that of the heptapods.

More interesting was the fact that Heptapod B was changing the way I thought. For me, thinking typically meant speaking in an internal voice; as we say in the trade, my thoughts were phonologically coded. My internal voice normally spoke in English, but that wasn't a requirement. The summer after my senior year in high school, I attended a total immersion program for learning Russian; by the end of the summer, I was thinking and even dreaming in Russian. But it was always spoken Russian. Different language, same mode: a voice speaking silently aloud.

The idea of thinking in a linguistic yet nonphonological mode always intrigued me. I had a friend born of deaf parents; he grew up using American Sign Language, and he told me that he often thought in ASL instead of English. I used to wonder what it was like to have one's thoughts be manually coded, to reason using an inner pair of hands instead of an inner voice.

With Heptapod B, I was experiencing something just as foreign: my thoughts were becoming graphically coded. There were trance-like moments during the day when my thoughts weren't expressed with my internal voice; instead, I saw semagrams with my mind's eye, sprouting like frost on a windowpane. As I grew more fluent, semagraphic designs would appear fully formed, articulating even complex ideas all at once. My thought processes weren't moving any faster as a result, though. Instead of racing forward, my mind hung balanced on the symmetry underlying the semagrams. The semagrams seemed to be something more than language; they were almost like mandalas. I found myself in a meditative state, contemplating the way in which premises and conclusions were interchangeable. There was no direction inherent in the way propositions were connected, no "train of thought" moving along a particular route; all the components in an act of reasoning were equally powerful, all having identical precedence.

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unlike the previous episodes, this one is narrated in the past. Did it change your perception of the text? 2. How is Louise' linguistic discovering described in the excerpt? Did you find it easy to follow and understand? 3. How are the protagonist's perception and mental processes affected by the aliens' language? What does the image of mandala contribute to the description of this change? 4. Do you think / dream in your mother tongue or in other languages as well? To what extent, in your opinion, do languages influence the way we think?
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Watch the trailer of "Arrival" (or the whole film) and say how Heptapod B is visualised in it. Do you find it adequate?

Language Practice

Task 3: Vocabulary



Look at the list of expressions relating to speaking and language. What can you add to this list?

To pick up (a word / phrase), to speak up, to speak the same language, to speak someone's language, like talking to a brick wall, to be at a loss for words, beyond words, in plain English, it's all Greek to me, loaded language, watch your language, words fail me.

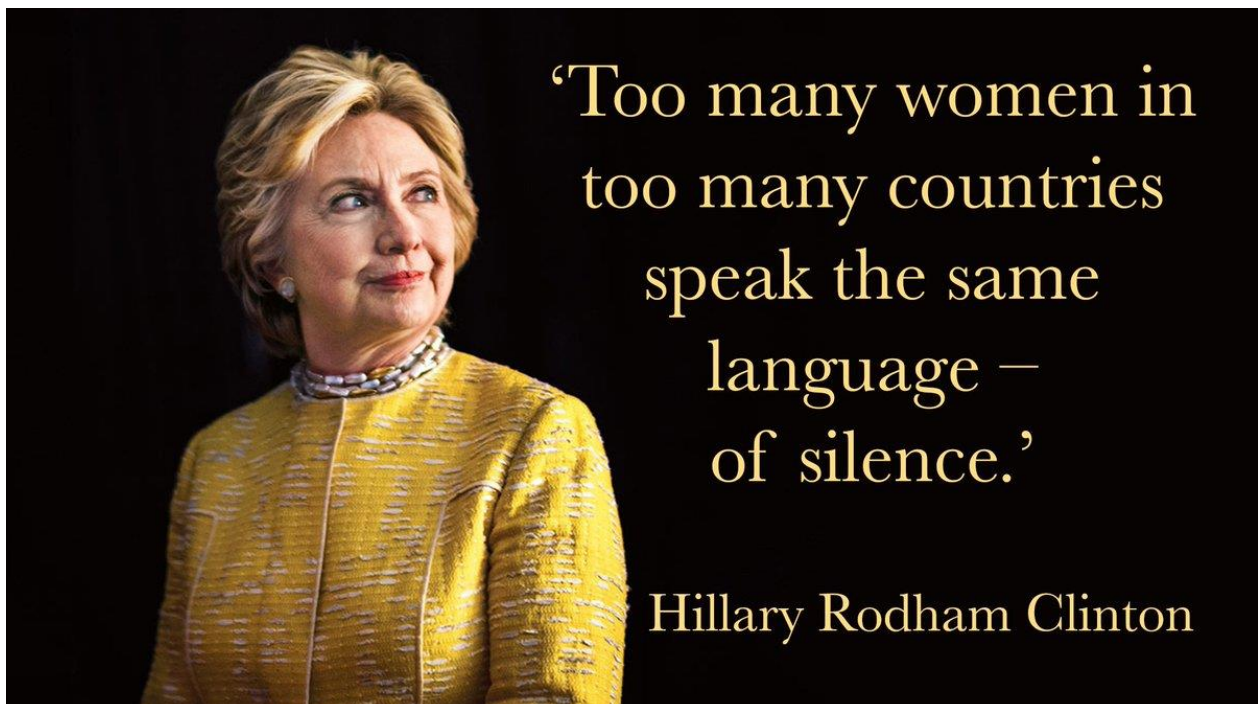
Work in pairs. Compile short dialogues using the expressions from the box above. Play the interpreter game: while one pair presents their dialogue, other students translate it into their first language.

Suggested topics are:

- ✓ (mis)communication between parents and children
- ✓ learning a new skill
- ✓ describing something that has impressed you

Task 4: Discussion

Read the quote below. What did Hilary Clinton mean when she said that?



*Think of other examples where important social issues (discrimination, prejudice, domestic violence, etc.) are expressed with the help of metaphors relating to **language** / **silence**.*

Task 5: Reported Questions



When we change direct questions into **reported question**, it is important to remember to change the word order back to the affirmative (subject + verb). To report questions, we use the verbs **to ask** and **to wonder**. To report yes / no question, we also insert **if** or **whether**. When there is more of an aspect of choice, **whether** is preferable. It is possible to add **or not** after **whether** in reported questions. Study the examples in the table below.

Direct question	Reported question
“Where has my youth gone?”	She wondered where her youth had gone.
“Why are you winking at me?”	My friend asked me why I was winking at her.
“When will I be on my feet again?”	I asked the doctor when I will be on my feet again / when I would be on my feet again.
“Did you find that character compelling?”	She wondered whether I found the character compelling.
“If your husband tells a blatant lie, will you call him out on it?”	He asked me whether or not I would call out my husband if he told a blatant lie.
“Have you noticed the stain on the carpet?”	My mother asked me if I had noticed the stain on the carpet.

Transform the sentences below using the prompts, as in the example.

- **What can I do to improve my observation skills? (The student asked me...)**
- **The student asked me what she could do improve my observation skills**
- 1. If a book has slow pacing, does it mean it’s bad? (He asked the professor...)
- 2. Was he alluding to that strange episode? (I wonder...)
- 3. Why don’t you stand up to your sisters? (They often ask me...)

4. Will you help me come up with the title for our book club? (She asked me...)
5. Where did you pick up that phrase? (She asked me...)
6. Will she step in, after all that happened? (I was wondering...)

Writing



The following three entries are taken from mentalfloss.com, where a list of “30 of the Best Parents in Literature” was published in 2016. Look at the Top 5 and say whether you agree with these choices.

1. Atticus Finch // To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

The widowed father of Jem and Scout, Atticus Finch is one of the great heroes of American literature. Steering his young children along the path of moral rectitude is hard in the Jim Crow South, and when Atticus, a lawyer, unsuccessfully defends an innocent black man from charges that he raped a white woman, it becomes even more difficult. But his own belief in rightness, morality, and good, even in the face of an unfair world, is communicated to his kids—and to the world. His impact on the legal profession, especially in the South, was also profound: The Atticus Finch Society, part of the Alabama Law Foundation, was founded to serve the legal needs of the poor and named after a fictional lawyer who “epitomizes the type of professional, and person, lawyers strive to be.”

2. and 3. Alex and Kate Murry // A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L’Engle

Tesseract is real, and Meg and Charles Murry’s scientist father has disappeared into one—and it’s up to these two brilliant but socially awkward children to save him. When it was published in 1962, *A Wrinkle in Time* was a sci-fi gift to all those nerdy kids out there for whom Star Trek hadn’t yet been invented. And the Murry parents—beautiful and smart microbiologist Kate and tesseract physicist Alex—made being scientists seem so cool. Who wouldn’t want parents like that?

4. and 5. The Weasleys // Harry Potter series by JK Rowling

Harry Potter wanted them to adopt him—and we wouldn’t mind either. Though Harry was already remarkably well-adjusted for a child who’d been forced to sleep in a spider-filled cupboard under the stairs, his friendship with the Weasleys showed him what a loving family really looked like. Mom

Molly was kind, fiercely protective of her children—her battle with Bellatrix Lestrange in the final book was immensely satisfying—and knitted a mean jumper. Dad Arthur was slightly bumbling, loved Muggle stuff, and was still a kid at heart. Best of all, they loved each other as much as they loved their children.

Without looking at the rest of the list, choose fictional parents and write your own entry stating why you admire them. Share your writing in class and check whether there are any overlaps with the list at the site.

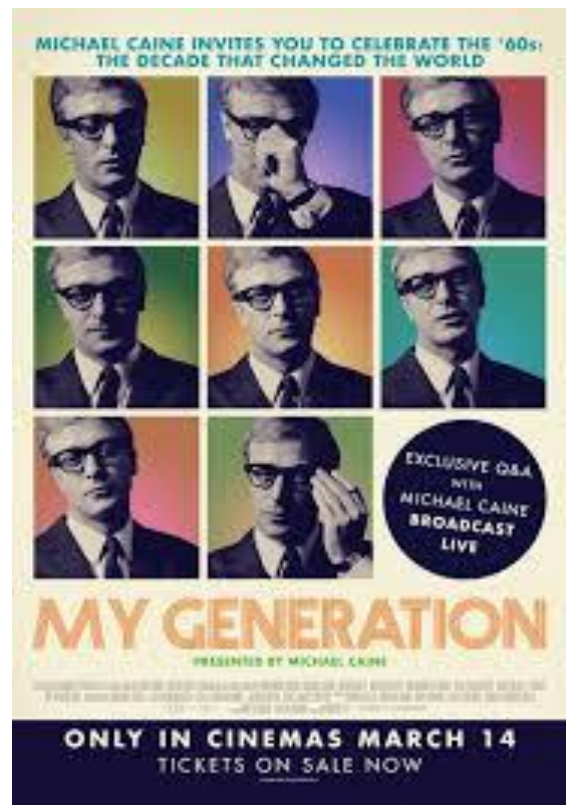
Project

Talking about My Generation



Many works of fiction and non-fiction attempt to capture the zeitgeist of their epochs and corresponding generations. Apart from historical and social contexts, the image of a particular generation is shaped by the clothes its representatives wear and the music they listen to, the way they dance and the way they speak.

Choose several works (including books, films, TV series, musicals, songs, documentaries, comic strips, etc.) that reflect the values, the visual image, as well as the language of a particular generation. Present your findings in class.



In the documentary “My Generation” (2018) Michael Caine, a famous British actor talks about the most turbulent decade of the 20th century: the 1960s. The film includes both archive footage and interviews with such key figures as David Bailey, Joan Collins, Sandie Shaw, Twiggy and Paul McCartney.

UNIT 14

Contemporary Young Adults: Coming of Age in a Multicultural World



Lead In

- ❖ What kinds of stories did you enjoy when you were a teenager? If you are still a teenager, say whether your book preferences have changed from your early teens up till now.
- ❖ Choose one story that particularly impressed you or significantly influenced you in your teens and talk about it to the class. Would you like to reread it? Would you recommend it to your peers?

Coming-of-Age Narratives

A **coming-of-age** story focuses on a young protagonist, typically a teenager, in transition from childhood to adulthood. The German term “**Bildungsroman**” (“novel of formation”) is often used to describe a novel that traces the protagonist’s psychological development in the passage from childhood into maturity. This transition typically includes a number of experiences, sometimes traumatic, and culminates in establishing of one’s **identity** and discovering one’s role in the world.

Coming-of-age narratives are abundant in **young adult** fiction, a category of fiction whose target audience embraces readers between 12 and 18 years old,

although the boundaries between children, young adult and adult fiction have always been vague. Thematically, young adult fiction deals with teenagers' everyday life (family life, school, personal relationships, friendship, etc.) and social problems (poverty, drug addiction, crime, teen pregnancies, etc.). Styles and genres of young adult fiction are diverse and include historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy, dystopian novels, comics and other varieties. The format of a personal diary is frequently used.

Numerous young adult novels address the issue of **multiculturalism**. According to "Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults" by Mingshui Cai, such novels are aimed at developing **social conscience** in children and teenagers teaching them to empathise with other ethnic groups. These novels can be **culturally conscious** (depicting unique features of a certain group) or "**melting pot**" narratives where characters of different races are presented as culturally homogeneous. **Cross-cultural** fiction reflects intercultural relationships between different groups.

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"It's a coming-of-age story."

Task 1

Brainstorm the criteria for setting the boundaries between stories for children / young adults / adult. Draw a diagram in your notebooks.



Task 2

Which of the following popular stories are for young adults? Do you think that adults / children read them, too?

- ❖ The Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling
- ❖ “The Hunger Games” trilogy by Suzanne Collins
- ❖ “A Song of Ice and Fire” series by George Martin
- ❖ “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” graphical novels by Jeff Kinney
- ❖ The Twilight series by Stephenie Meyer

Task 3

Watch a TEDx talk “A Place of Hope: From Refugee Camp to International Fashion Model” by Halima Aden and explain what role multiculturalism has played in her life. What does she mention about her place of birth, Swahili, hijab-wearing, “cliques”?

Language Practice

Task 1: Pronunciation Tips

One of the most challenging consonants for the learners of English is /w/, especially if there is no such sound in their first languages. It is frequently pronounced as /v/. Practise pronouncing these consonants using the table below.

/w/	/v/	/w/ + /v/
word, white, world, war, wordsmith, wear, longwinded, whimsical, wonder, worthy, heartwarming, willing, twist, obsequious, wimpy, window, question, worry.	verse, novel, vibes, volunteer, villain, visceral, captivated, self-evident, diverse, riveting, over- hyped, vibrant, advice, pensive, verisimilitude, observant.	wave, over-whelming, everywhere, weave, overwork, whatever, wolverine, hand-waving.

Use the following expressions to practice these sounds:

Whatever you say, watch your language!

Words fail me when I try to talk about women.

You'll get into hot water with your wife over this.

You have to work out who put a spoke in your wheel.

This blank verse is heartwarming and out of this world.

Having to work at the weekend was a bitter pill to swallow.

Work in pairs. Use the words in the table above to compile your own sentences containing both /w/ and /v/. Take turns to say them.

Reading a Cross-Cultural Story



Julia Alvarez (born in 1950) is a Dominican-American novelist, essayist and poet. She spent the first ten years of her life in the Dominican Republic, but then her family was forced to flee the country because of her father's involvement in a political rebellion against the Trujillo dictatorship. Since then she has lived in the USA and has become one of the most successful Latina writers in this country. Alvarez's stories are heavily influenced by her experiences as a Dominican in the

United States and address the issues of cultural assimilation and identity, for example, in such novels as "How the García Girls Lost their Accents" (1991) and "Before We Were Free" (2002). In 2009 she received the Fitzgerald Award for Achievement in American Literature.

"Before We Were Free" is a young adult novel set in the Dominican Republic and the USA during the last months of the Trujillo dictatorship (1960 - 1961). Rafael Trujillo, also known as El Jefe (The Chief), ruled the country from February 1930 until his assassination in 1961. The prominent features of his regime were the personality cult (e.g., city, streets, mountains, etc. were renamed in his honour) and the use of brutal force to suppress opposition. The novel portrays the extended family of the 12-year-old Anita de la Torre, some members of which are involved in the plot to overthrow El Jefe. Anita attends an American school in the capital of the country and is generally unaware of what is going on the political scene. As the plot unfolds, she gradually realises what dictatorship is and starts questioning what she has previously taken for granted.

Read the episode below and say how the protagonist progresses in the course of the novel. In the first episode Anita's cousin Carla has to leave school in the middle of the lesson because her family has to flee the country as soon as possible.



Episode 1

“May I have some volunteers?” Mrs. Brown is saying. We are preparing skits¹ for Thanksgiving, two weeks away. Although the Pilgrims never came to the Dominican Republic, we are attending the American school, so we have to celebrate American holidays.

It’s a hot, muggy afternoon. I feel lazy and bored. Outside the window, the palm trees are absolutely still. Not even a breeze. Some of the American students have been complaining that it doesn’t feel like Thanksgiving when it’s as hot as the Fourth of July.

Mrs. Brown is looking around the room. My cousin, Carla, sits in the seat in front of me, waving her arm.

Mrs. Brown calls on Carla, and then on me. Carla and I are to play the parts of two Indians welcoming the Pilgrims. Mrs. Brown always gives the not-so-good parts to those of us in class who are Dominicans.

She hands us each a headband with a feather sticking up like one rabbit ear. I feel ridiculous. “Okay, Indians, come forward and greet the Pilgrims.” Mrs.

Brown motions toward where Joey Farland and Charlie Price stand with their toy rifles and the Davy Crockett hats they've talked Mrs. Brown into letting them wear. Even I know the pioneers come after the Pilgrims.

"Anita" – she points at me – "I want you to say, 'Welcome to the United States.'" "

Before I can mutter my line, Oscar Mancini raises his hand. "Why the Indians call it the United Estates when there was no United Estates back then, Mrs. Brown?"

The class groans. Oscar is always asking questions. "United Estates! United Estates!" somebody in the back row mimics. Lots of classmates snicker, even some Dominicans. I hate it when the American kids make fun of the way we speak English.

"That's a good question, Oscar," Mrs. Brown responds, casting a disapproving look around. She must have heard the whisper as well. "It's called poetic license. Something allowed in a story that isn't so in real life. Like a metaphor or a simile."

Just then, the classroom door opens. I catch a glimpse of our principal, and behind him, Carla's mother, Tía Laura, looking very nervous. But then, Tía Laura always looks nervous. Papi likes to joke that if there were ever an Olympic event for worrying, the Dominican Republic would win with his sister on the team. But lately, Papi looks pretty worried himself. When I ask questions, he replies with "Children should be seen, not heard" instead of his usual "Curiosity is a sign of intelligence."

Mrs. Brown comes forward from the back of the room and stands talking to the principal for a minute before she follows him out into the hall, where Tía Laura is standing. The door closes.

Usually when our teacher leaves the room, Charlie Price, the class clown, acts up. He does stuff like changing the hands on the clock so that Mrs. Brown will be all confused and let us out for recess early. Yesterday, he wrote **NO HOMEWORK TONIGHT** in big block letters above the date on the board, **THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1960**. Even Mrs. Brown thought that was pretty funny.

But now the whole class waits quietly. The last time the principal came to our classroom, it was to tell Tomasito Morales that his mother was here for him.

Something had happened to his father, but even Papi, who knew Señor Morales, would not say what. Tomasito hasn't come back to school since then. Beside me, Carla is tucking her hair behind her ears, something she does when she's nervous. My brother, Mundín, has a nervous tic, too. He bites his nails whenever he does something wrong and has to sit on the punishment chair until Papi comes home.

The door opens again, and Mrs. Brown steps back in, smiling that phony smile grown-ups smile when they are keeping bad news from you. In a bright voice, Mrs. Brown asks Carla to please collect her things. "Would you help her, Anita?" she adds.

We walk back to our seats and begin packing up Carla's schoolbag. Mrs. Brown announces to the class that they'll continue with their skits later. Everyone is to take out his or her vocabulary book and start on the next chapter. The class pretends to settle down to its work, but of course, everyone is stealing glances at Carla and me.

Mrs. Brown comes over to see how we're doing. Carla packs her homework, but leaves the usual stay-at-school stuff in her desk. "Are those yours?" Mrs. Brown points at the new notebooks, the neat lineup of pens and pencils, the eraser in the shape of the Dominican Republic.

Carla nods.

"Pack it all up, dear," Mrs. Brown says quietly.

We pack Carla's schoolbag with everything that belongs to her. The whole time I'm wondering why Mrs. Brown hasn't asked me to pack my stuff, too. After all, Carla and I are in the same family.

Oscar's hand is waving and dipping like a palm tree in a cyclone. But Mrs. Brown doesn't call on him. This time, I think we're all hoping he'll get a chance to ask his question, which is probably the same question that's in everyone's head: Where is Carla going?



Mrs. Brown takes Carla's hand. "Come along." She nods to me.

Mrs. Brown leads Carla up the side of the classroom. I follow, afraid I'll burst into tears if I catch anyone's eye. I look up at the portrait of our Benefactor, El Jefe, which hangs above the classroom, his eyes watching over us. To his left hangs George Washington in his white wig, looking off into the distance. Perhaps he is homesick for his own country?

Just staring at El Jefe keeps my tears from flowing. I want to be brave and strong, so that someday if I ever meet the leader of our country, he'll congratulate me. "So, you are the girl who never cries?" he'll say, smiling down at me.

Notes

1. Skits are short theatrical sketches.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What holiday is approaching? How are the school kids going to celebrate it? 2. Why does the teacher introduce the notion of "poetic license"? 3. What is happening to Carla? 4. What is Anita's attitude to El Jefe?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would you describe the attitude of the teacher and American kids to the Dominican ones? How is this reflected in the language? 2. There is "the punishment chair" in Anita's school. What do you think of this method of disciplining? 3. The chapter from which the excerpt is taken is called "The eraser in the shape of the Dominican Republic". Can you explain the symbolism of this title? 4. Do you think that "poetic / artistic license" (e.g., changing historic facts or realities to suit the story) is appropriate in theatrical performances such as the one described in this episode?

How is the notion of artistic license connected with the **willing suspension of disbelief**? (See Unit 3)

Discuss the following types of artistic license in groups:

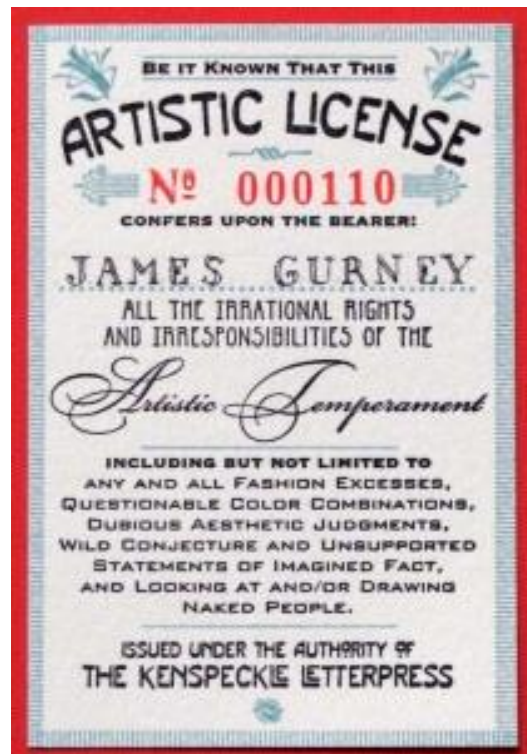
- ✓ using anachronisms in stories;

- ✓ changing historical facts in fiction;
- ✓ changing elements of the original story in translation;
- ✓ changing elements of the book in its film adaptation.

Look at the humoristic portrayal of “artistic license” on the right. What is the message of this picture?

What is meant by:

- artistic temperament;
- dubious aesthetic judgments;
- wild conjecture?



Episode 2

In this episode, El Jefe has already been assassinated, and Anita’s father and uncle have been arrested as the main conspirators. Anita and her mother had to flee from their home to avoid being arrested as well. They are currently hiding in their relatives’ house.

June 8, 1961, Thursday, right after supper, in bathroom

During supper tonight, Tía Mari turned on Radio Caribe kind of loud. Meanwhile, Tío Pepe tuned his shortwave radio to Radio Swan real low since that station is still illegal, and he and Mami and Tía Mari leaned forward listening closely to the “real” news. It was like night and day, what each station was reporting.

CARIBE: The OAS¹ is here to help the SIM² maintain stability.

SWAN: The OAS is here investigating human rights abuses.

CARIBE: Prisoners praise treatment to OAS investigation committee.

SWAN: Prisoners complain of atrocities to OAS investigation committee.

CARIBE: Consul Washburn has been recalled.

SWAN: Consul Washburn has been airlifted by helicopter to protect his life.

Both stations agreed on one thing: The plot did not work. Pupo, the head of the army, just wasn't there to announce the liberation over the radio, and instead, Trujillo Junior has taken over, and it's a bloodbath out there. The SIM are doing house-to-house searches. Over 5,000 people have been arrested, including family members of the conspirators. I wanted to block my ears and not listen to this stuff!

Whenever I feel this way, I start writing in my diary so there's another voice that I can listen to. A third radio, tuned to my own heart.

So I snuck off to the bathroom with my diary, and soon enough, Mami was calling me, saying it was rude for me to be off by myself, come join them and be sociable, but then Tía Mari told her to let me be, that it's a good thing that I'm writing, that ever since I started keeping this diary, I'm talking a lot more³. It took her saying so for me to realize it's true.

The words are coming back, as if by writing them down, I'm fishing them out of forgetfulness, one by one.

June 9, 1961, Friday-evening

Mami has heard from Tío Pepe that Mr. Washburn is back in Washington and pushing to get Papi and Tío Toni on the OAS list of prisoners interviewed, as their lives are then much safer. Once the OAS has a name on record, it's harder for the SIM to get rid of that individual.

Mami and Tía Mari have begun praying a rosary to the Virgin Mary every night to take care of all the prisoners, but most especially to take care of Papi and Tío Toni.

I always kneel with them. But even though I'm talking again, I can't seem to fish the words for an Our Father or Hail Mary out of my brain.

June 10, 1961, Saturday, late night

The electricity goes on and off all the time. Tía Mari bought Mami and me little flashlights. Tonight, a total blackout again. So I'm writing by the light of this tiny beam.

I never know exactly what time it is anymore – except when the siren sounds at noon and then again at 6 for curfew. The Mancinis don't have an electric clock in their bedroom because it would never tell the right time anyhow. The

kind you wind drives Tía Mari crazy because it tick-tocks too loud. She says she feels like someone is timing her life.

The truth is, when you live in such close quarters, you find out the most private things about people – like Tío Pepe always having to wear white socks to bed or Tía Mari tweezing little hairs from her upper lip.

I wonder what they've noticed about me? How I stroke a spot on my left cheek⁴ whenever I'm feeling scared or lonely?

June 11, 1961, after supper, second Sunday in hiding

Sundays are especially hard, as that was always the day of our big family gathering. But we were reduced to just the Garcías and us, then just us, then just us minus Lucinda, and now it's even less than a nuclear family, just Mami and me, like survivors after a bomb drops, a fallout family.

Every day, I ask Mami about Papi and Tío Toni. But on Sundays, I probably ask her more than once. (No, not “countless times,” like she accuses me of!)

Today, I promised myself I wouldn't ask her even once. But by evening, I couldn't stand it anymore. Mami, I said, just tell me if they're okay.

She hesitated. They're alive, she said, and started crying.

Tía Mari pulled her into the bathroom, and meanwhile I was left alone in the bedroom with Tío Pepe. We were quiet for a while and then he said, Anita, one must think positively. That is how the greatest minds in history have survived tragedy.



I felt like reminding him I'm not one of the greatest minds, but Tío Pepe is so smart, maybe his advice is worth a try?

I close my eyes and think positively... After a while, a picture pops into my head of Papi and Tío Toni and me walking on the beach. I'm real little, and they're holding me between them and swinging me out over the waves like they're going to throw me into the sea, and I'm giggling and they're laughing, and Papi is saying, fly, mi hijita, fly, like I am a little kite that is catching the wind!

Then, like on a birthday, I make a wish: that Papi and Tío Toni will soon be free and that we will all be together again as a family.

Notes

1. OAS, the Organisation of American States is a continental organisation that promotes regional solidarity and cooperation among its member states.
2. SIM, the Servicio de Inteligencia Militar (English: Military Intelligence Service) was the secret police that was used to keep control within the Dominican Republic during the dictatorship of Trujillo.
3. Due to the stressful atmosphere of her home before the assassination of Trujillo, Anita stopped talking almost completely.
4. Anita strokes the spot where she was kissed by Oscar, the boy she is beginning to fall in love with. Oscar is the Mancini's son and, although the children are not supposed to know that Anita and her mother are staying there, Oscar discovers in anyway and finds a way to communicate with Anita secretly.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the state of affairs in the Dominican Republic during the time period relevant for the episode. 2. Which Spanish words are used in the text? Can you guess their meaning from the context? 3. How is Anita feeling and what is she doing to cope with the situation?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why do you think it is hard for Anita to pray? 2. Do you think that “thinking positively” is a helpful technique in this situation? 3. Focus on the images of the radio, clock and kite. What role do they play in the text? Compare Anita's memory of her father with the painting below. Do you think they convey a similar feeling? 4. What does the format of a dairy add to the narrative? 5. Can you tell from these two episodes that the book is aimed at young adults? Do you find this a suitable topic for them and an adequate rendering of it? 6. Did your country have similar periods in its history? Have you read any books covering this period written specially for children / young adults?



The Yellow Kite by Trudi Doyle

Language Practice

Task 2: Must and Have to

Both “must” and “have to” mean “it is necessary to do something”. In certain contexts, it is possible to use either of them, as in “I must go now / I have to go now”. But the difference might be important in many situations: “must” is more personal and reflects the speaker’s conviction about the necessity of something, while “have to” usually refers to certain circumstances that make it necessary.

The negative forms “mustn’t” and “don’t have to”, however, are completely different. “Mustn’t” means that it is necessary *not* to do it (as in imperative “don’t do it!”). “Don’t have to” means that there is no need to do it.

Remember that only “have to” can be used in the past and that in questions it needs an auxiliary verb.

Study the examples in the table below and translate them in your first language.

MUST	HAVE TO
You must think positively (I think it is necessary that you do it)	You'll have to speak up (if you don't speak up, nobody will hear you: it's too noisy)
You mustn't put a spoke in her wheel (Don't do it!)	You don't have to help every friend in a tight spot (You needn't do it: it's not your responsibility. But you can if you want to)
<i>(must is not used with the past tenses)</i>	I had to grab my backpack, hoist it onto my back and run as fast as I could (it was necessary to do it)
Must I always watch my language?	Do I have to explain it to you in plain English?

*Finish the sentences below paying attention to the usage of **must** / **have to**.*

1. You're barking up the wrong tree again! You really must...
2. Where are you table matters? You mustn't... (chomp, cram, grab)
3. If you go on like this, I'll get into hot water with your colleagues. You'll have to...
4. When I see modern art, words fail me. I am glad I don't have to...
5. Your clothes are all crumpled. You have to...
6. It was like talking to a brick wall, really. So I had to...
7. The boat may lurch suddenly. We must...
8. They say the results fell short of my potential. Do I have to...?

Task 3: Vocabulary and Grammar

Work in pairs. Compile short dialogues for each of the sentences below.

You don't have to look up every word.

I have to admit, it was a bitter pill to swallow.

You must help me: it' all Greek to me!

You got the wrong end of the stick. Now we must face the consequences.

You must definitely read this book!

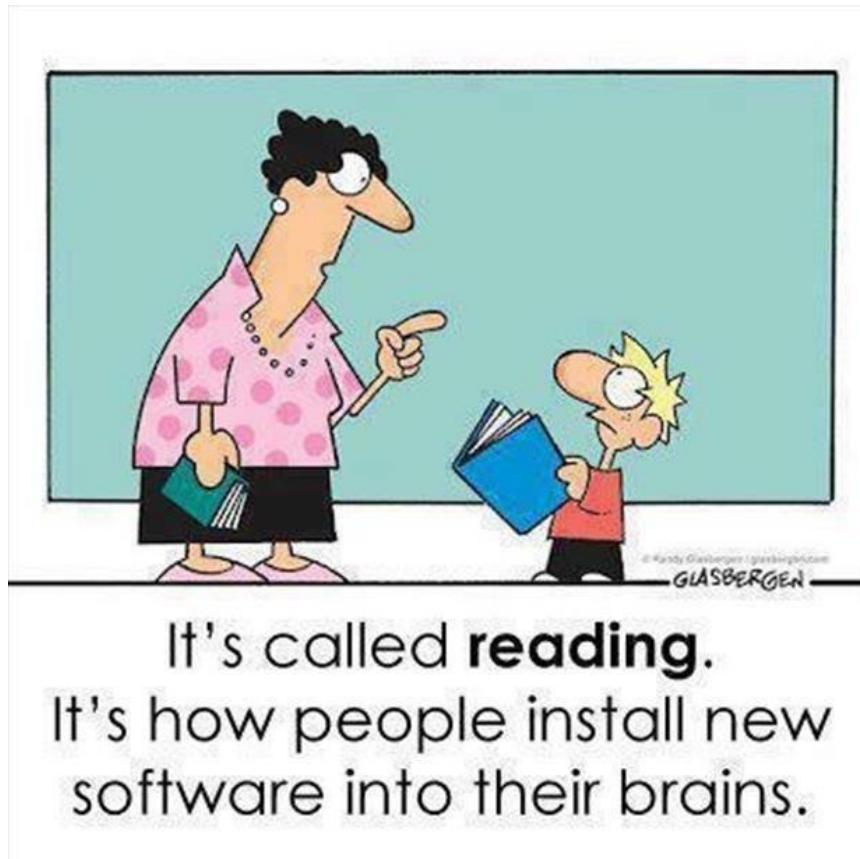
I don't have to be realistic in my art! Haven't you heard of artistic license?

Writing



When recommending a book for young adults, one should take their age and interests into consideration. What kind of story might captivate a contemporary teenager? Choose an English-language book that you might recommend to teenagers in your country who study English as a foreign language.

Write a short post for a social network about this book, using the plan structure you have already employed.



Project

Dear Diary!

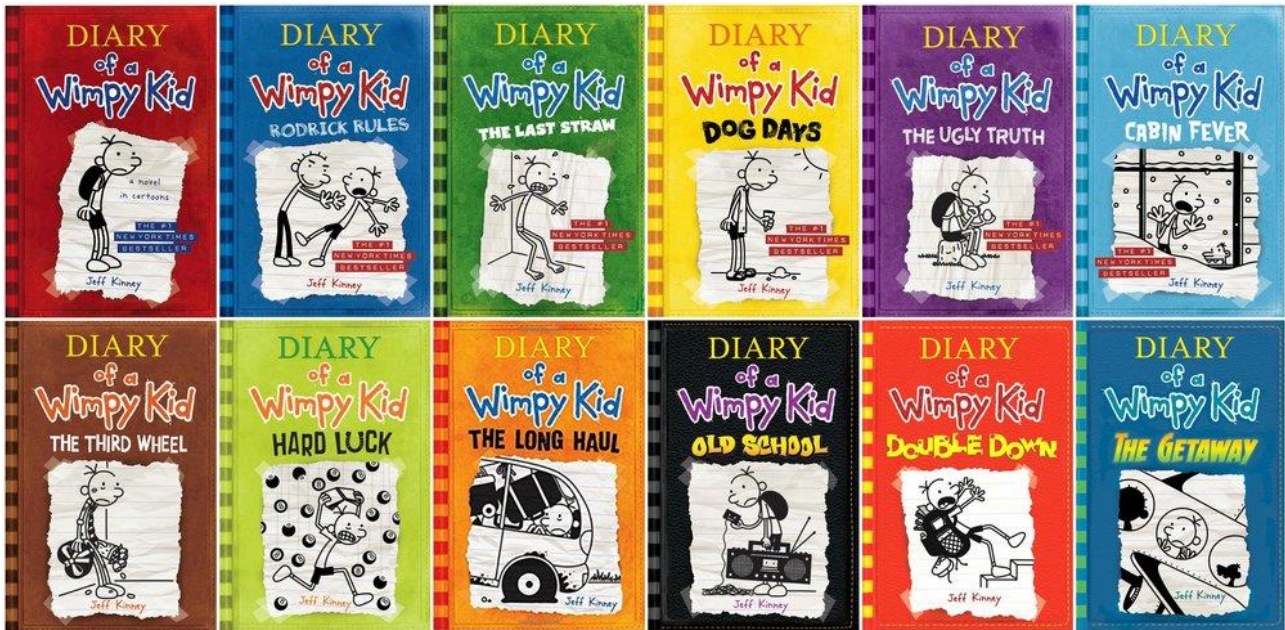


The format of a personal diary has allowed numerous authors to create intimate and heartfelt narratives. One of the most famous diaries in history is a non-fictional book “The Diary of a Young Girl” written by Anne Frank when she was in hiding for two years with her family during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. Among fictional diaries aimed at young adults the popular examples are the Adrian Mole series by Sue Townsend and “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” by Jeff Kinney. Adult fiction has also exploited the format, e.g. the Bridget Jones novels by Helen Fielding.

Choose a novel / several novels written as a diary and explore how this format shapes the narrative. You may compare how different authors employ this device, focusing on:

- ✓ Character presentation
- ✓ Imagery and diction
- ✓ Tone and atmosphere

Share your findings in class providing handouts with relevant examples.



Jeff Kinney, the author and illustrator of “Diary of a Wimpy Kid”, has been actively creating new titles in the series. In 2018, “The Meltdown”, the thirteenth book, was published.

UNIT 15

Over the Hill: Contemporary Society and Old Age

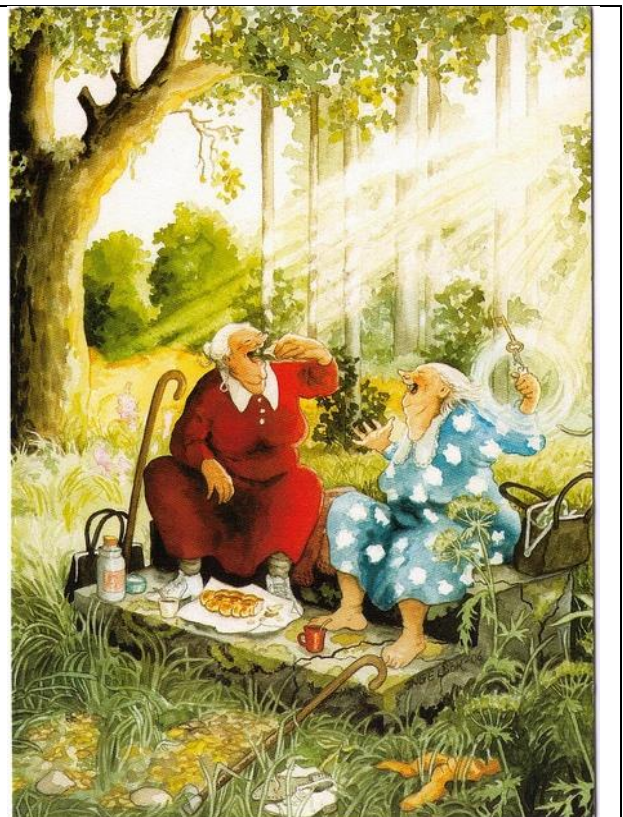
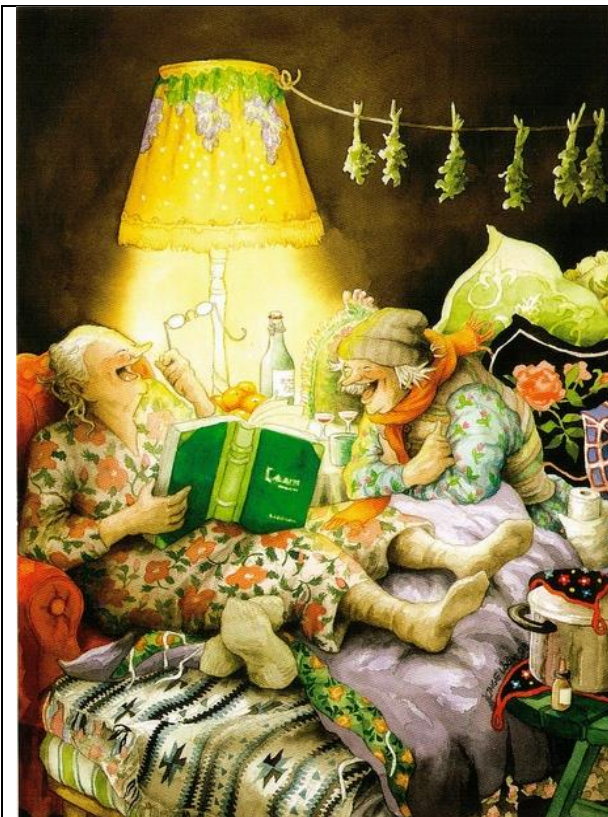
Lead In

- ❖ What are your personal definitions of “young”, “middle-aged” and “old”? What images do you associate with old age?
- ❖ Some people claim that it is politically incorrect to speak of “old people”: they insist on substituting the phrase with “senior citizens”. What is your attitude to this? What do you say in your first language?
- ❖ Think an old fictional character that you admire. Describe his / her personality to the class.



Inge Löök is a Finnish illustrator, graphic designer and gardener. She is famous for her “grannies” series, in which she portrays two upbeat old women, full of vitality, enthusiasm and apparently enjoying their lives.

Look at some of Löök’s “grannies” and say how they make you feel.



Exploring old age in fiction

While there is “young adult” literature, there is no specific literary category targeted at senior readers. Nevertheless, old age is extensively represented in fiction in a wide range of themes: **ageing, retirement, mortality and anticipation of death, memory and nostalgia, generation gap**, etc. Being a universal theme in literature, fictional portrayals of old age are often associated with philosophical ruminations and quests for the meaning of life, as epitomised in Ernest Hemingway’s famous “Old Man and the Sea”. Due to the achievements in technology and medicine, the world’s population of people over 65 is growing and so is the awareness of the ageing process, as well as the interest in its portrayals.

Using an elderly protagonist / narrator enables authors to create diverse narrative perspectives and plotlines. A very common pattern is an aged narrator telling about his / her youth and maturity, mulling over past experiences **in retrospect**. It is often a coming-of-age story or the whole life story presented with the wisdom and penetration associated with old age. **Reminiscences** and **nostalgia** frequently set the tone of such narratives. Sometimes old characters play the stock role of a **mentor** to a young protagonist, such as Albus Dumbledore to Harry Potter or Granny Weatherwax to Eskarina Smith (in Terry Pratchett’s “Equal Rites”). Another remarkable pattern is a **feisty** elderly protagonist who does not succumb to old age and breaks away from the confinement (of their body or situation), sometimes even finding love, as in “Love, Again” by Doris Lessing.

In spite of many likable elderly characters and reassuring stories, a lot of prejudice against old age is present in the contemporary world. The practice of discrimination of older people is called **ageism**. This issue is actively discussed in the media and fiction.

Task 1

Think of stories you have read that fit the pattern described above as “an aged narrator telling about his / her youth and maturity, mulling over past experiences in retrospect”.

Say whether you enjoyed reading them? Why / why not?

Task 2

Read the excerpts below and say how what imagery is used to talk of memory / past / reminiscence.

London is a haunted city for me now and I am the ghost that haunts it. As I go about my business, every street or square or avenue seems to whisper of an earlier, different era in my history. The shortest trip round Chelsea or Kensington takes me by some door where once I was welcome but where today I am a stranger. I see myself issue forth, young again and dressed for some long forgotten frolic, tricked out in what looks like the national dress of a war-torn Balkan country. Those flapping flares, those frilly shirts with their footballers' collars – what were we thinking of? And as I watch, beside that wraith of a younger, slimmer me walk the shades of the departed, parents, aunts and grandmothers, great-uncles and cousins, friends and girlfriends, gone now from this world entirely, or at least from what is left of my own life. They say one sign of growing old is that the past becomes more real than the present and already I can feel the fingers of those lost decades closing their grip round my imagination, making more recent memory seem somehow greyer and less bright.

(from “Past Imperfect” by Julian Fellowes)

Two years after my mother died, my father fell in love with a glamorous blonde Ukrainian divorcee. He was eighty-four and she was thirty-six. She exploded into our lives like a fluffy pink grenade, churning up the murky water, bringing to the surface a sludge of sloughed-off memories, giving the family ghosts a kick up the backside.

(from “A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian” by Marine Lewycka)

We live in time – it holds us and moulds us – but I've never felt I understood it very well. And I'm not referring to theories about how it bends and doubles back, or may exist elsewhere in parallel versions. No, I mean ordinary, everyday time, which clocks and watches assure us passes regularly: tick-tock, click-clock. Is there anything more plausible than a second hand? And yet it takes only the smallest pleasure or pain to teach us time's malleability. Some emotions speed it up, others slow it down; occasionally, it seems to go missing – until the eventual point when it really does go missing, never to return. I'm not very interested in my schooldays,

and don't feel any nostalgia for them. But school is where it all began, so I need to return briefly to a few incidents that have grown into anecdotes, to some approximate memories which time has deformed into certainty. If I can't be sure of the actual events any more, I can at least be true to the impressions those facts left. That's the best I can manage.

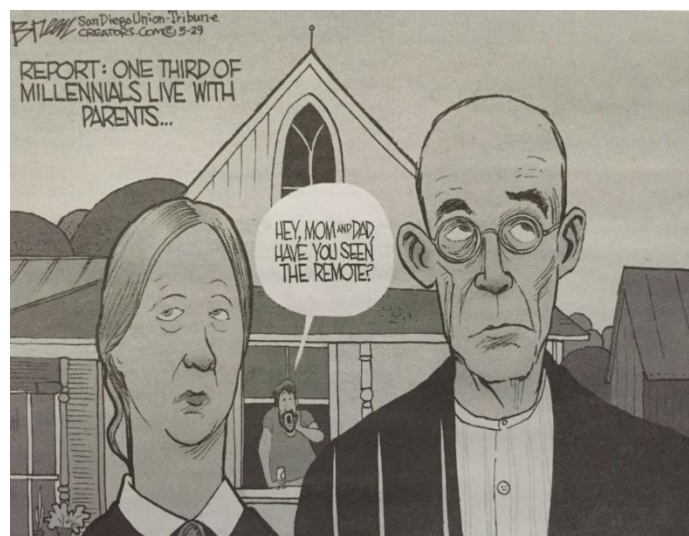
(from "The Sense of Ending" by Julian Barnes)

Task 3

Look at the cartoon on the right.

Which famous picture is used in it?

What, in your opinion, is the message of the cartoon?



Task 4

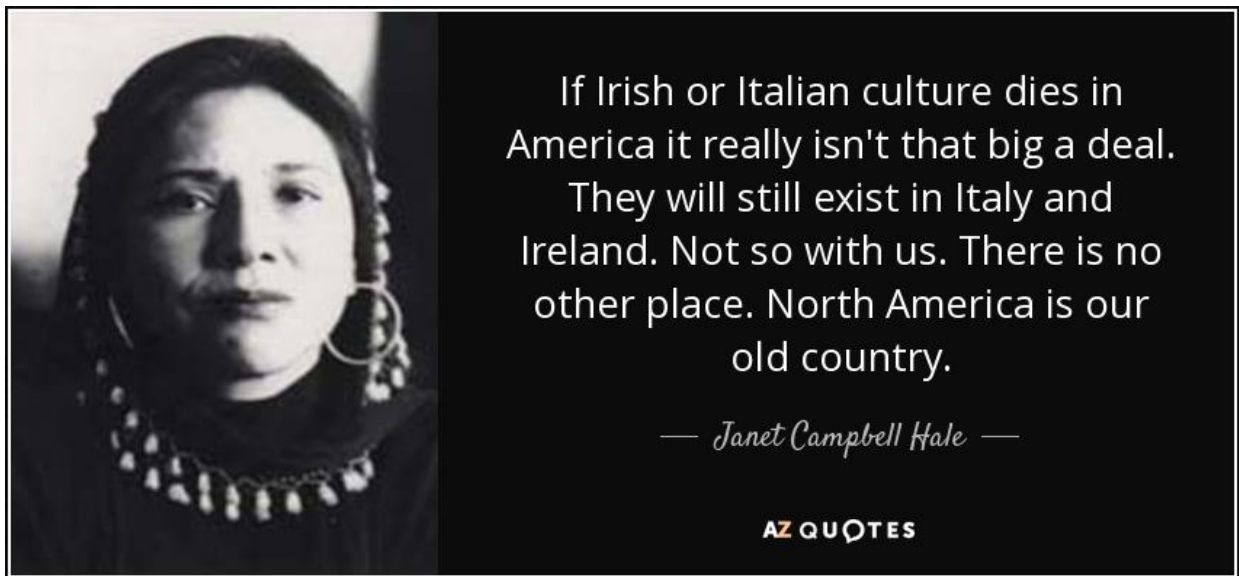
Look up current statistics on the world population. What percentage of population is over 65? Which countries have highest percentage of ageing population? What are the data for your own country?

Think which prejudices against seniors are typical of your country. Do you personally share any of them?

Being Old and Breaking Free

Janet Campbell Hale (born in 1946) is a Native American writer and educator. She has taught at colleges and universities and has been a resident writer at University of Oregon and University of Washington. She lives in Coeur d'Alene, Indian reservation in northwestern Idaho. In her writing Hale explores issues of poverty and abuse, as well as the condition of women in society and Native American identity. Her short story "Clair" was included in the anthology "Reckonings. Contemporary Short Fiction by Native American Women" published by Oxford University Press in 2008.

“Clair” is a story of an elderly Indian woman who, after the death of her husband, was persuaded by her son Ozzie to leave her home and stay with him and his wife. After it didn’t work out, she was forced to go to Loma Vista, a nursing home where the staff treated inmates in an indifferent and cruel manner. Clair was reminded of a Catholic mission school where she had to go when she was a little girl: she was treated with equal cruelty there, being forced to speak English and not her mother tongue and getting physical punishment for misbehavior. In her childhood she managed to run away from the school, and now she is determined to escape from Loma Vista.



Read the excerpts from the story and say how the author combines the theme of old age and the plight of Native Americans.

Episode One

“I was a fool to have listened to you, Ozzie,” she said to her son on the drive to Loma Vista. “I would prefer returning to my own home.”

“Don’t start in, Ma. You know you can’t live alone. You need someone to look after you full time now. Remember poor Mrs. Olson.”

Ozzie, the eldest of her three boys, was no spring chicken himself. His hairline receded just a bit and he had a double chin and a pot belly. A high school and college football player, he had gone to fat in middle age. He was a grandfather himself now.

“It’s okay, Ozzie. I’ll be better off in the home.” She was never that fond of Maybelle, and no doubt Maybelle knew. She wondered why Ozzie hadn’t

married a girl from back home or one of the girls who was his college classmate instead of a brassy blond white girl who worked at a hamburger stand near the UCLA campus. But then who was she to question Ozzie's odd choice?

Now, firmly ensconced at Loma Vista, Claire knew better than to rock the boat in any way. She kept no journal as there was even less privacy than at Ozzie's. She tried to keep quiet and cause no stir, to be as unobtrusive as she could be. She didn't want anyone to know how she felt. She could end up like one or the other of the McIvers.

Henry and Martha McIver were the only married couple she ever encountered at Loma Vista. Mr. McIver didn't try to hide his anger. "We were doing just fine, Martha and me, on our own. Our son just got tired of waiting for us to pass away and decided to put us here and grab control of our house and land, while he's still young enough to enjoy it. We were fine. Our grandson came every other Saturday to help with the yard work and any heavy lifting we needed to have done. True, my driver's license was revoked last year because my vision and reflexes aren't that good anymore, but we don't need to drive. Our neighbors give us lifts into town. The supermarket delivers for seniors. Sonny Boy has another thing coming if he thinks he can get away with this!" McIver's lawyer paid him a couple of visits at the home (he was going to sue the son and he was going to sue Loma Vista Nursing Home, he said, for false imprisonment).

But the thing was, McIver was eighty-nine, and no matter how lucid of mind or spry of body, no court would rule in his favor . . . no court would agree with him that he would be fine living on his own. And then there was Martha. Though "only" eighty, Martha, beginning shortly after the birth of their only child, frequently suffered from depression and now began to show signs of senility.

One day their grandson told Henry he worried about them. His father was worried, too, that the old people couldn't manage on their own anymore. To set his mind at ease, Henry confided in the young man.

"No need to worry none about us. None at all. See, your grandmother and I know we're getting on and it might come to our not being able to manage. We made a pact. If the going gets too rough and it appears we can't handle it

anymore, well, keep it to yourself now, don't mention it to your dad, but we decided we're going to check out together. Not some hideous way, now, so don't be afraid of any 'grisly finds,' but easy-like. Get in our car in the garage and start the motor. Take some pills. Just go to sleep. Something real easy-like. So don't worry about us." The grandson did tell their son. All in all, it didn't seem likely to Claire that any judge would find in Henry and Martha's favor.

"And when we get out of here, one of the first things I'm going to do is sue this damned place for false imprisonment!" Henry said.

[After a while Henry McIver was taken away to a different place and his wife, Martha, jumped out of the window. Clair went outside to say goodbye to Martha.]

Later, after the ambulance took the corpse away, Claire snuck out into the courtyard.

She knelt on the grass beside the spot where Martha had landed. Such a small person, yet she had left an impression on the ground. The grass lay flattened. Claire pressed the palm of her hand into the impression. "Now you're free, Martha dear," she whispered.

"Hey, you crazy old bat, what do you think you're doing?" Mrs. Lacey grabbed her roughly by the arm and pulled her to her feet. It reminded her of the nuns when she was a little girl back on the reservation and forced to go to Catholic mission school. The nuns treated children like that, grabbing, manhandling, scolding.


She never dreamed she would spend her old age in the same way she had spent most of her childhood, under lock and key, keeping her guard up at all times, being rudely spoken to and physically abused. Mrs. Lacey pulled and pushed, all the while scolding. "You know better than that, Miz LaFromme. You know good and well you're not allowed outside without supervision. I'm going to have to file a report on you now. And, of course, your son will be told. We'll tell your son you're not to be trusted, you sneaky little thing, you damned old weasel you. Just about had me fooled, but you're like all the rest. Can't trust a one of ya' damned coots¹."

That was when she first heard her own voice whispering: "*You've got to get out of this place. If it's the last thing you ever do.*" Yes. But how? Probably every inmate of Loma Vista had heard at one time or another that same voice

in their head, their own voice saying the same thing. Did anyone ever succeed in running away? She wondered. “*You’ve got to get out of this place!*” it said again, no longer a mere whisper, but with conviction. “Yes,” she agreed silently. “Yes.”

Notes

1. A coot means “a foolish old person”.

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think of the McIvers’ situation? Were their children justified in putting them into a nursing home? Would you have done the same, had you been in their position? 2. How does Clair’s mood change and why? What role do her childhood memories play in this change? 3. Which words and expressions are used in this episode to describe old age? What do they add to the slant of the episode? How is the prejudice against old age presented?
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Language Practice

Task 1: Idioms



Look at the idioms in the table below and translate the examples, using idiomatic equivalents in your first language.

A spring chicken is a young and naïve person. The expression is often used in the negative: no spring chicken .	Ozzie, the eldest of her three boys, was no spring chicken himself
To be over the hill means to be no longer young, past your prime.	Teenagers think that when you’re thirty, you’re over the hill.
To have an old head on young shoulders means being young and yet wise and insightful.	The protagonist is a child prodigy: a real old head on young shoulders, whose savvy about everything in life sometimes just stretches your credulity.

Originating in one of Shakespeare’s plays, the expression salad days refers to one’s carefree time of innocence and inexperience.	The old men sat and reminisced about their salad days.
When one is young at heart , one has a youthful mindset, regardless of the biological age.	In her fifties she was young at heart: always curious and upbeat.

Episode 2

“Look, Granny Claire,” Buddy, Ozzie’s grandson, said, holding up a new crayon drawing, “do you like it?” Buddy, who was eight, usually came with Ozzie. Her *tupiya*.¹ The one bright spot in all of this was that she had gotten to know her *tupiya*. Buddy, who was very fair-skinned, had dark brown curly hair and large grey-hazel eyes. No one would ever take him for an Indian. It didn’t matter. He was her dear *tupiya*.

“Bring it here, let’s have a look.” She blinked back her tears.

The drawing appeared to be of two people sitting in a giant cup which was on a giant saucer. One figure wore a baseball cap, the other had two long braids. Both wore wide grins. She and Buddy were often the subjects of his drawings. “Is that us?” he nodded. “Why are we sitting in a cup? Is someone going to drink us?”

“No. We’re at Disneyland and here we’re riding the Mad Hatter’s Tea Party. Next we’re going to Pirates of the Caribbean.”

“We sure look happy.”

“We are.”

“Ma, I have to go make a phone call, okay. I’ll be back in a few minutes. You stay with your Gran, Buddy.”

“His *tupiya*,” Claire corrected her son, who ignored her.

“Okay,” Buddy said. As soon as Ozzie left the room, Buddy said in a very quiet voice, just barely above a whisper, “Gran, I have something to tell you. Don’t tell nobody, okay? I’ve got a plan.”

“Okay.”

“When I grow up, I’m going to come here and break you out.”

“How will you do that?”

“I’ll bring a disguise of some kind. We’ll walk right out the front door. Then we’ll run away. They’ll never find us.”

“Where will we go, Buddy?”

“I don’t know. I was thinking maybe L.A.”

“Why L.A.?”

“Because it’s far away. Because it’s real big. And because it’s close to Disneyland. After I get a job we’ll go to Disneyland on my days off. We’ll have a good time.”

“Sounds good to me, Buddy. Sounds great. And thanks. I feel better now knowing I’m not going to be stuck in this place forever.” Buddy smiled. One of his front teeth was missing. Maybe he wasn’t eight. Maybe he was seven. That was the second time she heard her own voice saying, “*You’ve got to get out of this place. And you’re going to have to do it all yourself. Nobody is going to rescue you. You can’t wait for Buddy to grow up. You have to do it, Claire. You’re all you’ve got.*”

Yes. She already knew. *She* was all she had.

“I love that picture of us in a teacup, Bud. You know what, I’m not going to tape this one to the wall. I’m going to keep it in my pocket so I can take it out and look at it whenever I want.” One wall was covered with Buddy’s drawings. Mrs. Sullivan said they were an eyesore and when Claire refused to take them down, Mrs. Sullivan said she was going to complain, was going to change rooms if she had to. Claire was making waves. She was afraid of being taken away in the night as Henry McIver was to “someplace else.” Claire had to get out.

That very evening, just before dinner was brought in, Claire stole into the room of a man named Arthur, “Hi, Arthur. How’re you doing?”

Arthur narrowed his watery eyes and looked her up and down.

“What do you want?” he asked. He was a skinny little man about her size.

“I want to borrow some clothes from you, okay?” Claire said, opening the old man’s locker. So spare and neat.

Arthur was not in his right mind, like many, perhaps most, of the inmates of Loma Vista. He saw goblins and giant nuns and rodeo clowns traipsing around his room at odd hours. Sometimes he thought he was still a soldier in France. Sometimes he thought he was a young husband and father and talked

about his kids and his job at the factory. Some days Arthur thought he was in a POW camp and would refuse to speak at all except to give his name, rank, and serial number.

Nobody would believe Arthur if he told them Claire had come into his room, opened his locker door, selected a sports coat, a pair of trousers, a cotton dress shirt, and a vee-neck pullover sweater (all of which she knew were there since she'd seen him decked out in these clothes when his children came to visit, which was only once a year at Christmas). And besides, he didn't appear to recognize her today.

Maybe he thought she was an enemy soldier.

Arthur's clothes fit her nicely, except for the shoes, which were much too big. Damn! Well, she had a pair of walking shoes, no heels, very plain. Maybe they would pass for men's shoes. She took the folded crayon drawing Bud had given her, the one depicting the two of them happily riding in giant cups at Disneyland, and put it in the inside pocket of the sports coat.

Claire decided she would make her break after they collected the dinner trays. They were busy then and wouldn't be around again until late evening. And her cantankerous roommate, Mrs. Sullivan, always took a bath after dinner. The dinner trays were brought. Mrs. Sullivan ate her dinner. Then she took a clean towel from her locker, a bar of soap, her robe. Claire couldn't let her leave just yet. She needed Mrs. Sullivan to be gone right after the trays were collected. She had to dress, then make good her escape. Timing was important.

"Mrs. Sullivan, tell me, are you sleeping well now?" Mrs. Sullivan frowned at her.

"Why, yes, I am. Thank you. And I don't think I'm to blame, not at all, for your friend's death. She was the one who chose to jump off the roof. I was within my rights complaining about that horrid noise she made at night."

"Of course, Mrs. Sullivan. Of course. Nobody thinks you're to blame. You need your rest. We all do." Mrs. Sullivan left the room as the attendant swept in and swept the trays away. Claire closed the door behind them. She couldn't lock it, though.

Loma Vista doors had no locks on them. She dressed quickly in Arthur's clothes and her leather walking shoes and looked at her reflection. "Not bad,

if I do say so myself,” she said. She looked like a man, except for the long braids. They might be a giveaway down here. You didn’t see men, like up on the reservation, in long braids.


Maybe she could get a hat somewhere and pin them up under it. For now, though, she was ready. This was it.

The upper half of the window opened outward. She was very slim and, for an old person, very agile. She made it out onto the ledge. Though they were on the first floor, still, it was about a twenty-foot drop. She got down on her knees and got hold of the ledge with both hands and let her body slide down the outer wall. This way it was only about a ten-foot drop and, with any luck, she would fall into the flower beds where the earth was damp and soft. She did. She kept close to the ground and to the building. She cut across a park and kept walking.

She could feel and hear her heart pounding. Her body, sensing her excitement, sent adrenaline to her aid to help her out. Fight or flight. She would rather take flight than put up a fight. Oh, the giddiness! The exhilaration!

Notes

1. Tupiya in Coeur d’Alene Salish means both “great-grandparent” and “great-grandchild.”

<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What role does the dialogue play in this episode?2. How is Clair’s escape narrated? Is suspense created in this episode?3. What does the phrase “fight or flight” mean? How is the visceral aspect of Clair’s state rendered?4. Comment on the importance of Clair’s Indian origin for the situation.
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Task 2: Vocabulary

When ageing is depicted, its physical and mental sides are often dwelt upon. Vitality or its absence is commented upon: both states can be described in a number of ways.



Work in pairs. Look at the word cloud below. Consult the dictionary if necessary. Describe real or fictional old people using these words. Let your partner guess who you are describing.



Episode 3

For several hours she walked, aided by her fine new walking stick, leisurely taking in the scenery, which was mostly desert. Once she spotted a rattlesnake curled up near a pile of boulders. He blended in quite nicely there. Rattlesnakes were okay, she thought. This one held himself still as could be. He thought she didn't see him. He would not strike at her unless she came near enough to step on him. She had no intention of going near him.

Garter snakes, the little black things with yellow or red stripes down their backs, the nonpoisonous "good" snakes that ate pests were the kind she didn't like. They were always darting around imposing their presence on humans as though they didn't know they were repulsive, as though they thought themselves cute. Rattlers weren't like that at all. They knew how to keep their distance.

When she came to the top of a high hill and saw a winding creek way down yonder, she headed for it and found a good camping place. She took off her clothes and washed her underpants and shirt and pullover sweater and draped them over bushes to dry. She took the elastic fasteners off the ends of her braids and undid them. Her hair fell loose about her shoulders and down to her waist in back.

She waded out just a few feet into the icy cold river, until the water was knee-deep, then she sat down in a spot that had few stones and bathed herself and rinsed her hair.


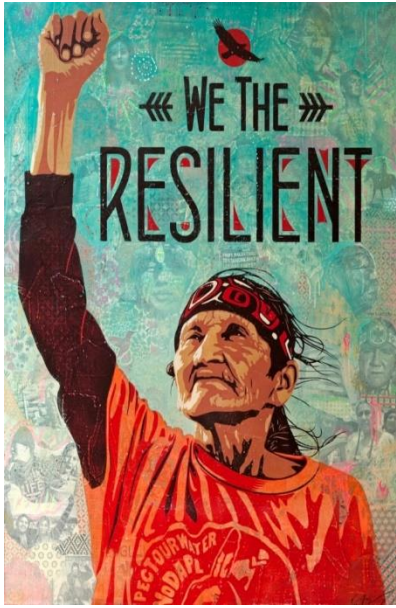
Oh, the water was so cold it made her teeth chatter. As soon as she felt clean enough, she waded back out of the water and lay on her back on a smooth, flat rock that was very warm. She spread her white hair all around her to dry in the sun. She felt the sun and warm chinook¹ wind on her naked body and laughed a little to herself.

This was so fine, this moment, so fine. All was perfect, absolutely perfect. She was alive again and was glad. Life could be good. No, it *is* good. Despite everything, despite heartache and loss and meanness and unfairness and the fact that we all must die, life is good and in these perfect moments we know the goodness.

Such times occurred most often, it seemed, when she was a child. Once, seventy-one years ago, she was perfectly content a whole summer.

Notes:

1. Chinook wind is dry, warm, down-slope wind in the interior West of North America.

<p style="text-align: center;">Discussion</p>  	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the atmosphere of this episode? What feeling does it evoke in you? 2. How do you think this story is going to end? 3. What would be your own “perfect moment”? Do you think you can only experience it while you are young or is it possible to enjoy life to the full in the old age? 4. Look at the poster on the left. In this piece, the artist Ernesto Yereña depicted Helen Red Feather of the Lakota tribe who showed bravery and resilience at the Standing Rock reservation in 2016. She took part in protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline that prevented the tribe from accessing clean water and threatened the sacred burial grounds. What imagery is used in this poster? How would describe its message?
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Language Practice

Task 3: Pronunciation Tips

The pronunciation of the voiceless glottal fricative /h/ in English differs from that in many other languages. Make sure the sound is produced by the glottis and the air escapes freely through the mouth.

hale, heartwarming, habit, headache, handsome, hideous, handle, whole, hilarious, hand-waving, hinder, enhance, inhabit

In the weak forms of function words (have, he, his, her, him, etc.) so-called h-dropping often occurs: the sound 'h' is omitted.

Practise h-dropping in the following sentences:

➤ She had no intention of going near him.

➤ She spread her white hair all around her to dry in the sun.

Compile your own phrases using both function words with /h/ and words from the list above, as in the example:

➤ She thought he had hideous habits.

Offer your phrases to other students for practicing /h/ and h-dropping.

It is important to remember that the letter h is not pronounced in a number of English words. Read the words below making sure you do not articulate /h/. Which of these words drops its /h/ only in American English? Which word has two alternative pronunciations?

hour, vehicle, annihilate, Graham, honour, hauteur, rhetoric, herb, rheumatism, heir, honorific, exhibition, vehement, hors d'oeuvre, forehead, honest, exhaust, rhythm, haute couture

Which of these words are hard for you to articulate? Work with your classmates to create tongue-twisters or poems to help you remember the correct pronunciation.

Task 4: Talking about Age

Study the phrases in the table below containing expressions with the word "age" and translate the example into your language.

<p>Age is used as a verb meaning “to get older” or “to make older”. The gerund / participle form can be both ageing and aging.</p>	<p>She has aged gracefully. The stressful job aged my grandfather prematurely. My hobbies help me keep my mind off ageing.</p>
<p>To come of age is to reach maturity.</p>	<p>He stayed with the foster family until he came of age.</p>
<p>To look one’s age means to have an appearance that is generally expected by this age.</p>	<p>My aunt is pushing 50, but she doesn’t look her age. He is on the wrong side of 60 and he looks it.</p>
<p>When someone has reached a very old age, it is said they lived to the ripe old age of 80/90/100, etc.</p>	<p>In spite of witnessing two wars, my great-grandmother lived to the ripe old age of 98.</p>
<p>When something of interest happened someone did something particular at a young age, the phrase at the tender age of 5 / 7/ 10, etc. is used.</p>	<p>He won his first music competition at the tender age of 11. The twins were forced to leave home at the tender of 14.</p>
<p>Ageism / agism is discrimination on the basis of age, especially against older people.</p>	<p>There is a lot of digital ageism nowadays: senior people are represented as unable to use technology and especially the Internet properly.</p>
<p>“Age before beauty” is a humorous way to tell someone who is older to go before someone younger. It is often used ironically and playfully.</p>	<p>You go first. As they say, age before beauty.</p>
<p>“Act you age!” generally means “act in a mature way”.</p>	<p>Don’t be such a baby, act your age!</p>

Give more examples of ageism in contemporary society. Working in pairs, compile short dialogues, in which prejudices connected with old age are exposed. Use the expressions from the table above and the vocabulary given earlier in this unit.

Writing



Imagine that you have heard your older relative or acquaintance complain that all books / films seem to be about young people, while old age is presented as ridiculous / pitiful. Think which book / film / TV series you could recommend to this person. Write an email to them, explaining your choice. Focus on the character of the protagonist / character that you want specifically to draw your addressee's attention to.

Here are some ideas that you might use:

The story is touching / witty / hilarious / uplifting / reassuring / inspiring / liberating because...

The novel is a comment on the fear of mortality / people's indifference to the elderly / fallibility of memory in advanced age.

The author gives a detailed description of the life of old people / ageing process / a nursing home that...

You should definitely read the story because the character of ... is very upbeat / feisty / lively / resilient / undaunted by age

I am sure you'll enjoy the character of... because despite his / her age...

The story attacks stereotypical portrayals of old people as feeble / ridiculous / useless

It is a classic of its kind with the timeless message of... but with a novel and positive approach to ageing

All in all, it is well worth reading since it conveys the sense of... / idea of...

Project

The Young and the Old



Many stories portray special relationships between the young and the old. They draw heavily on the contrast between two age groups, juxtaposing their innocence and experience. The relationship can be fueled by mutual respect and love or, on the contrary, by antagonism and generation gap. Find such pairs in fiction and research the dynamics of the relationship. Share your conclusions in class.



The American TV series “Young Sheldon” puts an emphasis on the relationship between a child prodigy Sheldon Cooper and his grandmother, “Meemaw”, who refuses to act her age and become a stereotypical “granny”.

UNIT 16

Looking for Romance: Love and Relationships in Fiction

Lead In

- ❖ What is your favourite fictional couple? Tell the class about their relationship.
- ❖ Do you believe, as many people do, that romance novels are only interesting for women?
- ❖ How do you define the word “romance”? Do you consider yourself a romantic person?

«There are as many forms of love as there are moments in time»

Jane Austen



Exploring Romance in Fiction

The word “romance” has a long and eventful history, which starts in the Middle Ages. **Chivalric romance** developed in medieval France and spread to the literatures of other countries, particularly England. Displacing heroic epics of the previous age, it centred on stories of knights and their quests, with a special interest in **courtly love**. Originally, “romance” meant a work written in the French language, since it evolved from a dialect of the Roman language, Latin. The term “roman” (meaning “novel”) in many European languages derives from “romance”.

Gothic romance that originated in the 18th century and flourished through the 19th focused on sensitive protagonists trapped in gloomy and terrible surroundings that instilled the sense of horror. To set apart the novel and the

romance, the term **prose romance** is often applied to fiction with nonrealistic events and melodramatic tone. The word romance is further expanded to encompass the whole genre, **romantic fiction**, one of the best-selling genres nowadays. Its precursors are 18-century sentimental novels, as well as 19-century novels by Jane Austen, the main focus of which is courtship / romantic love between two people, traditionally ending in a happy marriage.

Romantic comedy, known since the Elizabethan times, also traces a love affair, the course of which does not run smooth, revealing flaws in characters, comic misunderstandings and mishaps. In the end, the couple overcome all difficulties and form a happy union. The genre is still widely popular today, especially in its cinematic equivalents, including soap operas and sitcoms.

Contemporary love stories are not found exclusively in the genre of romantic fiction. Due to the universality and timelessness of the theme, it is ubiquitous in the mainstream fiction, as well as in the genres of fantasy, science fiction, crime fiction, historic novels, erotic fiction and many others. The classic **boy-meets-girl** plot is not the only possible variant in the modern world of tolerance, where one can easily read or watch boy-meets-boy and girl-meets-girl romances.

In everyday speech, “romance” is commonly used as a synonym to “love affair”.

Task 1

Look at the following tropes taken from TV Tropes website. Do you know what they mean? Can you think of examples for each one? Think of literary genre where such tropes are likely to be found.

- Love Triangle
- Forbidden Love
- Age-Gap Romance
- Beast and Beauty
- True Love's Kiss
- Runaway Fiancé
- Fidelity Test



Task 2

Check your literary intuition! All three excerpts below are taken from the stories set in the 19th century, but only one of them was actually written in the 19th century. Which one?

All three excerpts are about romance but only two of the corresponding novels can be called “love stories”. Which is the odd one out?

Clinch’s efforts in love were always of a mothering sort, for it is a feature of human nature to give what we most wish to receive, and it was a mother that Edgar Clinch most craved – his own having died in his infancy, and since then been resurrected as a goddess of shining virtue in his mind, a goddess whose face was as a blurred shape, seen through a window on a night of fog. There was an ill-fated aspect to all of his love’s labours, however, for they required of their object a delicacy of intuition that he himself did not possess. Edgar Clinch was a hopeless romantic, but in all the ordinary senses, he was an unsuccessful one: despite his daily ministrations, Anna Wetherell remained entirely ignorant of the fact that the hotelier loved her with the passion of a lonely and desperate heart. She was courteous to him, and kept her rooms in decent order, but she never solicited his company, and she restricted their conversation to the most trivial of themes. Needless to say, her indifference only warmed the coals of the man’s infatuation – and banked them higher, so that they burned longer, and with a redder light.

Edmund now believed himself perfectly acquainted with all that Fanny could tell, or could leave to be conjectured of her sentiments, and he was satisfied. It had been, as he

before presumed, too hasty a measure on Crawford’s side, and time must be given to make the idea first familiar, and then agreeable to her. She must be used to the consideration of his being in love with her, and then a return of affection might not be very distant.

He gave this opinion as the result of the conversation, to his father; and recommended there being nothing more said to her, no farther attempts to influence or persuade; but that everything should be left to Crawford’s assiduities, and the natural workings of her own mind.

‘Devil of a fellow, Jack! Trouble is – wouldn’t make you a good husband, Kit. Been

worrying me for a long time. Thought you was in love with him. Don’t mind telling you it was as much as I could do to keep a still tongue in my head when he asked you to marry him tonight. What I mean is, like you to have everything you want. Wished it was me, and not Jack, that’s all.’

Miss Charing raised her face from her handkerchief. ‘I was never in love with Jack in my life!’ she said. ‘I thought I was, but I know now it was no such thing. He seemed just like all the heroes in books, but I soon found that he is not like them at all.’

‘No,’ agreed Freddy. ‘I’m afraid I ain’t either, Kit.’

‘Of course you are not! No one is! And if somebody was, I should think him quite odious!’

Task 3

Work in pairs. Describe an ideal romantic fictional hero / heroine.

Now think whether such person would make an ideal partner in real life. Why / why not?

Think of yourself as a fictional character. Do you think you would make a good romantic hero / heroine?



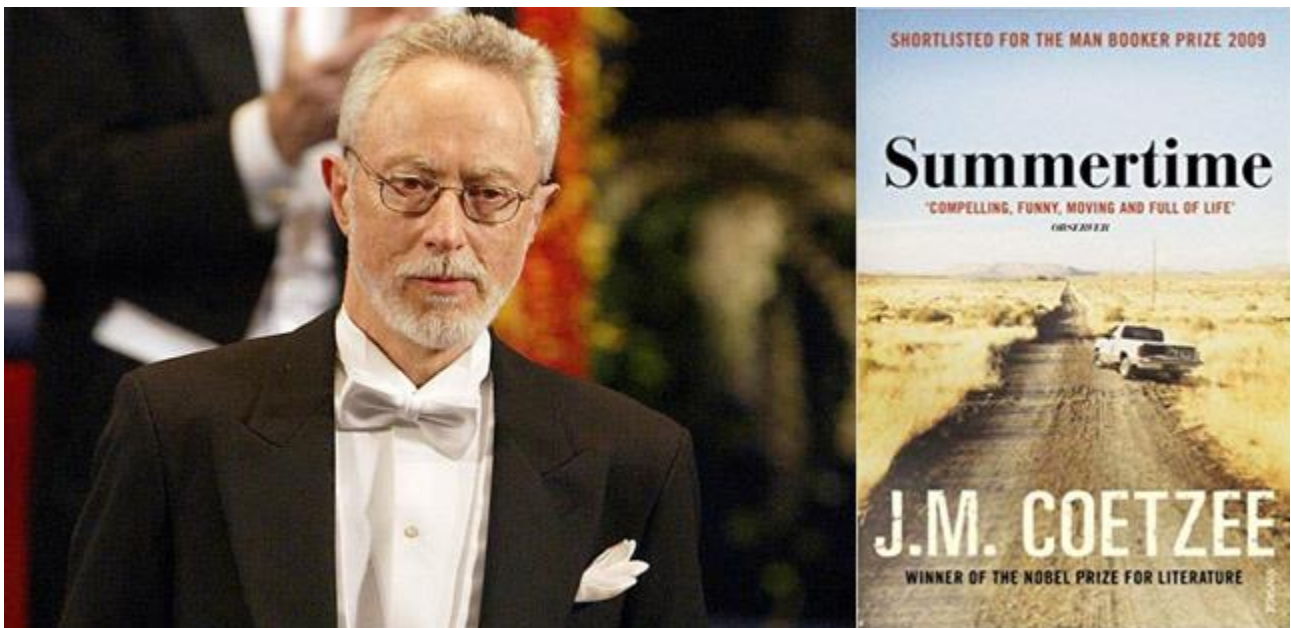
Brainstorm the ideas for the following creative writing project:

“How to write a perfect love stories that everyone will like?”

The Beginning of a Romance

John Maxwell Coetzee (born in 1940) is a famous South African-born author, linguist, educator and translator. He has written numerous novels, stories and essays, as well as a PhD that focused on a computer-aided stylistic analysis of Samuel Beckett’s prose. Coetzee has been the recipient of many literary awards, and in 2003 he received the Nobel Prize in Literature. The Swedish Academy supported its choice by the claim that Coetzee “in innumerable guises portrays the surprising involvement of the outsider”. His “well-crafted composition, pregnant dialogue and analytical brilliance” have also been praised. After retiring Coetzee relocated to Australia where he is currently living, having acquired the Australian citizenship.

Since the 1990s Coetzee has been working on a series of fictionalized memoirs. In his “Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life” he focused on his childhood memories of Worcester and Cape Town in South Africa. It was followed by “Youth: Scenes from Provincial Life II” in which Coetzee depicted the turbulent 1960s in Cape Town and London. “**Summertime**” (2009) is the third novel in the series: the action takes place in the 1970s in Cape Town and other South African settings. Although the book is clearly autobiographical, there are some remarkable peculiarities: the story of John Coetzee (who is said to be dead) told from the perspective of five people who have known him. There is a fictitious biographer in the novel who interviews these people, interprets their stories and also adds fragments from John Coetzee’s own notebooks. The novel was shortlisted for the 2009 Booker Prize.



Read the excerpts from “Summertime” below. In which Julia, a married woman whose husband has been unfaithful, starts an affair with Coetzee.

Episode 1

How I met John. I first bumped into him in a supermarket. This was in the summer of 1972, not long after we had moved to the Cape. I seemed to be spending a lot of time in supermarkets in those days, even though our needs – I mean my needs and my child’s – were quite simple. I shopped because I was bored, because I needed to get away from the house, but mainly because the supermarket gave me peace and gave me pleasure: the airiness, the

whiteness, the cleanness, the muzak, the quiet hiss of trolley wheels. And then there were all the choices – this spaghetti sauce against that spaghetti sauce, this toothpaste against that toothpaste, and so forth, on and on. I found it calming. It was good for my soul. Other women I knew played tennis or did yoga. I shopped.

This was the heyday of apartheid, the 1970s, so you didn't see many people of colour in a supermarket, except of course the staff. Didn't see many men either. That was part of the pleasure. I didn't have to put on a performance. I could be myself.

You didn't see many men, but in the Tokai branch of Pick n Pay there was one I noticed now and again. I noticed him but he didn't notice me, he was too absorbed in his shopping. I approved of that. In appearance he was not what most people would call attractive. He was scrawny, he had a beard, he wore horn-rimmed glasses and sandals. He looked out of place, like a bird, one of those flightless birds; or like an abstracted scientist who had wandered by mistake out of his laboratory. There was an air of seediness about him too, an air of failure. I guessed there was no woman in his life, and it turned out I was right. What he plainly needed was someone to take care of him, some no-longer-young hippie with beads and hairy armpits and no makeup who would do the shopping and the cooking and cleaning and maybe supply him with dope too. I didn't get close enough to check out his feet, but I was ready to bet the toenails weren't trimmed.

I was always conscious, in those days, of when a man was looking at me. I could feel a pressure on my limbs, on my breasts, the pressure of the male gaze, sometimes subtle, sometimes not so subtle. You won't understand what I am talking about, but any woman will. With this man there was no pressure detectable. None.

Then one day that changed. I was standing in front of the stationery rack. Christmas was around the corner, and I was selecting wrapping paper – you know, paper with jolly Christmas motifs, candles, fir-trees, reindeer. By accident I let a roll slip, and as I bent to pick it up I dropped a second roll. Behind me I heard a man's voice: 'I'll get them.' It was of course your man, John Coetzee. He picked up both rolls, which were quite long, a metre maybe, and returned them to me, and as he did so, whether intentionally or

not I still can't say, pressed them into my breast. For a second or two, through the length of the rolls, he could actually be said to have been prodding my breast.

It was outrageous, of course. At the same time it was not important. I tried to show no reaction: did not drop my eyes, did not blush, certainly did not smile. 'Thank you,' I said in a neutral voice, and turned away and went on with my business.

Nevertheless it was a personal act, no use pretending it wasn't. Whether it was going to fade away and be lost among all the other personal moments only time would tell. But not easily ignored, that intimate, unexpected nudge. In fact when I got home I went so far as to lift my bra and examine the breast in question. It was unmarked, of course. Just a breast, a young woman's innocent breast.

[...]

You asked me to give an idea of John as he was in those days, but I can't give you a picture of him alone without any background, otherwise there are things you will fail to understand.

I understand. I mean, I accept that.

I drove past him, as I said, did not slow down, did not wave. The whole story could have ended there and then, the whole connection, and you would not be here listening to me, you would be in some other country listening to the ramblings of some other woman. But, as it happened, I had second thoughts, and turned back.

'Hello, what are you up to?' I called out.

'As you can see: shovelling sand,' he said.

'But to what end?'

'Construction work. Do you want a tour?' And he clambered down from the pickup.

'Not now,' I said. 'Some other day. Is that pickup yours?'

'Yes.'

'So you don't have to walk to the shops. You could drive.'

'Yes.' Then he said: 'Do you live around here?'

'Further out,' I replied. 'Beyond Constantiaberg. In the bush.'

It was a joke, the kind of little joke that passed between white South Africans in those days. Because of course it wasn't true that I lived in the bush.

The only people who lived in the bush, the real bush, were blacks. What he was meant to understand was that I lived in one of the new developments carved out of the ancestral bush of the Cape Peninsula.

'Well, I won't hold you up any longer,' I said. 'What are you constructing?' 'I'm not constructing, just concreting,' he said. 'I'm not clever enough to construct.' Which I took as a little joke on his part to answer the little joke on mine. Because if he was neither rich nor handsome nor appealing – none of which he was – then, if he was not clever, there was nothing left to be.



But of course he had to be clever. He even looked clever, in the way that scientists who spend their lives hunched over microscopes look clever: a narrow, myopic kind of cleverness to go with the horn-rimmed glasses.

You must believe me when I tell you that nothing – nothing! – could have been further from my mind than flirting with this man. For he had no sexual presence whatsoever. It was as though he had been sprayed from head to toe with a neutralizing spray, a neutering spray. Certainly he was guilty of nudging me in the breast with a roll of Christmas paper: I had not forgotten that, my breast retained the memory. But ten to one, I now told myself, it had been nothing but a clumsy accident, the act of a Schlemiel.¹

So why did I have second thoughts? Why did I turn back? Not an easy question to answer. If there is such a thing as taking to a person, I am not sure that I took to John, not for a long time. John was not easy to take to, his whole stance toward the world was too wary, too defensive for that. I presume his mother must have taken to him, when he was little, and loved him, because that is what mothers are there for. But it was hard to imagine anyone else doing so.

Notes

1. Schlemiel is a Yiddish word meaning "incompetent person", "fool." It is a trope in Jewish humour: "schlemiel jokes" are stories of an unlucky schlemiel finding himself in unfortunate situations.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was Julia’s emotional state in the summer of 1972? Why did she shop a lot? 2. Who says “I understand. I mean, I accept that” and why? What is the role of this character in the narrative? 3. Why did Julia feel interested in John Coetzee in spite of the fact she didn’t find him attractive?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you find Julia reliable narrator? Why / why not? Why do you think the author chose such voice to tell about his own life? 2. What imagery is used to convey Julia’s impressions of John? 3. Do you trust your first impressions of people? Can you fall in love at first sight? 4. Predict how their relationship will move on further. Then read Episode 2 and check whether your prediction proved right.

Episode 2

I went home, paid the house-help, gave Chrissie her lunch and put her down for her nap, then baked two sheets of chocolate brownies. While they were still warm I drove back to the house on Tokai Road. It was a beautiful, wind-still day. Your man (remember, I did not know his name at that point) was in the yard doing something with timber and a hammer and nails. He was stripped to the waist; his shoulders were red where the sun had caught them. ‘Hello,’ I said. ‘You should wear a shirt, the sun isn’t good for you. Here, I’ve brought some brownies for you and your father. They are better than the stuff you get at Pick n Pay.’

Looking suspicious, in fact looking quite irritated, he put aside his tools and took the parcel. ‘I can’t invite you in, too much of a mess,’ he said. I was clearly not welcome.

‘That’s all right,’ I said. ‘I can’t stay anyway, I have to get back to my child. I was just making a neighbourly gesture. Would you and your father like to come over for a meal one evening? A neighbourly meal?’

He gave a smile, the first smile I had had from him. Not an attractive smile, too tight-lipped. He was self-conscious about his teeth, which were in bad shape. ‘Thank you,’ he said, ‘but I’ll have to check with my father first. He isn’t one for late nights.’

‘Tell him it won’t be a late night,’ I said. ‘You can eat and go, I won’t be offended. It will just be the three of us. My husband is away.’

You must be getting worried. *What have I let myself in for?* you must be asking yourself. *How can this woman pretend to have total recall of mundane conversations dating back three or four decades? And when is she going to get to the point?* So let me be candid: as far as the dialogue is concerned, I am making it up as I go along. Which I presume is permitted, since we are talking about a writer. What I am telling you may not be true to the letter, but it is true to the spirit, be assured of that. Can I proceed?

[Silence.]

I scribbled my phone number on the box of brownies. ‘And let me tell you my name too,’ I said, ‘in case you were wondering. My name is Julia.’

‘Julia. How sweetly flows the liquefaction of her clothes.’¹

‘Really,’ I said. What he meant I had no idea.

He arrived as promised the next evening, but without his father. ‘My father is not feeling well,’ he said. ‘He has taken an aspirin and gone to bed.’

We ate at the kitchen table, the two of us, with Chrissie on my lap. ‘Say hello to the uncle,’ I said to Chrissie. But Chrissie would have nothing to do with the strange man. A child knows when something is up. Feels it in the air.

In fact Christina never took to John, then or later. As a young child she was fair and blue-eyed, like her father and quite unlike me. I’ll show you a picture. Sometimes I used to feel that, because she did not take after me in looks, she would never take to me. Strange. I was the one who did all the caring and caring-for in the household, yet compared with Mark² I was the intruder, the dark one, the odd one out.

The uncle. That was what I called John in front of the child. Afterwards I regretted it. Something sordid in passing off a lover as one of the family.

Anyway, we ate, we chatted, but the zest, the excitement was beginning to go out of me, leaving me flat. Aside from the wrapping paper incident in the supermarket, which I might or might not have misread, I was the one who

had made all the overtures, issued the invitation. *Enough, no more*, I said to myself. *It is up to him now to push the button through the hole or else not push the button through the hole*. So to speak.

The truth is, I was not cut out to be a seductress. I did not even approve of the word, with its overtones of lacy underwear and French perfume. It was precisely in order not to fall into the role of seductress that I had not dressed up for the present occasion. I wore the same white cotton blouse and green Terylene slacks (yes, Terylene³) that I had worn to the supermarket that morning. What you see is what you get.

Don't smile. I am perfectly aware how much I was behaving like a character in a book – like one of those high-minded young women in Henry James, say, determined, despite her better instincts, to do the difficult, the modern thing. Particularly when my peers, the wives of Mark's colleagues at the firm, were turning for guidance not to Henry James or George Eliot but to *Vogue* or *Marie Claire* or *Fair Lady*. But then, what are books for if not to change our lives? Would you have come all the way to Kingston to hear what I have to say about John if you did not believe books are important?

No. No, I wouldn't.

Exactly. And John wasn't exactly a snappy dresser himself. One pair of good trousers, three plain white shirts, one pair of shoes: a real child of the Depression. But let me get back to the story.

For supper that night I made a simple lasagne. Pea soup, lasagne, ice cream: that was the menu, bland enough for a two-year-old. The lasagne was sloppier than it should have been because it was made with cottage cheese instead of ricotta. I could have made a second dash to the shops for ricotta, but on principle I did not, just as on principle I did not change my outfit.

What did we talk about over supper? Nothing much. I concentrated on feeding Chrissie – I didn't want her to feel neglected. And John was not a great talker, as you must know.

I don't know. I never met him in the flesh.

You never met him? I'm surprised to hear that.

I never sought him out. I never even corresponded with him. I thought it would be better if I had no sense of obligation toward him. It would leave me free to write what I wished.

But you sought me out. Your book is going to be about him yet you chose not to meet him. Your book is not going to be about me yet you asked to meet me. How do you explain that?

Because you were a figure in his life. You were important to him.

How do you know that?

I am just repeating what he said. Not to me, but to lots of people.

He said that I was an important figure in his life? I am surprised.

I am gratified. Gratified not that he should have thought so - I agree, I did have quite an impact on his life - but that he should have said so to other people.

Let me make a confession. When you first contacted me, I nearly decided not to speak to you. I thought you were some busybody, some academic newshound who had come upon a list of John's women, his conquests, and was now going down the list, ticking off the names, hoping to get some dirt on him.

You don't have a high opinion of academic researchers.

No, I don't. Which is why I have been trying to make it clear to you that I was not one of his conquests. If anything, he was one of mine. But tell me - I'm curious - to whom did he say that I was important?

To various people. In letters. He doesn't name you, but you are easy enough to identify. Also, he kept a photograph of you. I came across it among his papers.

A photograph! Can I see it? Do you have it with you?

I'll make a copy and send it.

Yes, of course I was important to him. He was in love with me, in his way. But there is an important way of being important, and an unimportant way, and I have my doubts that I made it to the important important level. I mean, he never wrote about me. I never entered his books. Which to me means I never quite flowered within him, never quite came to life.

[Silence.]

No comment? You have read his books. Where in his books do you find traces of me?

I can't answer that. I don't know you well enough to say. Don't you recognize yourself in any of his characters?

No.

Perhaps you are in his books in a more diffuse way, not immediately detectable.

Perhaps. But I would have to be convinced of that. Shall we go on? Where was I?

Supper. Lasagne.

Yes. Lasagne. Conquests. I fed him lasagne and then I completed my conquest of him. How explicit do I need to be? Since he is dead, it can make no difference to him, any indiscreetness on my part. We used the marital bed. If I am going to desecrate my marriage, I thought, I may as well do so thoroughly. And a bed is more comfortable than the sofa or the floor.

As for the experience itself – I mean the experience of infidelity, which is what the experience was, predominantly, for me – it was stranger than I expected, and then over before I could get accustomed to the strangeness. Yet it was exciting, no doubt about that, from start to finish. My heart did not stop hammering. Not something I will forget, ever. Going back to Henry James, there are plenty of betrayals in James, but I recall nothing about the sense of excitement, of heightened self-awareness, during the act itself – the act of betrayal, I mean. Which suggests to me that, though James liked to present himself as a great betrayer, he had never actually done the deed itself, bodily.



[...]

That was our first time together. Interesting, an interesting experience, but not earth-shaking. But then, I never expected it to be earth-shaking, not with him.

What I was determined to avoid was emotional entanglement. A passing fling was one thing, an affair of the heart quite another.

Notes

1. “How sweetly flows the liquefaction of her clothes” is a line from the poem “Upon Julia’s Clothes” by Robert Herrick.
2. Mark is Julia’s husband.
3. Terylene is a synthetic polyester fabric.

<p>Comprehension</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did Julia go back to Tokai road again? 2. What was Julia’s child’s attitude to John Coetzee? 3. What surprised Julia during her exchange with the interviewer? What did she mean by “important important level”?
<p>Discussion</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does the allusion to the poem by Herrick add to the text? 2. Did Julia have mixed emotions about her affair with John? Trace different emotions in the text and say how they are expressed. Comment on such notions as “emotional entanglement”, “a passing fling” and “an affair of the heart”. 3. As Julia expresses her feelings, she refers to such authors as Henry James and George Eliot as opposed to popular magazines. Discuss where you would try to find guidance with regard to emotional and romantic situations.

Language practice

Task 1: Pronunciation and Stress

The stress in the English language is not fixed, as in French or Polish, which means it is not always clear for learners which syllable is stressed in a particular word. The choice in two- or three-syllable words is usually between the first or second syllable. Decide where the stress is in the following words:

Romance, narrative, robust, component, diverse, conquest, hotel, affect, vehicle diffuse, perfume, plotline, overtone, lasagne, indignant, gratified, nondescript.



The number of syllables in an English word is not always apparent. How many syllables are there in the following words?

clothes, bizarre, macabre, obsequious

Read all the words in this section aloud and make up phrases to practise their pronunciation. If there is a word that is difficult for you to remember, create

a tongue-twister or a poem where it rhymes with a more familiar word. For example, if you find it hard to remember that the second syllable it stressed in the word “hotel”, rhyme it with “to tell”:



**It was a nondescript hotel:
I really have no more to tell.**

Task 2: Should

While the modal verbs “must” and “have to” express the idea of the necessity of an action, “should” conveys the idea of advisability. Learners of English as a foreign language tend to overuse “should”, especially when “have to” is the optimal option.

Comment on the usage of modals in the following two sentences. Translate them into your first language.

- A person has to / must eat in order to live.
- A person should eat a balanced diet.

*Complete the sentences below using **must** / **have to** / **should**. Explain your choice. Say where more than one variant is possible.*

1. This gothic romance is quite good. You ... read it.
2. This gothic romance is enthralling. You ... read it.
3. This gothic romance is on the reading list. You... read it.
4. You... avoid emotional entanglement.
5. You... avoid extramarital affairs.
6. You... avoid calling people “feeble” or “senile”.
7. She is pushing 70, but you... admit she is still young at heart.
8. You’re so irresponsible. You... act your age.
9. If you want to survive, you... be resilient.
10. Characters... be feisty if the author wants us to like them.

Work in pairs. Role-play the following situation:

One of you is a customer in a book shop and the other is the shop assistant. The customer is looking for a specific type of romance novel and the shop assistant is recommending different titles. Use **must** / **have to** / **should** where relevant, as in the examples:

- You should try Rosamunde Pilcher's books then
- You must read this one - it's excellent!
- Sorry, I don't know, I'll have to check.

Writing



According to Natalya Izotova, Coetzee's fiction relies heavily on ludic stylistics ("ludic" means involving game strategies). On the level of narrative, three main game strategies are used: psychonarrative, metafictional narrative and autofictional narrative. The excerpts from "Summertime" illustrate the ambivalence and tension of the ludic autofictional narrative: it problematises the authenticity of memory and highlights the interplay between fiction and reality. For many readers, texts with elaborate narrative games seem convoluted and strange. How do we write about fiction that surprises / perplexes us?

Read and compare two reviews from Goodreads about "Summertime". Which reader finds the format strange and which enjoys it? How do they express their attitude?

What an odd book. The author writes it as though he is someone else writing his biography after his death. Parts of it were very strange and parts of it were hard to understand. As someone who was living in South Africa in the late 70's I really enjoyed the African references and being able to practice the little Afrikaans I still remember. Apart from that though I guess I was not really enamoured of the book although I feel encouraged to maybe try another of his books in the near future.

(written by Phrynne)

After *Boyhood* and *Youth*, I expected another searing self-portrait told in calm and beautifully measured third-person. What I got is autobiography in quite a revolutionary form: the women who knew Coetzee in his early thirties are interviewed about the now-dead author. Utterly engaging, filled with awkward intimacy and painful slip-ups, *Summertime* is the best book in the trilogy, the best book I've read in a year.

Another interesting aspect of the book: so many "greats" have written their portraits of the artists as young men – Goethe, Flaubert, Joyce, and Coetzee himself spring to mind. But I've never read a self-examination focusing on

this point – beyond youth, “young-manhood”, I suppose – the trials by fire after self-awareness has cemented and the moral compass has been set, but before artistic recognition occurs.

(written by Vestal McIntyre)

Write a brief review of “Summertime” for a website. Use the following words and expressions:

The author uses unconventional ways / methods / approaches of...

The narrative is experimental / innovative due to the fact that...

The author / the narrative really pushes the boundaries of...

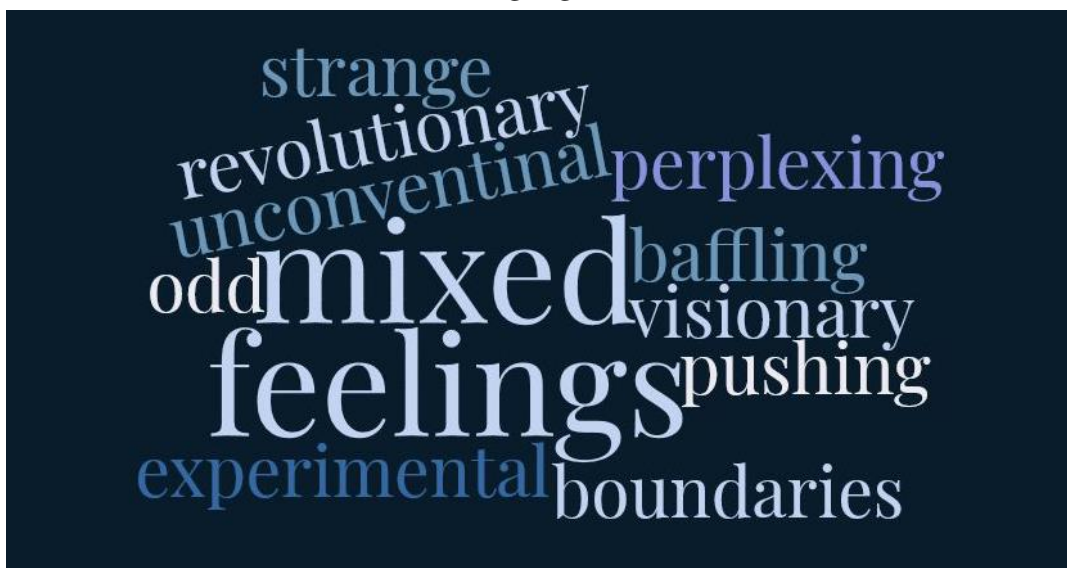
The book comes across as the cutting-edge narrative / style / fiction because...

The author is a visionary / ingenious inventor / revolutionary who...

The book / the style inspires mixed feelings because...

I found the story-telling technique perplexing / convoluted / baffling because...

It’s a challenging read since...



Project

A Case of Chemistry



When we talk of relationships and attraction that appears between two people, we often use the word “chemistry” to describe an emotion that two people get when they share a special connection.

This term can also be applied to fictional couples in books or films. “There’s

chemistry between them” is a frequent comment from someone satisfied with the way this special connection is portrayed. Find a fictional couple whose relationship, in your opinion, definitely fits this notion. How is this chemistry achieved (visually, verbally and by other means)? Study the stylistics of romantic connection and present your findings in class.



“La La Land”, the 2016 romantic musical film, has been often praised for the onscreen chemistry between its leading stars, Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone.

WORDLISTS

1. General vocabulary

acceptable
acerbic
act one's age
affair
age
ageism
agile
ancient
anticipation
apathetic
apologetic
at the tender age of
bark up the wrong tree
be at a loss for words
be lost on someone
belligerent
beyond words
bilingual
bitter
bitter pill to swallow
blatant
blind spot
callous
chomp
cling
code-switching
come as a shock
come up with (a plan, idea, solution)
coming of age
concede
condescending
confidential
contemptuous
cosiness
cram
creak
crinkle
crumple
culminate in
cumulative
cynical
deferential
dismissive
diverse
doddering
dominant
earnest
emotional entanglement
encounter
end up doing sth
enlightening
evasive
face up to the fact
facetious
fallibility
fall short of
familiar
feeble
feisty
fight or flight
fling
flippant
frail
from scratch
fumble
gaga
generation gap
generic
get hold of sth
get into hot water (with someone)
get out of hand
gleam

go about doing sth	mild
go out of one's way	Millennials
go to great lengths	mindset
grab	mishmash
grip	moralising
gritty	mortality
have a hard time	multilingual
hale	nestle
hammer	no spring chicken
heartly	nondescript
hinder	nostalgic
hoist	obsequious
huddle up	observant
impassive	old head on young shoulders
impeccable	over the hill
in-joke / inside joke	partial
in plain English	patronising
indignant	pensive
ingratiating	pick up (a word / phrase)
intense	plunge
intimate	polyglot
it's all Greek to me	puff
jerk	pull a rabbit out of one's / the hat
keep (something) straight	put something across
keep one's mind off sth / someone	put a spoke in one's wheel
(not) know what to make of something	put someone off (doing sth)
language acquisition	resilient
language shifting	reticent
laudatory	ripe old age of
lethargic	robust
light-hearted	rounded
like talking to a brick wall	salad days
loaded language	sarcastic
lucid	sassy
lulling	saving grace
lurch	scathing
(not) make head of tail of something	scrunch
make it a point (to do something)	scrutinise
make the most of something	second-guess

self-absorbed	thought-provoking
self-evident	tight spot
self-indulgent	tongue-in-cheek
self-reliant	trigger
senile	twist
sentimental	undaunted
sequential	uneasy
shrunk	upshot
slide	vibes
social conscience	watch your language
solemn	well-preserved
speak someone's language	whimsical
speak the same language	wink
speak up	withered
stare	words fail me
step in	work out
sympathetic	wrinkled
take issue with someone	wrong end of the stick
take things to heart	young at heart
tell a different story	zealous

2. Words and expressions for discussing and analysing fiction

adversary	character-driven
allegory	characterise / characterisation
allude to / allusion	characterological
ambience	cliché
ambiguity	cliff-hanger
antagonist	climax
artistic	come across (as)
artistic license	come to life
atmosphere	conflict
auditory	convey
authenticity	convincing
baffling	convoluted
bizarre	credibility
captivating	cross-cultural
celebratory	cutting-edge
challenging	defamiliarisation
character	dénouement

depict / depiction / depicting
descriptive
detached
detail
dialogue
direct speech
draw someone in
effect
embed / embedded
emphasise / emphasis
engaging
enthralling
epiphany
expectation
experimental
exposition
fable
fictional
figurative
flashback
flat / two-dimensional
focus on
foil
foreshadowing
gripping
gustatory
hand-waving
heartfelt
heartwarming
hilarious
idiolect
idyllic
imagery
imaginary
imaginative
immersion
implicit
in character / out of character
incident

inciting
(in)direct (characterisation)
ingenious
in medias res
in retrospect
incongruity
innovative
insight / insightful
inspiring
intrusive (narrator)
ironic
keep someone on the edge of one's seat
kinesthetic
leitmotif
liberating
long drawn out
long-winded
lyrical
macabre
major / minor
melancholy
message
metafiction / metafictional
mixed feelings
monotonous
moral centre
motif
motive / motivation
multicultural
must-read
narrate / narrative / narrator / narratee
nemesis
nostalgia
olfactory
out of this world
overall setting
over-hyped
page-turner
pattern

perceive / perception
perplexing
personified
perspective
plot
plot-driven
point of view
portray / portrayal
premise
protagonist
push boundaries
(not able to) put the book down
reassuring
recurring (motif)
reminiscence
resolution
revelation
revolutionary
rising / falling action
round
self-conscious (narrator)
self-reflexive
setting
slow pacing
stereotype
stock (character)
story
story-telling
storyline
stretch one's credulity
subplot
suspenseful
symbolic
synesthesia
tactile
tangible
technique
tense
theme
timeless
timeline
tone
tonality
touching
trope
twist
unconventional
universal (theme)
(un)reliable (narrator)
uplifting
verisimilitude
vibrant
villain
visionary
visual / visualise / visualisation
vivid
willing suspense of disbelief
witty
with bated breath
wordsmith
young adult fiction

GUIDELINES FOR SELF-STUDY PROJECTS

1. Project topics should be distributed among the students in the beginning of the term.
2. Your project should focus on **contemporary authentic English-language material** (fiction, films, drama, graphic novels, songs, poems, etc.)
3. If the topic presupposes the analysis of a certain linguistic or literary aspect (genre, narrative techniques, stylistic features, etc.), it is recommended to include a **brief theoretical review** of this issue.
4. While sharing the results of your research with the class, make sure to support them with a presentation, audio / video materials, handouts, etc.
5. Your presentation in class should be **interactive**: the other students are supposed to be involved in discussions, assignments and activities.
6. Avoid **plagiarism** in your presentation.
7. Avoid using **obscene and offensive material**.
8. Stick to the time limit of 20–25 min.

A sample outline

- Introduction
- Theoretical Part (based on the chosen aspect of analysis)
- Practical Part (presenting and analysing the material, conducting activities)
- Conclusions

6 Tips for a Successful PowerPoint Presentation

- ✓ Make the text on each slide short and simple
- ✓ Keep to one style / font
- ✓ Do not overuse media on your slide
- ✓ Avoid unnecessary or infantile images
- ✓ Use contrasting backgrounds
- ✓ Always think of a backup plan

PROJECT TOPICS

Unit 1. Book Challenge!

Another TED Talker, Lisa Bu reads books in pairs: e.g., about two different people involved in the same event, or similar stories in different genres or cultures. Different social media that specialise in books offer challenges and games for involved readers. Brainstorm ideas for individual reading challenges. Choose one of the ideas you've generated and accept your own book challenge.

Unit 2. The Appeal of Incongruity

The protagonist of the story chose double bass because he felt it was incongruous for a small boy like himself. Think of similar situations in fiction / cinema / songs / poetry. Collect several striking examples of incongruity and analyse the effect they create. Present the results of your research in class.

Unit 3. Discover TV Tropes

TV Tropes is a website that collects various plot devices and conventions (also known as tropes) from creative works, such film and television (which was the site's initial focus), as well as literature, mythology, drama, music, comics, manga, video games, music, advertisements and toys. The site provides both the explanation of tropes and their examples across the media. Each trope has a descriptive name, such as **Brainless Beauty**, **Damsel in Distress**, **Dark and Troubled Past**, **Foolish Sibling Responsible Sibling**, **Gold Digger**, **Knight in Shining Armor**, **Not What It Looks Like**, **Wide-Eyed Idealist** and so on. Research the site and choose one of the tropes to study in more detail. Present the examples of this trope in different creative works. Alternatively, you can focus on one work and single out several tropes in it. In conclusion, describe how these tropes affect our suspension of disbelief.

Unit 4. Setting as a Character

The House of Usher in Poe's famous tale is perceived as a character in the story. Do you remember other stories, films, songs or poems, where a house / a castle / a city / a country is personified or made special in other ways?

Research the topic and make a presentation focusing on the portrayal of the chosen location and the interaction between the setting and the characters in the story.

Unit 5. Strange Narrators and Narratees

"The Book Thief" employs Death as a narrator. Have you ever read other books or short stories where the narrator is unusual or strange? Do you remember unexpected narratees? Research the topic and make a presentation in class. Provide the excerpts before you introduce your chosen narrators / narratees so that other students can make guesses about their identities.

Unit 6. Which Literary Character are You?

You can find a lot of such tests online. How about creating your own? Choose several fictional characters (from one story or from different ones) and devise a set of questions to sort people into the corresponding categories.

Run the test on your class (the teacher including!) Analyse the results and explain your choice of questions and characters

Unit 7. Devil is in the Detail

Do you remember stories where a seemingly innocuous detail played a pivotal role? What was that detail? How was it introduced in the beginning and when did it become apparent that it was more than it seemed? Explain the role of this detail in the plot, character development and your own perception of the story.

Unit 8. My Heart's in the Highlands

Choose a fictional work that uses vivid imagery to represent a certain English-speaking country or region (Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, etc.) Study the way the author employs this imagery and what effect is elicited with its help.

Present your project including the examples of the imagery.

Unit 9. The Ambience of Comfort

A lot of people appreciate the atmosphere of cosiness and homeliness, although there is no agreement about how it can be achieved. What is your personal idea of domesticity and comfort? What images are associated with a cosy and welcoming home? Research different aspects of this phenomenon and find examples in fiction, poetry or cinema that coincide with your own perception of comfort.

Unit 10. Winter Tales

What kind of stories do you like to read or watch in the darkest and coldest time of the year? What kind of music do you listen to? Stories that are associated with winter festivities (Advent, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Yule, Christmas, New Year, etc.) are frequently heartwarming and centred on moral transformation (as in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"). Some of them are allegorical, and some often have a sentimental or nostalgic slant. Choose a "winter tale" that has had a strong effect on you and explore its imagery, tone, atmosphere and message. Present this story in class and compare your response to it with that of your classmates.

Unit 11. People with Many Voices

There are fictional characters who have several identities, each with his or her own idiolect. In cinema, actors may play several different roles within one film, completely

transforming into new personalities. In audiobooks, narrators often impersonate a range of characters by changing their voices and putting on various accents. Choose one of such works and analyse how dialogues are presented in it. Make sure to provide examples during your presentation.

Unit 12. Do You Speak My Language?

Find a story where language problems (having a hard time learning a foreign language, verbal misunderstandings, minority vs. majority language, secret / magic / ancient languages, speech impediments, etc.) play a central role. Analyse the characters of this story as linguistic personalities and explore their idiolects. Share your findings in class.

Unit 13. Talking about My Generation

Many works of fiction and non-fiction attempt to capture the zeitgeist of their epochs and corresponding generations. Apart from historical and social contexts, the image of a particular generation is shaped by the clothes its representatives wear and the music they listen to, the way they dance and the way they speak.

Choose several works (including books, films, TV series, musicals, songs, documentaries, comic strips, etc.) that reflect the values, the visual image, as well as the language of a particular generation. Present your findings in class.

Unit 14. Dear Diary!

The format of a personal diary has allowed numerous authors to create intimate and heartfelt narratives. One of the most famous diaries in history is a non-fictional book “The Diary of a Young Girl” written by Anne Frank when she was in hiding for two years with her family during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. Among fictional diaries aimed at young adults the popular examples are the Adrian Mole series by Sue Townsend and “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” by Jeff Kinney. Adult fiction has also exploited the format, e.g. the Bridget Jones novels by Helen Fielding.

Choose a novel / several novels written as a diary and explore how this format shapes the narrative. You may compare how different authors employ this device, focusing on:

- ✓ Character presentation
- ✓ Imagery and diction
- ✓ Tone and atmosphere

Share your findings in class providing handouts with relevant examples.

Unit 15. The Young and the Old

Many stories portray special relationships between the young and the old. They draw heavily on the contrast between two age groups, juxtaposing their innocence and experience. The relationship can be fueled by mutual respect and love or, on the contrary, by antagonism and generation gap. Find such pairs in fiction and research the dynamics of the relationship. Share your conclusions in class.

Unit 16. A Case of Chemistry

When we talk of relationships and attraction that appears between two people, we often use the word “chemistry” to describe an emotion that two people get when they share a special connection. This term can also be applied to fictional couples in books or films. “There’s chemistry between them” is a frequent comment from someone satisfied with the way this special connection is portrayed. Find a fictional couple whose relationship, in your opinion, definitely fits this notion. How is this chemistry achieved (visually, verbally and by other means)? Study the stylistics of romantic connection and present your findings in class.

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