

Glossary of Key Terms

Evaluation

Making a balanced judgement about something by looking at its various parts in detail.

Genre

The type or style of a text e.g. horror, sci-fi, crime.

Narrative

A story or account of events and experiences.

Narrator

The person giving the account of the story/event/experience.

Narrative hook

A part of the opening of the story that grabs the reader's attention and encourages them to read on.

Narrative voice

The sense of character and personality revealed by the narrator.

Setting

The time and area in which the action of a story takes place.

Tension

The increased feeling of suspense, anxiety or excitement created by the text.

Tone

The overall effect/mood/feeling of a text.

Lord of the Flies

CHAPTER ONE: The Sound of the Shell

The boy with fair hair lowered himself down the last few feet of rock and began to pick his way toward the lagoon. Though he had taken off his school sweater and trailed it now from one hand, his grey shirt stuck to him and his hair was plastered to his forehead. All round him the long scar smashed into the jungle was a bath of heat. He was clambering heavily among the creepers and broken trunks when a bird, a vision of red and yellow, flashed upwards with a witch-like cry; and this cry was echoed by another.

"Hi!" it said. "Wait a minute!"

The undergrowth at the side of the scar was shaken and a multitude of raindrops fell pattering.

"Wait a minute," the voice said. "I got caught up."

The fair boy stopped and jerked his stockings with an automatic gesture that made the jungle seem for a moment like the Home Counties.

The voice spoke again.

"I can't hardly move with all these creeper things."

The owner of the voice came backing out of the undergrowth so that twigs scratched on a greasy wind-breaker. The naked crooks of his knees were plump, caught and scratched by thorns. He bent down, removed the thorns carefully, and turned around. He was shorter than the fair boy and very fat. He came forward, searching out safe lodgments for his feet, and then looked up through thick spectacles.

"Where's the man with the megaphone?"

The fair boy shook his head.

"This is an island. At least I think it's an island. That's a reef out in the sea. Perhaps there aren't any grownups anywhere."

The fat boy looked startled.

"There was that pilot. But he wasn't in the passenger cabin, he was up in front."

The fair boy was peering at the reef through screwed-up eyes.

"All them other kids," the fat boy went on. "Some of them must have got out. They must have, mustn't they?"

The fair boy began to pick his way as casually as possible toward the water. He tried to be offhand and not too obviously uninterested, but the fat boy hurried after him.

"Aren't there any grownups at all?"

"I don't think so."

The fair boy said this solemnly; but then the delight of a realized ambition overcame him. In the middle of the scar he stood on his head and grinned at the reversed fat boy.

"No grownups!"

The fat boy thought for a moment.

"That pilot."

The fair boy allowed his feet to come down and sat on the steamy earth.

"He must have flown off after he dropped us. He couldn't land here. Not in a place with wheels."

"We was attacked!"

"He'll be back all right."

The fat boy shook his head.

"When we was coming down I looked through one of them windows. I saw the other part of the plane. There were flames coming out of it."

He looked up and down the scar.

"And this is what the cabin done."

The fair boy reached out and touched the jagged end of a trunk. For a moment he looked interested.

"What happened to it?" he asked. "Where's it got to now?"

"That storm dragged it out to sea. It wasn't half dangerous with all them tree trunks falling. There must have been some kids still in it."

He hesitated for a moment, then spoke again.

"What's your name?"

"Ralph."

The fat boy waited to be asked his name in turn but this proffer of acquaintance was not made; the fair boy called Ralph smiled vaguely, stood up, and began to make his way once more toward the lagoon. The fat boy hung steadily at his shoulder.

"I expect there's a lot more of us scattered about. You haven't seen any others, have you?"

Ralph shook his head and increased his speed. Then he tripped over a branch and came down with a crash.

The fat boy stood by him, breathing hard.

"My auntie told me not to run," he explained, "on account of my asthma."

"Ass-mar?"

"That's right. Can't catch my breath. I was the only boy in our school what had asthma," said the fat boy with a touch of pride. "And I've been wearing specs since I was three."

He took off his glasses and held them out to Ralph, blinking and smiling, and then started to wipe them against his grubby wind-breaker. An expression of pain and inward concentration altered the pale contours of his face. He smeared the sweat from his cheeks and quickly adjusted the spectacles on his nose.

"Them fruit."

He glanced round the scar.

"Them fruit," he said, "I expect--"

He put on his glasses, waded away from Ralph, and crouched down among the tangled foliage.

"I'll be out again in just a minute--"

Ralph disentangled himself cautiously and stole away through the branches. In a few seconds the fat boy's grunts were behind him and he was hurrying toward the screen that still lay between him and the lagoon. He climbed over a broken trunk and was out of the jungle.

Year 9 English Homework Project: Exploration of Fiction Texts

LO: Being able to evaluate fiction texts and the methods that writers use is an important part of your GCSE English Language and Literature courses. This project aims to guide you through the openings of three different novels and the different ways they use language and structure to engage their reader. You will put your own creative writing skills to the test as you write and evaluate your own novel opening.

Exploration of Fiction Texts



You will explore three different influential texts - each one taking a different approach in its opening pages:

- *The Catcher in the Rye* (J.D. Salinger): Narrative voice
- *Lord of the Flies* (William Golding): Establishing characters
- *The War of the Worlds* (H.G. Wells): Setting the scene

As you read, challenge yourself to look up some of the words that you don't know. Either annotate your extract with the definitions or write them down along with your responses to the tasks.

Hard copies of all work completed will need to be handed in to your English teacher at the end of the project. If at any point you find yourself struggling or are confused, please find your English teacher who will be happy to help. If you need a paper copy of these instructions or the worksheets, please ask your teacher.

Remember that English staff are available to help after school throughout this project and Homework Club takes place in the library every night after school.

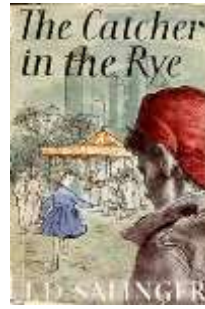
Task 1: Exploration of Genre

(50 minutes)

- 1) Complete the genre table in which you are asked to identify the characteristics of each genre and give examples.
- 2) Respond to the questions on page two of the same document.

Task 2: Narrative voice in *The Catcher in the Rye*

(50 minutes)



Read the opening of *The Catcher in the Rye* which is a famous novel about teenage angst, rebellion and alienation. Complete the following tasks:

- 1) Write a list of important facts we learn about the narrator.
- 2) Highlight or write down all the colloquial (informal language/slang) expressions you can find. What do we learn about the narrator's personality and feelings from this use of language?

CHALLENGE TASKS

- 3) The narrator writes "*I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas just before I got pretty run-down and had to come out here and take it easy*". To what extent do you think this is an effective way to 'hook' the reader in?
- 4) Based on what you have read so far, why has the author chosen to use first person narration? What does this allow him to do?

Task 3: Introducing characters in *Lord of the Flies*

(50 minutes)



Read the opening of *Lord of the Flies* which is about a group of children who become stranded on an island following a plane crash. Complete the following tasks:

- 1) The author chooses to open this novel by focusing entirely on two characters. Draw a sketch of each character and label them with words/phrases the author uses to describe them.

CHALLENGE TASKS

- 2) As well as description, the author uses dialogue to introduce his two characters. Using a different colour for each character, underline all the speech. What do you notice? What does this tell us about the characters and their relationship?
- 3) How effective do you think the author has been in introducing his characters? In your answer you should comment on use of descriptive language and dialogue.

Task 4: Setting the scene in *The War of the Worlds*

(50 minutes)



Read the opening of *The War of the Worlds*, a popular science fiction novel. In this opening, the author reveals that aliens from Mars are about to invade Earth because their planet is becoming uninhabitable due to cooling temperatures. The author focuses on describing setting and creating tone. Complete the following tasks:

- 1) How would you describe the tone (mood or feeling) of this opening? Underline or write a list of words in the extract that support your response.

CHALLENGE TASKS

- 2) Focus on paragraph 4 which compares the harsh conditions of Mars with the more favourable ones on Earth. Draw both planets and fill the inside of each one with words and phrases from the text that are used to describe them.
- 3) Read the last paragraph. How does the writer use language to build tension here?

Task 5: Evaluation

(50 minutes)

Which novel do you think had the most effective opening? Write a detailed evaluation in which you discuss the following:

- How the writer introduces characters
- How the writer hooks the reader in
- How the writer uses language to set the tone (mood and feeling) of the novel

Please see the available support sheet if you need further guidance on this task.

Task 6: Book review

(50 minutes)

Using a book you have recently read outside of class, complete the Fiction Book Review sheet.

CHALLENGE TASK

Write a synopsis of your chosen book in which you aim to summarise the plot in a way that captures the reader's attention.

Task 7: The Writer's Toolkit

(50 minutes)

- 1) Complete the Writer's Toolkit worksheet in which you have to match the terms to their correct definitions.



CHALLENGE TASKS

- 2) Write five different versions of your own opening line to a story. Each version should contain one of the following language techniques:
 - Alliteration
 - Simile
 - Metaphor
 - Personification
 - Emotive language
- 3) Which of your opening lines is the most successful? Explain your choice by commenting on the effect of your language choices.

Task 8

(1 hour 40 minutes)

Write your own opening to a novel in which you choose to focus on one of the following:

- Creating a narrative voice
- Establishing characters
- Setting the scene

Please note:

- You are not expected to think of the plot for an entire novel. Come up with a general idea and focus on creating an engaging opening using one of the strategies above.
- Write between 350-500 words.
- Look at the evaluation questions in the next task before you begin, this will help to guide you in your planning.

Task 9: Evaluation

(50 minutes)

Write an evaluation of your own novel opening. Use the following questions to guide you:

- Which genre did you choose and how have you shown the features of this genre in your writing?
- Did you write in first, second or third person? What is the effect of your choice?
- Is your focus on the narrator, establishing characters or setting the scene? Explain which choice you made and why.
- How many different language techniques from the Writer's Toolkit sheet did you use? Give some examples.
- How have you 'hooked' the reader in? Explain which of your lines you think is the most engaging or creates the most tension.
- Overall, what impact has exploring the fiction extracts in this project had on your own writing?



Task 5: Evaluation – Support Sheet

Use the questions and prompts below to help you structure your answer.

Which novel do you think had the most effective opening? Write a detailed evaluation in which you discuss the following:

How the writer introduces characters

- How are characters introduced differently in *The Catcher in the Rye* and *Lord of the Flies*?
- *The Catcher in the Rye* and *The War of the Worlds* both use first person narration but in which text is the narrator given a stronger sense of identity?
- Which of the four characters across the three extracts are you most interested in and why?

How the writer hooks the reader in

- Which text has the best opening line and why?
- Find some specific examples from the extracts that might leave the reader wanting to find out more.
- Which text creates the most excitement or tension? Explain using examples.

How the writer uses language to set the tone (mood and feeling) of the novel

- Which text has the best descriptive language? Give examples.
- Can you find any examples of engaging or humorous language?
- Can you find any examples of punctuation or sentence types being used for effect?

Conclusion

- Overall, which novel do you think had the most effective opening?

Task 1 – Genre

Genre Type	Genre Characteristics (What might you expect to find in a book of this genre? Consider plot, setting, characters, time period and language style)	Examples (Using your own knowledge or research, list 3 examples of books for each genre)
Science fiction		1) 2) 3)
Horror		1) 2) 3)
Action and Adventure		1) 2) 3)
Fantasy		1) 2) 3)
Mystery		1) 2) 3)
Thriller		1) 2) 3)

- 1) Of the genres listed, which is your favourite and why? Give a detailed explanation in which you discuss the genre's characteristics.
- 2) What is a subgenre? Write a definition and give examples based on one of the genres listed in the table.
- 3) Think of a genre that has not been included in the table. Explain the genre's characteristics and give examples of books of that genre.
- 4) What is the purpose of classifying books in this way? Write down as many advantages that you can think of.
- 5) What are the potential complications and disadvantages of classifying books by genre?

THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

by J.D. Salinger

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that, especially my father. They're nice and all--I'm not saying that--but they're also touchy as hell. Besides, I'm not going to tell you my whole goddam autobiography or anything. I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas just before I got pretty run-down and had to come out here and take it easy. I mean that's all I told D.B. about, and he's my brother and all. He's in Hollywood. That isn't too far from this crummy place, and he comes over and visits me practically every week end. He's going to drive me home when I go home next month maybe. He just got a Jaguar. One of those little English jobs that can do around two hundred miles an hour. It cost him damn near four thousand bucks. He's got a lot of dough, now. He didn't use to. He used to be just a regular writer, when he was home. He wrote this terrific book of short stories, *The Secret Goldfish*, in case you never heard of him. The best one in it was "The Secret Goldfish." It was about this little kid that wouldn't let anybody look at his goldfish because he'd bought it with his own money. It killed me. Now he's out in Hollywood, D.B., being a prostitute. If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me.

Where I want to start telling is the day I left Pencey Prep. Pencey Prep is this school that's in Agerstown, Pennsylvania. You probably heard of it. You've probably seen the ads, anyway. They advertise in about a thousand magazines, always showing some hotshot guy on a horse jumping over a fence. Like as if all you ever did at Pencey was play polo all the time. I never even once saw a horse anywhere near the place. And underneath the guy on the horse's picture, it always says: "Since 1888 we have been molding boys into splendid, clear-thinking young men." Strictly for the birds. They don't do any damn more molding at Pencey than they do at any other school. And I didn't know anybody there that was splendid and clear-thinking and all. Maybe two guys. If that many. And they probably came to Pencey that way.

Anyway, it was the Saturday of the football game with Saxon Hall. The game with Saxon Hall was supposed to be a very big deal around Pencey. It was the last game of the year, and you were supposed to commit suicide or something if old Pencey didn't win. I remember around three o'clock that afternoon I was standing way the hell up on top of Thomsen Hill, right next to this crazy cannon that was in the Revolutionary War and all. You could see the whole field from there, and you could see the two teams bashing each other all over the place. You couldn't see the grandstand too hot, but you could hear them all yelling, deep and terrific on the Pencey side, because practically the whole school except me was there, and scrawny and faggy on the Saxon Hall side, because the visiting team hardly ever brought many people with them.

There were never many girls at all at the football games. Only seniors were allowed to bring girls with them. It was a terrible school, no matter how you looked at it. I like to be somewhere at least where you can see a few girls around once in a while, even if they're only scratching their arms or blowing their noses or even just giggling or something. Old Selma Thurmer--she was the

headmaster's daughter--showed up at the games quite often, but she wasn't exactly the type that drove you mad with desire. She was a pretty nice girl, though. I sat next to her once in the bus from Agerstown and we sort of struck up a conversation. I liked her. She had a big nose and her nails were all bitten down and bloody-looking and she had on those damn falsies that point all over the place, but you felt sort of sorry for her. What I liked about her, she didn't give you a lot of horse manure about what a great guy her father was. She probably knew what a phony slob he was.

The reason I was standing way up on Thomsen Hill, instead of down at the game, was because I'd just got back from New York with the fencing team. I was the goddam manager of the fencing team. Very big deal. We'd gone in to New York that morning for this fencing meet with McBurney School. Only, we didn't have the meet. I left all the foils and equipment and stuff on the goddam subway. It wasn't all my fault. I had to keep getting up to look at this map, so we'd know where to get off. So we got back to Pencey around two-thirty instead of around dinnertime. The whole team ostracized me the whole way back on the train. It was pretty funny, in a way.

The other reason I wasn't down at the game was because I was on my way to say good-bye to old Spencer, my history teacher. He had the grippe, and I figured I probably wouldn't see him again till Christmas vacation started. He wrote me this note saying he wanted to see me before I went home. He knew I wasn't coming back to Pencey.

I forgot to tell you about that. They kicked me out. I wasn't supposed to come back after Christmas vacation on account of I was flunking four subjects and not applying myself and all. They gave me frequent warning to start applying myself--especially around midterms, when my parents came up for a conference with old Thurmer--but I didn't do it. So I got the ax. They give guys the ax quite frequently at Pencey. It has a very good academic rating, Pencey. It really does.

The War of the Worlds

by H. G. Wells [1898]

CHAPTER ONE

THE EVE OF THE WAR

No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's and yet as mortal as his own; that as men busied themselves about their various concerns they were scrutinised and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a man with a microscope might scrutinise the transient creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water. With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their assurance of their empire over matter. It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same. No one gave a thought to the older worlds of space as sources of human danger, or thought of them only to dismiss the idea of life upon them as impossible or improbable. It is curious to recall some of the mental habits of those departed days. At most terrestrial men fancied there might be other men upon Mars, perhaps inferior to themselves and ready to welcome a missionary enterprise. Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those of the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us. And early in the twentieth century came the great disillusionment.

The planet Mars, I scarcely need remind the reader, revolves about the sun at a mean distance of 140,000,000 miles, and the light and heat it receives from the sun is barely half of that received by this world. It must be, if the nebular hypothesis has any truth, older than our world; and long before this earth ceased to be molten, life upon its surface must have begun its course. The fact that it is scarcely one seventh of the volume of the earth must have accelerated its cooling to the temperature at which life could begin. It has air and water and all that is necessary for the support of animated existence.

Yet so vain is man, and so blinded by his vanity, that no writer, up to the very end of the nineteenth century, expressed any idea that intelligent life might have developed there far, or indeed at all, beyond its earthly level. Nor was it generally understood that since Mars is older than our earth, with scarcely a quarter of the superficial area and remoter from the sun, it necessarily follows that it is not only more distant from time's beginning but nearer its end.

The secular cooling that must someday overtake our planet has already gone far indeed with our neighbour. Its physical condition is still largely a mystery, but we know now that even in its equatorial region the midday temperature barely approaches that of our coldest winter. Its air is much more attenuated than ours, its oceans have shrunk until they cover but a third of its surface, and as its slow seasons change huge snowcaps gather and melt about either pole and periodically inundate its temperate zones. That last stage of exhaustion, which to us is still incredibly remote, has become a present-day problem for the inhabitants of Mars. The immediate pressure of necessity has brightened their intellects, enlarged their powers, and hardened their hearts. And looking across space with instruments, and intelligences such as we have scarcely dreamed of, they see, at its nearest distance only 35,000,000 of miles sunward of them, a morning star of hope, our own warmer planet, green with vegetation and grey with water, with a cloudy atmosphere eloquent of fertility, with glimpses through its drifting cloud wisps of broad stretches of populous country and narrow, navy-crowded seas.

And we men, the creatures who inhabit this earth, must be to them at least as alien and lowly as are the monkeys and lemurs to us. The intellectual side of man already admits that life is an incessant struggle for existence, and it would seem that this too is the belief of the minds upon Mars. Their world is far gone in its cooling and this world is still crowded with life, but crowded only with what they regard as inferior animals. To carry warfare sunward is, indeed, their only escape from the destruction that, generation after generation, creeps upon them.

The Writer's Toolkit

Match the definition to the term!

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Adjective | 11) Foreshadowing |
| 2) Noun | 12) Personification |
| 3) Abstract noun | 13) List of three |
| 4) Proper noun | 14) Imagery |
| 5) Pronoun | 15) Allusion |
| 6) Verb | 16) Emotive language |
| 7) Adverb | 17) Onomatopoeia |
| 8) Simile | 18) Superlative |
| 9) Metaphor | 19) Alliteration |
| 10) Pathetic fallacy | 20) Monosyllabic sentences |

- A) Use of the senses to create a more vivid description for the reader
- B) Weather used to reflect the mood of the characters
- C) A passing reference to something
- D) An action
- E) I, me, he, she, herself, you, it, that, they, each, few, many, who, whoever, whose, someone, everybody, etc
- F) Finding three different ways to say something for additional emphasis
- G) A comparison using like or as
- H) Words which convey a strong emotion
- I) A direct comparison of two things with similar qualities
- J) Words which sound like their meaning
- K) The name of a thing which is not tangible
- L) A describing word
- M) Name of place or person
- N) Sentences which use words of one syllable
- O) A type of metaphor which lends human qualities to inanimate or natural objects
- P) The name of a thing
- Q) A repeated sound at the beginning of two or more words
- R) Hinting at events that may come
- S) A word which describes a verb, usually ending in 'ly'
- T) A word describing the highest quality or degree or something e.g. 'greatest'