

THE
DUSTON^{TDS}₄₋₁₉
SCHOOL

Knowledge

Organiser

Year 9 English

*Creative writing
and Short Stories*



Topic:

Short Stories and Creative Writing

Big questions that will help you answer this enquiry question:

1. What are the key images in each of the stories?
2. What do these key images represent?
3. What kind of narrator does each story have?
4. How do the writers show a deeper subtext in each story?
5. What is the subtext and how can I work this into my own writing?
6. What are the tools I need to develop to improve my own writing?
7. What ideas can I take from these writers and use in my own work?
8. How can I use a key central image in my writing to anchor the ideas around?

Narrator	Archetype	Setting
Figurative Language	Character	Innocence
Empathy	Emotional response	Unreliable narrator
Drip-feed	Appealing to the senses	Show Don't Tell
Symptoms of emotions	Discourse markers	Audience
Purpose	Register	Tension
Vocabulary choices	Paragraphs for effect	Conscious writing

Text		Analysis and comment
Your Shoes	A mother cradles her daughter's pair of shoes as the daughter has run away from home.	<p>The narrative voice of the mother changes throughout. She is defensive, protective, angry, sad. Other characters weave in and out of her narrative – the father, her own mother, the daughter. The narrative drip feeds information to the reader – why did the daughter leave? The shoes are a recurring image throughout the story and this changes. They are both an image of the daughter and the mother's controlling nature. The mother is obsessive and totally different to her own mother and daughter. The story was written for a homeless charity to highlight why people run away from home. Look at how the mother becomes increasingly erratic throughout until towards the end there is a worrying sound of her own insanity.</p>
The Darkness Out There	A sweet sounding old lady turns out to be a vicious killer, while the uncouth young man, Kerry, turns out to be the most perceptive of all of them	<p>The darkness is a Jungian archetype for things we dread. Packer's End works in the same way as the Forbidden Forest in Happy Rotter. The characters are misleading – Mrs Rutter is vicious and knowingly allows a young man to die through revenge. The young man dies slowly and she doesn't care. The main character is again misleading – it is her education and her becoming aware that drives the story, so we learn along with her that appearances are deceptive. The 3rd person narrator is used well here. Although omniscient, it is all from the point of view of Sandra, and her perception is lacking in places. The character of Kerry is deceptive. Practical, greasy, messy, and abhorrent to the narrator, yet morally right and much more perceptive than Sandra. The story raises an interesting moral complication – was Mrs Rutter right or wrong, justified or not? Are we on her side or Kerry's by the end of the story. Can we ever truly judge given that we are not at war and have not lost our husbands to the Germans?</p>
Paula Brown's new snowsuit	The narrator learns about the unfairness of the world as her innocence is lost and the war begins.	<p>Role and creation of the hero archetype – Superman being linked to Uncle Frank. Jimmy Lane as a character choice is a conscious one. The voice of a child narrator – looking back with the wisdom of adulthood. Loss of innocence as a theme – link to the declaration of war. The war film she sees before Snow White reflects this loss of innocence. The snow white references link to the powder blue snowsuit which is eventually stained. Blame and trust are key themes in the story. Betrayal is a key idea when Uncle Frank pays the Browns anyway. Look at colours as running themes throughout the story.</p>

Homework

The tasks below represent only part of what you can do to enhance and develop your understanding of the text. You are preparing for an exam on a challenging text.

Knowledge is power, so the more you know, the more secure you will be in your learning.

Working towards your GCSEs in the 21st Century means that you are one of the most connected generation of pupils of all time! You have a world of knowledge and thought at your fingertips! So use it.

Homework Tasks:

- 1) *Your Shoes* was written for a homeless charity to highlight the issue of teenage homelessness. Research this issue. What are the current statistics for teenage “runaways”. What are the main causes of teenagers running away from home?
- 2) *The Darkness Out There* tells of a downed Luftwaffe pilot being left to die overnight. Research the Battle of Britain and the Blitz and find out what typically happened to German pilots who were shot down.
- 3) *Paula Brown’s New Snowsuit* uses America’s involvement in World War Two as a background. Research this and compare your notes to the story—why might it have signalled a loss of innocence as it does in the story?

If you have “no homework” (a likely story!) or you have finished the above, try these tasks on a weekly basis to ensure your understanding of the stories is secure.

- 1) **Find some revision notes on these stories (all of them used to be GCSE texts) . Make sure your reading of the stories includes the ideas from these revision sites.**
- 2) **Research the writers and other works they have produced. Are there common themes?**

	PLC	What this means
W 1	Communicate clearly and with imagination, adapting tone and style to purpose and audience.	Students will show an awareness of how tone and register can be adapted to meet the needs of the reader and the purpose of the writing.
W 2	To use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for effect.	Students will learn how to use ambitious vocabulary and vary their sentence types for effect.
W 3	Organise information and ideas so that texts are coherent and cohesive.	Students will organise and structure writing so that meaning is clear and for narrative effect.
W 4	Spell and punctuate with accuracy.	Spelling and punctuating your work so that meaning is clear.

Extract from a Year 9 pupil's creative writing.

Write a creative piece based on the following image:



The year was 1917. I was a very young chap. I had dark black hair, crystal blue eyes and enough seduction skills that even the most stubborn women couldn't resist. I had just turned 18 and instead of partying and drinking with my friends, I sat rotting in a rat-smelling cage called a trench.

From above my sweaty head the thick swaying blades of grass sang a comforting tune. Even though the atmosphere then was soothing, I was still trembling from the two years of horrific sights that had come before. I had made a few friends in the war but they were nothing compared to what I wanted most. My family.

We were nothing special. Our uniforms stank of blood, sweat and tears and our boots were filthy enough to cover France with a thick layer of mud. We were guinea pigs to the country's experiment. Nothing more than revitalised street scum fighting to the death in a war without end.

The hours that I sat waist deep in mud shaking flew by. Dawn was quicker than expected. For a week the Sergeant boasted that that day would be the day we snuck through the German defences but we all thought he was talking rubbish. With some hesitation all of us stood up and prepared to take orders from the angry sergeant.

After hearing his idea, I wanted to cry like a squirrel with its tail chopped off. We were to walk in full gear across no man's land and towards the enemy lines. My friend Gus, after hearing the news, sat back down. The Sergeant gave him a strange glare and calmly asked what the matter was. Gus cried that it was suicide. Everyone nodded their tired heads. The heartless Sergeant made it clear that we had no choice.

So as the birds began to sing and trees started shouting, we walked in a line towards the exit of the trench. Gus, who stood in front of me, pulled a small locket from his pocket. On it was a very attractive woman and two children who looked around 4 years old.

I looked down in shame. I had been complaining and crying for two long years now, but I had nothing to lose. I was disgusted with myself. I didn't deserve the self pity.

Commentary

This is a strong response.

The pupil has clearly engaged with the task and engaged with the image.

The pupil uses really advanced vocabulary choices – look in the first paragraph for examples of this.

The paragraphing is secure and adds to the meaning of the passage. To improve, this pupil could add one line paragraphs for something shocking or revealing.

The pupil is really descriptive in this passage. Look at the way he describes the weather, the grass, the surroundings, his uniform. It's all really evocative and is starting to link to the subject matter.

To improve, he could make this link much more explicit – reflect himself and his worn out character in his worn out uniform, for example.

There is no dialogue, but still there is a sense of character conveyed to the reader. The silence is really effective. Try not to overdo dialogue.

The description of the weather is really effective – look at how they are all sweating without it being warm. This is a great example of SHOW DON'T TELL.

Overall, this piece of work would get 17/20 (85%).

Take a look at the mark scheme to see where it would have earned marks.

	TDS W1 - IMAGINATION	TDS W2 - EFFECT	TDS W3 – Expression and Accuracy
Level 4 16-20 perceptive and detailed analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is compelling, incorporating a range of convincing and complex ideas Fluently linked paragraphs with seamlessly integrated discourse markers Communication is ambitious and consistently conveys precise meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register is convincing and compelling for audience Assuredly matched to purpose Extensive and ambitious vocabulary with sustained crafting of linguistic devices Register is convincingly matched to audience Convincingly matched to purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence demarcation is consistently secure and consistently accurate Wide range of punctuation is used with a high level of accuracy Uses a full range of appropriate sentence forms for effect Uses Standard English consistently and appropriately with secure control in tense and grammatical structures High level of accuracy in spelling, including ambitious vocabulary
Level 3 11-15 Clear, relevant explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is engaging, using a range of clear connected ideas Effective use of structural feature Communication shows some ambition and conveys precise meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register is consistently matched to audience Consistently matched to purpose Increasingly sophisticated vocabulary and phrasing chosen for effect with a range of successful linguistic devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence demarcation is mostly secure and mostly accurate Range of punctuation is used, mostly with success Uses a variety of sentence forms for effect Mostly uses Standard English appropriately with mostly controlled tenses and grammatical structures Generally accurate spelling, including complex and irregular words
Level 2 6-10 Some understanding and comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing variety of linked and relevant ideas Some use of structural features Communication is clear but limited in ambition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some sustained attempt to match register to audience Some sustained attempt to match purpose Conscious use of vocabulary with some use of linguistic devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence demarcation is mostly secure and sometimes accurate Some control of a range of punctuation Attempts a variety of sentence forms Some use of Standard English with some control of tenses and grammatical structures Some accurate spelling of more complex words
Level 1 1-5 Simple, limited comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of some relevant ideas Evidence of simple structural features Communication is limited but clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple awareness of register/audience Simple awareness of purpose Simple vocabulary; simple linguistic devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional use of sentence demarcation Some evidence of conscious punctuation Simple range of sentence forms Occasional use of Standard English with limited control of agreement of tenses and grammatical structures. Accurate basic spelling
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.	Nothing worthy of credit.



Wider Reading List

Other short stories

The Garden Party and other short stories Katherine Mansfield

The Bell Jar Sylvia Plath

The Ghost of Thomas Kempe Penelope Lively

Advice on creative writing

<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/writing-help/top-tips-for-creative-writing>

<http://www.writerstreasure.com/creative-writing-101/>

<https://www.writingforward.com/writing-tips/the-22-best-writing-tips-ever>