

Greater Depth Writing in KS2

2018-19

Standardisation

Exercise 1

Pupil C

The collection includes:

- A) a missing chapter
- B) an informal letter
- C) a formal letter
- D) a biography and associated newspaper report
- E) a story opening

All of the statements for 'working towards the expected standard', 'working at the expected standard' and 'working at greater depth' are met.

The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure).

Across the collection, writing is effectively adapted for varied purposes and audiences, selecting and maintaining the appropriate form throughout. The pupil's knowledge of language is evident, gained from close study of a class novel and wider reading of science fiction as well as non-fiction texts – from the chapter written in the style of Louis Sachar's novel 'Holes' to the futuristic science fiction opening and the carefully researched biography of Shakespeare.

The missing chapter skilfully captures the style of the original novel. Single-clause sentences and sentence 'fragments' (The hole was finally done. Finished. Slumping back...Mr Sir. With a gun. Was this a nightmare?), the use of the second person (If you don't want to die, you probably don't want to disturb) and the stream of consciousness technique (There it was, a pinprick in the distance) work together to recreate the quirky narrative. Occasional over-reliance on the source text (It was nothing to be proud of, but he felt proud nevertheless) does not detract from the success of the piece, which is firmly rooted in the pupil's understanding and appreciation of the novel.

Fronted clauses, typically introduced by -ing and -ed verbs (Heaving himself up, Stanley...Blinded, he fell back...Summoning up the last of his spit, he...Comforted by the fact that) engage the reader by withholding the subject, whilst literary language (A glowing full moon balanced precariously... liquid ice soothed his aching back, washing away the heat...Overpowering heat welcomed him) vividly evokes the scene.

The 2 letters, both written in role as Stanley, skilfully convey events through his viewpoint and draw on the style of the novel, whilst effectively addressing the differing purpose and audience of each. The personal letter to his mother aims to reassure her. By drawing on elements of life at Camp Green Lake, the pupil cleverly transforms each into an ironically positive experience that could not be further from the truth (I was worried I wouldn't sleep, but the bedding was so good I can't even remember getting into bed!). The letter of complaint to Children's Services adopts a more serious tone as befitting its audience (shocking state...disgusting conditions...appalling...terrible quality), juxtaposed with Stanley's understandable sense of outrage (...we are children. Children in the middle of their education...how can you possibly expect us...?).

The 2 linked pieces on Shakespeare draw on the writer's knowledge of biographical writing and reportage. The well-researched biography adopts a chronological approach, charting key events in Shakespeare's life, neatly framed by the concise introductory and concluding lines (This is the life of...This was the life of). As befitting a biography, factual details gleaned from research predominate, whilst the more speculative nature of the information (where the facts are less clear) is acknowledged (it is believed...There are theories that). The writer's voice is subtly present throughout (it was common for baptism...but unfortunately...which meant she...a complete mystery...a very wealthy man indeed), whereas the more overt commentary (is considered the greatest writer of the Elizabethan age...a vital part of England's history) conveys the writer's open admiration for their subject.

In the newspaper report, emerging details of the murder combine with eyewitness testimony and editorial comment. The reporter adopts a wary stance, conveying both respect for the murdered king (his Majesty...our great King) as well as diplomacy (Lord Macbeth...was the hero of that battle...is expecting to be crowned King) and guarded pragmatism (While we may mourn...we must move on...We must stay as one – as SCOTLAND!).

The story opening, in which the main character, Sonar, is depicted as a bored television buff who finds himself drawn – literally – into the TV set, is skilfully structured, with transitional moments conveyed with concision (into the extremely solid looking glass...“Arrghhh!!!” he shrieked, as he plunged into icy water...Why was he a girl?...A massive jolt woke Sonar). The subtle humour that pervades the piece (What on Earth – get it!...couldn't suppress a high-pitched giggle...after six snapped hairbands), the use of literary language (Streaks of rain raced down the glass...like a large machine powering down) and the well-placed clues that enable the reader to infer the situation ahead of the protagonist (Long silvery locks...Wet auburn curls...Something cold and slimy...cold goldfish-free water...eyelashes were coated in what seemed like tar...giant thingie on wheels) are all indicative of a writer sufficiently confident to draw on and adapt their chosen genre to engage the reader.

The pupil can distinguish between the language of speech and writing and choose the appropriate register.

Throughout the collection, the pupil consistently demonstrates the ability to distinguish between the language of speech and writing, choosing the appropriate register according to the context.

Features of language more resonant of speech are deliberately deployed to create an appropriate level of informality when appropriate – for example, to engage the reader in the missing chapter and the science fiction story. However, when writing for more formal contexts, an appropriately formal register is adopted, avoiding the language that might otherwise be used in speech.

The pupil makes a conscious choice to adopt an informal register in order to achieve their intended effects. The casual asides in the missing chapter (He would need to get on the road [well, desert]) and in the science fiction story (It's not like he had anything to do) imply an ironic third-person narrator, and the deliberate deployment of features of spoken language in Stanley's letter to his mother (it was SUPER dark, like literally, you will not believe it!...There's this thing called...Well – DUH...it was totally worth it) combines with the subtle humour (I have had like ZERO time to write...Hashtag-worst-holiday Ever) to successfully capture Stanley's speaking voice, creating the chatty, intimate and light-hearted tone required.

An appropriately formal register is adopted in the letter of complaint (I was sent here as a consequence of my mistake, as many boys are...we are not even permitted...This task might be manageable if it were not for) and in the two pieces on Shakespeare. The impersonal style of the biography is appropriate to its informative purpose (is considered the greatest writer of the Elizabethan age...Shakespeare and his writings are still widely studied...He is regarded as England's national playwright), whilst the relatively formal, measured stance of the reporter is successfully conveyed (His majesty had been staying...he had not thought it unusual...it is important to remember that).

The pupil can exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this.

Throughout the collection, levels of formality are consciously controlled according to context, audience and purpose. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are manipulated to convey differing levels of formality – from the chatty style of Stanley's letter home and the humorous science fiction narrative to the more formal pieces on Shakespeare.

The missing chapter successfully imitates the informal, quirky style of the original, with its sentence ‘fragments’ (A lizard. A Yellow Spotted Lizard.), brief transition to the second person (If you don’t want to die, you probably don’t want to disturb a Yellow Spotted Lizard) and apt choices of vocabulary (popped...chinks...spat).

The 2 letters, both written in role as Stanley, deploy differing levels of formality as befitting their quite different audiences. The personal letter consciously establishes and sustains a level of informality appropriate to Stanley’s character and situation. Imperatives (Wait until you hear... Please don’t worry...Tell Dad I said hi), second-person direct address (You know when the court guy says), contracted forms (‘cause I wanted...y’know...Please don’t worry ‘bout me), phrasal verbs (been up to...dried off...going on) and elliptical sentence ‘fragments’ (I have to go now – can hear the dinner bell!...I am FINE. Better than fine! Really, I am.) combine with carefully chosen vocabulary (the court guy...pretty painful...like literally...super fast...Ultra-cool) and vague language (this really nice girl...where the stuff was...There’s this thing called) to achieve an ‘upbeat’ tone, concealing the truth about Camp Green Lake from his parents.

A far greater level of formality is deployed in the letter of complaint through the use of passives (I was sent here...One of my room mates [...] was cut severely...we are not even permitted...we are expected to survive...measly amount of water we are given), the subjunctive (if it were not for) and precise vocabulary choices (consequence...endure...conditions...permitted...adapt...attending). Occasional emotive outbursts (we are children. Children in the middle of their education...how can you possibly expect us) add to the sense of Stanley’s outrage without detracting from the required formality of the piece.

The informative biography achieves a relatively impersonal style through extensive use of the passive voice (is considered the greatest writer...is best known for his plays...have been proven... were awarded a royal patent...work was published...are still widely studied...He is regarded), including the impersonal ‘it’ construction (It is believed that), whilst expanded noun phrases convey detail concisely (the only known record of his existence during this period...a group of successful writers and actors...the theatrical fashion of the day). Assured vocabulary choices (existence... prosecuted...premises...secular...temperate) and subtle authorial intrusion (but unfortunately...a very wealthy man indeed) contribute to the knowledgeable, authoritative tone of the piece.

The relatively formal, measured tone of the newspaper report is appropriate to the subject matter and the circumstances surrounding the murder. Verb forms, including the perfect, simple and progressive forms, are manipulated to convey the timeframe of events (had been staying...was the hero...and now is...There had been...happened...had indeed heard...had not thought it unusual...had not investigated further...is expecting to be crowned), whilst modal verbs (we may... we must...) and the impersonal ‘it’ construction (it is important to remember) provide a level of editorial caution. Vocabulary choices are apt (victory...host...banquet...bed chamber... occupants...disturbances...investigated).

The science fiction opening judiciously deploys informal vocabulary and grammatical constructions to create a highly assured and humorous narrative. The ironic stance of the narrator is captured through informal asides (It’s not like he had anything to do...his mother had decided blonde was too ‘common’...as it always did), whereas precise vocabulary choices secure the humour in the piece (shrugged indifferently...scrap of peanut butter...measly selection...going to face-plant).

The pupil can use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.

A range of punctuation is used correctly – for example:

commas to clarify meaning

o His muscles felt like bags of wet cement, and if someone told him he was to sleep here tonight, he would have accepted. [Piece A]

o Heaving with relief, he rolled over, panting, only to jump up in agony at the burning in his back. [Piece A]

o I was sent here as a consequence of my mistake, as many boys are. [Piece C]

o Rushing through the door in humiliation, he fled into a cramped cubicle, locking the door. [Piece E]

punctuation to indicate parenthesis

o ... to get on the road (well, desert)... [Piece A]

o There was this really nice girl escort – her name was Landy – she took me to my cabin... [Piece B]

o Shame, really, ‘cause I wanted to go everywhere! [Piece B]

o ... measly amount of water we are given (previously stated above). [Piece C]

o His host, the Lord Macbeth of Glamis and Cawdor, was the hero of... [Piece D]

o “But I, uh,” stammered Sonar, blinking in confusion, “oh, yeah, of course.” [Piece E]

colons, semi-colons and dashes to mark the boundary between independent clauses

o His arms were too weak from countless hours of digging; his legs were too tired to support his heavy weight. [Piece A]

o He could tell because his dirt pile had a really peculiar shape; it had a spooky resemblance to Mr Sir... [Piece A]

o I’m surprised at how quickly everybody got up – I was hardly awake! [Piece B]

o It was safer than I thought – we were all tied into rope harnesses with metal hooks. [Piece B]

o However, this task is so pointless: would it not be better... including us? [Piece C]

o The next known record of Shakespeare is when he was already a playwright in London: he received several negative reviews... [Piece D]

o ... the Globe was built, with Shakespeare owning 12.5% of it – he became a very wealthy man indeed. [Piece D]

o It didn’t last long – a beam of red laser shot out... [Piece E]

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o It was like the whole object that they had been travelling in had shut down; there was a soft whirring noise... [Piece E]

colons to introduce a list and semi-colons within lists

o There’s every thing imaginable: cereals of every kind; the cutest cakes; a full fried breakfast range and the best fruits. [Piece B]

hyphens to avoid ambiguity

o ... algae-filled slime ponds... [Piece B]

o ... the 16-year-old maid... [Piece D]

o ... cold, goldfish-free water... [Piece E]

o ... a hot-pink brush... [Piece E]

When necessary, punctuation is used precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity. For example, commas are used to avoid miscues (Stanley looked around, eyes squinting for the orange glow...There it was, a pinprick in the distance...More stars than he had ever seen, sprinkled across the sky...Mesmerised, Stanley walked on) and to mark nouns in apposition (Annys, the 16-year-old maid). Commas, colons, semi-colons and dashes are used confidently, often working in tandem to control ambitious, multi-clause sentences (The infamous yellow spotted lizard is extremely common: while I realise the counsellors cannot possibly take these animals away from their natural habitat, they could at least provide us with...It didn’t last long – a beam of red laser shot out of the signal indicator, scanning the room while buzzing continuously).

The use of a semi-colon is particularly well chosen in the missing chapter, where it is used to balance two linked, independent clauses for literary effect (His arms were too weak from countless hours of digging; his legs were too tired to support his heavy weight).

Piece A: a missing chapter

Context: having explored the first few chapters of *Holes* (Louis Sachar), pupils were asked to expand chapter 7 to provide a detailed account, capturing the moment when Stanley completed his first hole, through to his arrival back at Camp Green Lake.

Chapter 7½

The missing chapter

The hole was finally done. Finished. Slumping back into the measly shade his hole provided him, Stanley closed his eyes and fought to keep awake. He stayed like this for some minutes, ignoring the beads of sweat racing down his forehead. His muscles felt like bags of wet cement, and if someone told him he was to sleep here tonight, he would have accepted. But that wasn't an option. He would need to get on the road (well, desert) if he wanted to get back before midnight.

Heaving himself up, Stanley made his first attempt of lifting himself out. It was not even worth the try. His arms were too weak from countless hours of digging; his legs were too tired to support his heavy weight. He scabbled helplessly at the edge of his hole, coughing at the clouds of dust that arose from around him. Blinded, he fell back, only to land ^{ing} painfully on his shovel. The shovel. A new idea popped into Stanley's head: a climbing wall. He cut two chinks of dirt out of the side of his hole - footholds footholes. Slipping his feet into the gaps, he was able to climb out with some desperate effort. Heaving with relief, he rolled over, panting, only to jump up in agony at the burning in his back. Summoning. He turned round to look at his hole. It was nothing to be proud of, but he felt proud nevertheless. Summoning up there last of his spit, he spat into his hole.

Half an hour had passed, but Stanley could still see his hole in the far distance. He could tell because his dirt pile had a really peculiar shape; it had a spooky resemblance to MR Sir holding a gun. Weird.

The sky was rapidly darkening, changing from blossom-pink to crimson to a deep indigo. Stanley looked around, eyes squinting for the orange glow of the camp. There it was, a pinprick in the distance. Comforted by the fact that he had been going the right way all along, Stanley picked up his shovel and walked towards the light, rather like a moth flying towards a candle. For the first time, ^{he} looked up and he was shocked.

(Sparkling silver stars were) Stars. More stars than he had ever seen, sprinkled across the sky like sparkling silver glitter. A glowing full moon balanced precariously on the tip of an azure mountain. Mesmerised, Stanley walked on, unable to tear his eyes off the never-ending blue.

He had already reached camp. It was ~~the~~ ^{the} line the stars had led him here themselves. Relieved, he trudged towards the shower and started unbuttoning his shirt.

Gingerly, Stanley stepped into the shower. He had kept his shoes on. The corners were encrusted with dirt and mould. The shower head was brown ~~with~~ ^{with} rust, and it was dangling on by a sliver of rope. After a few desperate pangs of frustration and (effort), an unsteady trickle of water was released.

It was Heaven. The liquid ice soothed his aching back, washing away the heat. Though he did not use soap, he stood under the water for a full 5 minutes. Finally, realising he would miss right - register if he did not leave now, he unwillingly stepped out. Overpowering heat welcomed him almost immediately. It was unbelievable.

'Don't move' snarled a voice from behind. He froze. With his hands in the air, he turned round. Mr Sir. With a gun. Was this a nightmare? Pinching himself, hard, he realised this was real. Very real. At once, he blamed his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather. He always did.

Bang.

Stanley wondered if he was in Heaven. To his surprise, it looked a lot like Camp. It took some seconds for him to realise he wasn't dead. How could Mr Sir have missed?

A threatening hiss made him turn around. A lizard. A Yellow Spotted Lizard. Every muscle in Stanley's little body was screaming at him to run. To run for his life. It just took his brain longer to react.

If you don't want to die, you probably don't want to disturb a Yellow Spotted lizard. Shooting at one is a good way to disturb it. Showing off his startlingly white teeth, it jumped off the wall and charged. Scared or not, Stanley needed to run. Bang!

Piece B: an informal letter

Context: as part of a guided reading activity, pupils discussed how Stanley might embellish his stay at Camp Green Lake to hide the truth from his mother. Pupils then wrote a letter in role as Stanley, with the remit of reassuring his mother that all was well.

- Gorgeous lake
- 150 ft fabric slide

Flat 218A Dowlake Close
California
Los Angeles
CA70914

Camp Green Lake
Texas
21.7.2005

Hi Mum!

First of all, I am really very sorry that I have -n't written; there has been so much going on, I have had like ZERO time to write. You know when the court guy says places don't last? I can see why now! Wait until you hear what I've been up to!

The nine hour journey was pretty painful. Thank goodness lunch was provided! When we arrived it was SUPER dark, like literally, you will not believe it! There was this really nice girl escort - her name was Landy - she took me to my cabin straight away. (Shame, really, 'cause I wanted to go everywhere!) I was worried I would -n't sleep, but the bedding was so good I can't even remember getting into bed!

I woke up to the sun pouring in the window much nicer than ~~too~~ dad screaming at me! I'm surprised at how quickly everybody got up - I was hardly awake! I've already made a friend - he's called Michael. He showed me where the stuff was. Everyone is provided with clean

stuff towels, a toothbrush set and a pair of bedroom slippers. It was great. After we got ready, we headed down to the dining room. Breakfast, Mum, is AMAZING. There's every thing imaginable - cereals of every kind; the cutest cakes; a full fried breakfast range and the best fruits. There's this thing called Dragon fruit, and it's sooo good. I could eat 10 a day! After, we went on a tour of the camp. I call it a 'tour' but wait until you hear.

First stop: the lake! It wasn't just any lake - y'know, the murky, algae-filled slime ponds? This lake is clearer than the ~~slime~~ ^{drinking} water (maybe). And it's SO BIG!!! When you get there it's just a blue sparkling ~~rubb~~ ripple after another...

That's not it tho - the activities are even better; there's a 150ft fabric slide that shoots you out into the lake. I went on it twice - it was just so much fun! When I learn to swim I can start sailing lessons. I just can't wait. When we'd dried off with the fluffiest blue towels, we carried on deeper into the forest.

I thought the forest would be dark and shadowy like that time we went hiking with Dad. Remember? Hashtag-worst-holiday Ever. It's not like this here though. The sun is so hot it just burns right through the leaves. We were walking for a really long time, so I thought it was just a super boring nature walk. But when we got there - WOW.

Wooden platforms, 10 metres above ground, with the most am. fantastic - thrilling - exciting obstacle courses in between. It was safer than I thought - we were all tied into rope harnesses with metal hooks. The instructor - Mr Cawdan - or more commonly known as 'Strict Scream' gave us a ten-minute lecture on how we were never allowed to ever unhook our clips. Well - DUH.

But when we finally got up there, it was totally worth it. One of my favourite courses was the 'Tightrope'. It was ~~basically~~ basically one single rope which you had to walk across. Obviously we were all secure with our harnesses and everything - but still! I was SO scared!!! But the ~~reprise~~ ^{reprise} was the best. You jumped, and then you shoot down super fast. Ultra-cool!!!

I have to go now - can hear the dinner bell! Please don't worry 'bout me - I am FINE. Better than fine! Really, I am. Seriously, I can't believe this is a prison alternative! Tell Dad I said hi (and that I love him)! How is the 'sneaker recycle' project going on?

Love you, Mum,

Stanley

xxx

Piece C: a formal letter

Context: as part of a whole-class study of *Holes* (Louis Sachar), pupils revisited the language of formal writing before composing a typed letter to the Children's Services in role as Stanley, to complain about the conditions at Camp Green Lake.

Children's Services

Los Angeles

California

G60R 4Y6

Camp Green Lake

Texas

K93H 44J

Thursday 23rd May 2005

To whom this may concern,

I am writing to inform you and complain about the shocking state of Camp Green Lake. I was sent here as a consequence of my mistake, as many boys are. But I am sure that I am not the first to realise the disgusting conditions here. We are sent here for our sentence which I am happy to endure. However, I am not willing to accept such conditions.

First, let me highlight the dangers and the wilderness here. The infamous yellow spotted lizard is extremely common: while I realise the counsellors cannot possibly take these animals away from their natural habitat, they could at least provide us with information / lessons so we can protect ourselves if we ever have to face one.

Another concern is the medical service provided here. Not even a band-aid is available, let alone a first-aid kit. The staff have neither the knowledge or the patience to attend to our needs. One of my room mates (unnamed) was cut severely the other day, and all the staff could do was give him a mere piece of ragged cloth to clean up the wound. This is appalling.

Something else I am concerned about is the terrible quality of the food. If you had to wake up at four o'clock every morning, I expect you would at least want a hot breakfast. But here at Camp Green Lake there is nothing except watery gruel and yesterday's bread for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The water is foul and often has a sickly green tinge to it. What is more, we are not even permitted to have more than a pitiful litre a day. The temperature is well over 40 Celsius from ten in the morning to late at night, and we are expected to survive on this whilst digging, often all day.

I expect you have heard of the unusual task prisoners here have to perform. Each and every boy has to dig a hole in the baking sun: five feet wide and five feet deep. This task might be manageable if it were not for the measly amount of water we are given (previously stated above). However, this task is so pointless: would it not be better for us to serve our time by performing tasks around the camp that could benefit everyone, including us? How can we adapt back to society if all we have been doing is digging holes for a year and a half? Another thing to remember is that we are children. Children in the middle of their education. Of course, we will be attending school after we have served our sentence, but how can you possibly expect us to continue our education after we have missed so much?

I hope that you will take the time to read and address the points I have made in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Stanley Yelnats

Piece D: a biography and associated newspaper report

Context: as part of a project on Shakespeare, pupils carried out their own independent research, noting key facts and points of interest about the playwright's life, which they incorporated into the writing of a biography. They then drew on their prior knowledge of the features of a newspaper report to write an article based on *Macbeth*, which they had explored through class discussion and drama.

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare is considered the greatest writer of the Elizabethan age. Although he is best known for his plays, he has also written over 100 sonnets and numerous poems. Shakespeare is also responsible for introducing many new phrases into the English language.

This is the life of William Shakespeare.

EARLY LIFE

Shakespeare's exact date of birth is unknown, but since there is a record of his christening, being on the 26th of April 1564, it is believed he was born on the 23rd (it was common for baptism to take place three days after birth). He was born to Catholic parents, John and Mary Shakespeare, on Henley Street, Stratford-upon-Avon. Shakespeare was the third of eight children, but unfortunately the eldest two died. His father was a leather merchant, who later became a bailiff: a high position in the council. His mother was a local-landed heiress, which meant she was born to a wealthy family.

EDUCATION

It is likely that Shakespeare attended school at the age of six or seven until the age of about fifteen, probably at King Edward VI School. He had a free education as his father was a bailiff, while most others had to pay. There he studied Greek, Latin and Religious Education, which helped him greatly when he was writing his works. There is no record of him attending university.

INTO ADULTHOOD

At the early age of eighteen, Shakespeare married Ann Hathaway on 27th November 1582. They had three children: Susannah, followed by twins, Judith and Hamnet (sadly Hamnet died at the age of eleven). Shakespeare later went to London to work in the emerging theatres. Strangely, the next seven years of his life are a complete mystery, with the baptism of his three children being the only known record of his existence during this period. There are theories that he escaped to London to avoid being prosecuted for deer poaching, and also of him being an apprentice butcher, a lawyer's clerk and a teacher. However, none of these rumours have been proven.

HIS PLAYWRITING DAYS

The next known record of Shakespeare is when he was already a playwright in London: he received several negative reviews, such as that from the playwright Robert Greene who called him an 'upstart crow'.

As Shakespeare grew more experienced, his works began to gain in popularity, especially amongst royalty. Queen Elizabeth 1 favoured his plays as they made her uncle, Henry VI, look important. In 1599, Shakespeare became part of the 'Lord Chamberlain's men', a group of successful writers and actors. The same year, the Globe was built, with Shakespeare owning 12.5% of it – he became a very wealthy man indeed. Now that he had money, it was time to spend it. Shakespeare bought the second largest house in Stratford for his family, numerous properties in London, 107 acres of farmland and a cottage. Later, he also bought premises in London to let.

A CHANGE OF NAME

When Queen Elizabeth I died, Shakespeare and his company (The Lord Chamberlain's Men) were awarded a royal patent by King James I, originally King James VI of Scotland; the company soon became known as 'The King's Men'. Shakespeare's work shifted dramatically, from the previous religious tone to the secular entertainment for the public.

DEATH AND LEGACY

It is believed that 'Two Noble King's Men' was one of the last plays Shakespeare ever wrote. His final plays were graver in tone, and ended with forgiveness, not tragedy. This could have been the theatrical fashion of the day, but many people believe it reflected Shakespeare's more temperate view of life as he aged. He died on the 23rd April, 1616, on his fifty-second birthday: the cause of his death is unknown, but just a month previously his doctor reported him to be perfectly healthy.

Seven years after his death, a collection of Shakespeare's work was published – the most complete version so far. It included plays no-one had ever seen before. Created by friends, John Heminge and Henry Condell, many think Shakespeare would not have become such a legend if it was not for this work.

Nearly five-hundred years later, Shakespeare and his writings are still widely studied. He is regarded as England's national playwright: a vital part of England's history as well as its language.

This was the life of William Shakespeare.

- SCOTLAND NEWS -

THE MURDER OF THE KING!!!

Yesterday, on the 27th of April 1043, the King of Scotland was killed⁺ by a mysterious murderer.



The late King Duncan of Scotland.

His majesty had been staying at Glamis castle, as a result of the another victory: the battle against the Norwegian Army.

His host, the Lord Macbeth of Glamis and Cawdor, was the hero of that battle and now is one of the King's closest friends...

There had been a magnificent banquet in the evening, where the King dined with many noblemen. He then retired to his guarded bed chamber to rest.

The actual murder happened at around midnight. His body was not discovered until morning when Annys, the 16-year-old maid, came to serve his Majesty his breakfast.

"It was a gruesome murder scene. At first I just thought he was asleep, but then I noticed that the bedsheets had turned crimson. Pulling off the covers, I revealed a stab wound in the stomach. He was cold all over and his eyes were blank with horror..." Annys

described, weeping with
fright.

Of course, there had
been many other
occupants in the castle.

Nobleman Lennox said
that he had indeed
heard some disturban-
ces during that time,
but since he had not
thought it unusual,
he had not investigated
further into the matter.

While we may mourn
for our great King,
it is important to
remember that we
must move on. Lord
Macbeth is expecting
to be crowned King
in the coming days.
We must stay as
one - as SCOTLAND!

Piece E: a story opening

Context: pupils explored a number of openings to science fiction novels, before planning and typing their own opening for a science fiction story that would appeal to year 6 pupils.

Meet Dave

Streaks of rain raced down the glass, forming a pool along the edge of the window. Sonar shrugged indifferently, not caring about the damp, grey atmosphere. It's not like he had anything to do.

Walking into the kitchen, he nibbled at a stale ginger biscuit, looking for sandwich ingredients. He eventually found a scrap of peanut butter at the back of a cupboard. Then realising he had no bread, he resolved to dry, plain ricecakes. His mother never seemed to have time to buy food. She was either sleeping, in the shower, or just 'out'. Sighing, he trudged back into the living room, shook the remote control and turned on the TV. Staring at the measly selection of videos, he scrolled up and down, trying to decide which one he had watched less than ten times. Tired and frustrated, he flicked his silvery hair back (his mother had decided blonde was too 'common' for her son so she had dyed it) and closed his eyes. When he finally opened them again, he was shocked to see a new title flashing on the screen: 'Meet Dave'.

Blinking curiously, Sonar clicked onto the film. The loading circle appeared (as it always did), but he was astonished when an 'error' sign appeared. He clicked OK...flashes of blue lightning crackled ominously; it was like it had penetrated the screen, reaching out towards him... Sonar backed into the sofa, his grey eyes reflected the blue from the light.

As the lightning died, he heaved a sigh of relief. It didn't last long – a beam of red laser shot out of the signal indicator, scanning the room while buzzing continuously. It was like the film had taken on the device. He felt a strong pull, so strong he could feel himself slipping off the sofa. Before he had realised it, he was no longer making contact with, well, anything. He was floating in midair. It was like a giant invisible bubble held him high in the air. His grey eyes were wide with fear and bewilderment. Long silvery locks hung in every direction; his mouth open in a silent shriek. The bubble, containing Sonar, gathered speed and approached the black screen of the television. Terrified he was going to face-plant into the extremely solid looking glass...

"Arrghhh!!!" he shrieked, as he plunged into icy water. Something cold and slimy touched his forehead, then his left cheek. Disconcerted, he pulled his face out and in the process, fell back with a thump. Wet auburn curls dripped miserably down onto an olive-green uniform.

"Number Three. What on EARTH do you think you are doing?" growled a dark-skinned man in a similar uniform. A few people chuckled appreciatively, murmuring, "What on Earth – get it!"

A dark flush crept over Sonar, turning him into a human plum. Clambering up, he rushed towards a door with the familiar male bathroom sign.

"Uh, number Three? The female bathroom is over there," the man called out, pointing towards the opposite door.

"But I, uh," stammered Sonar, blinking in confusion, "oh, yeah, of course."

Rushing through the door in humiliation, he fled into a cramped cubicle, locking the door. Panting, he took a few seconds to recover...

"Aaahhh!!!" he screamed, rushing out of the toilet in a frenzy. "I'm a girl!" he finished, eyes wide with horror. For the first time, Sonar took in his appearance. His damp hair had grown down to his waist and been curled in the process. He had lost 4 inches of height and gained 5kg of weight. His eyelashes were coated in what seemed like tar. Is this what being a girl feels like, wondered Sonar? He stared in fascination at his new body, not apprehending the fact everybody was staring at him, or rather, now, her.

"Number Three, this is not acceptable!" shouted the man once more. "I'm very sorry I should be saying this, but as a captain I really must. "Sort yourself out and place your foolish body on the Naughty Step!" Hearing the last phrase, Sonar felt an urge to laugh uncontrollable. The Naughty Step! The angry face directed at him quenched this urge slightly, but he couldn't suppress a high-pitched giggle.

The corridors were straight and everything, to Sonar's relief, was very helpfully labelled. After many more awkward questions and peculiar stares, he was directed to a small, neat cabin. Splashing his face with cold goldfish-free water from a silver tap, he picked up a hot-pink brush and made an attempt to put his hair into a ponytail. Eventually, after six snapped hairbands and orange lace all over the floor, he had to give up. Growling in anger, he sat on the plastic mattress and started to think: where was he? Why was he here? How did he get here? Why was he a girl?

A massive jolt woke Sonar up from his daydream. He was thrown across the room, crashing painfully into the cold stone floor. An ear-blasting siren erupted, echoing through many corridors. A booming voice which Sonar recognised as the captain's accompanied the wail, directing all crew to the main hall. Cautiously, Sonar pushed open the door a crack, to see people rushing down, face serious. Joining them, he tried to catch the murmured conversations of the crowds.

"Some sort of crash, one of those giant thingie on wheels," muttered a woman with long blonde hair in a ponytail.

"I hear we're out of power, and the right foot's twisted," replied another, a man with short dark hair.

As if on cue, the bright white lights flickered, before blacking out completely. It was like the whole object that they had been travelling in had shut down; there was a soft whirring noise like a large machine powering down...

Exercise 2

Pupil A

This collection includes:

- A) a Greek myth
- B) a letter of complaint
- C) a balanced argument
- D) a fable
- E) a blog

All of the statements for 'working towards the expected standard', 'working at the expected standard', and 'working at greater depth within the expected standard' are met.

The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure).

Across the collection, writing is effectively tailored for a variety of purposes and audiences, selecting, maintaining and adapting both form and authorial voice throughout. The pupil's knowledge of language, gained from wide reading of fiction and non-fiction texts, is evident – from the formal balanced argument to the skilful adaptations of a Greek myth and a fable.

'The Story of Thesos' draws on the structure and language of a Greek myth to create an original and humorous cautionary tale, cleverly melding the knowing wisdom of the authorial voice (it was always considered wise to... he would be careful not to forget the 'almost'... well, it could be fatal... it often happens that) with the smug arrogance of Thesos (I am just so remarkably skilled... still as smug as ever) and the weary resignation of his father (His father sighed. He had heard all of this before).

Literary language (Towering statues looked over all that lived there... fat-fingered fumbler), patterning (quick-tempered with his father, rude to his servants and unfriendly to his fellow citizens... Ares had been confident, proud, careless) and grammatical choices (In stepped a shrivelled-up hag... Gone was the tattered travelling cloak... In their place stood a tall, muscular man) contribute to the overall success of the piece.

Well placed clues, including the early reference to the statue of Ares "wielding his fatal blade", the unannounced arrival of the "shrivelled-up hag", and Ares' realisation of his "own empty hand", engage the reader, requiring the implied meaning to be inferred and foreshadowing the events that follow. The ending is skilfully handled, from the anticipation (Something was wrong... The crowd fled) to the startling outcome. Whilst it is inevitable that Thesos will be punished for his arrogance, his apt transformation into a sword, withheld until the final sentence, still has the power to shock.

Although 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets' provides the stimulus for the letter, the writer draws not only on their reading of this novel, but also on their reading of formal letters to lodge an official complaint about Harry. By choosing to write in role as the Basilisk, the writer is able to make oblique references (Hissssss translation... dim-witted half-giant, Reubeus Hagrid... a non-explanatory grudge against He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named) that are likely to appeal to those familiar with the novel. These cleverly reveal the overbearing and duplicitous nature of the giant snake through a combination of flattery (Being the great and wise man you are) and assertion (It is an atrocious thing to harbour grudges... you will agree that this is a terrible act) in a cynical attempt to have Harry expelled from Hogwarts. Furthermore, the use of 'it' as the subject of a clause (it is my duty to inform you... It is an atrocious thing to harbour grudges) has the effect of slightly distancing the writer from the views expressed, making the Basilisk's assertions seem more plausible than they actually are.

In the balanced argument, the writer deals with a potentially emotive topic in an authoritative and objective manner. By providing detailed information about the impact of deforestation, the writer leaves the reader in no doubt about the seriousness of the issue. Despite acknowledging the counter argument (an opportunity to earn money and make a living... they have no choice) and the tentativeness of some of the facts (It is estimated that... perhaps the most detrimental of them being... may lose... could crush), the writer deftly secures their case (However, most people believe that [...] is the right thing to do).

The fable draws on the pupil's reading of Kipling's 'Just So' stories to create a new tale about the koala's shout. Language choices evoke a convincing narrative voice (In the beginning... indeed, he had developed... oh Best Beloved), whilst literary language (the unfortunate rocks... tail swishing like a turbine) and repetitive patterning (On Tuesday... and shouted... And the koala said) contribute to the authentic style of the piece. The apparent simplicity of the tale belies its sophistication – the modal 'would', used extensively at the start of the piece (would sit... would look up... would remain silent), is reinforced by the past progressive (was sitting... was sleeping) and simple present (I am... you are) to suggest the koala's habitual behaviour, whilst the perfect form (had developed... has been... has [...] not made up for) suggests the changed state of affairs at the end.

The blog, based on the writer's interpretation of Neverland, skilfully relocates the narrative to the world of online computer games, with Peter and the lost children engaged in a deadly fight against a world populated by robots. The form of the blog provides the vehicle for the narrator to tell his story, artfully interweaving the world of online computer gaming and screen chat with a hi-tech version of Neverland to create a highly original narrative.

The narrator addresses the blog directly, almost as an old friend, drawing on shared experiences (Hello blog... I haven't seen you in a while... You know, where you start off with), and seeming to blog as the events unfold around him, creating pace and immediacy (I would tell you, but it seems as if we're evacuating... I have to go now). The piece is neatly structured, with the writer's opening explanation for having neglected his blog, and the final reference to "that Anonymous guy" who set in motion the whole train of events. Clause structures are varied, combining sentence fragments (All of the game data erased) with single and multi-clause sentences, sometimes introduced by a co-ordinating conjunction to suggest the narrator's train of thought (And I was only about 2,000 XP away from getting to level 78!). Combined with the subtle humour ("OT OS AAT!" I yelled [translation: WHAT WAS THAT!])... It's strange, fighting a robot. They're a lot smarter than you think... I'm really starting to hate that Anonymous guy), the piece is indicative of a writer sufficiently assured to draw on and adapt their chosen genre to engage the reader.

The pupil can distinguish between the language of speech and writing and choose the appropriate register.

Throughout the collection, the pupil consistently demonstrates the ability to distinguish between the language of speech and writing, choosing the appropriate register according to context. Features of language more resonant of speech are deliberately deployed to create a level of informality when necessary – for example, to recreate the quirky, conversational style in the blog. However, when writing for more formal contexts, an appropriately formal register is adopted, avoiding the language that might otherwise be used in speech.

The writer consciously adopts a highly informal register in the blog, in keeping with its context. Language resonant of speech recreates the narrator's casual, chatty style when addressing his blog as a familiar old friend (Okay, let me explain. You know all those books and movies about... You know, where you start off with). Vague language (dream of this stuff... this sort of landing pad... evacuating or something) and the humorous replication of his distorted speech (EY! OT OO OO IN' OOR OOIN!) add to the authenticity of the piece, whilst abbreviated forms and colloquial language (gotta... newbies... 'round here... 'cos... nick... 'em... Nah, it's fine) encapsulate the distinctive voice of the "new Peter Pan".

In contrast, the impersonal and objective tone adopted in the balanced argument is indicative of the highly formal register required (It is estimated that... experts predict that... perhaps the most detrimental of them being... After much consideration). Vocabulary choices are precise (deforestation... demolished... economically developed... hazard... detrimental), as befitting the audience, form and purpose of the writing as well as its more serious subject matter.

The Greek myth and the fable both adopt a semi-formal register, contributing to the somewhat antiquated feel of the writing (it was always considered wise... The crowd was silenced as thunder clapped overhead... The koala was errant and idle... Why must you have created such an idle burden and placed it within our midst?). The voices of the characters, conveyed through dialogue, are similarly formal (Thesos, my boy... You have challenged me. Soon you may regret it... why must you remain silent?), helping to evoke the mythical setting of the stories.

An appropriately formal register is adopted in the letter of complaint about Harry Potter, written from the perspective of the Basilisk (a matter of utmost importance... my duty to inform you... which is strictly forbidden... Undoubtedly this is unacceptable behaviour). Occasional lapses into a slightly less formal register (the dim-witted half-giant... the great oaf... an arrogant, lying rule-breaker) are entirely appropriate as the ingratiating Basilisk's mask slips and his true nature is revealed.

The pupil can exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this.

Throughout the collection, levels of formality are consciously controlled according to context, audience and purpose. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are manipulated to convey differing levels of formality – from the highly formal argument on deforestation to the conversational style of the blog and the somewhat archaic formality of the myth and the fable. In 'The Story of Thesos', the writer makes assured choices of both grammar and vocabulary. The impersonal 'it' construction, incorporating the passive voice (it was always considered wise), and the deliberate choice of modal verbs (you may regret it... Nobody could say... you shall learn why), sometimes in conjunction with the personal pronoun 'one' (One might go as far as... Should one grow arrogant enough to), combine with apt vocabulary choices (undid him... deadly foe... old crone... Take heed... ask his pardon... befall) to successfully capture the semi-formal style of a Greek myth.

A semi-formal style is similarly adopted in the fable through the avoidance of contracted verb forms (He would sit... I am silent... he had developed) and the deliberate repetition of modal verbs (the koala would answer... why must you...?). The writer's conscious and assured use of syntax combines with judicious choices of vocabulary (errant and idle... oh Best Beloved... idle burden... within our midst... heard their pleas), including the use of 'for' as a conjunction (for this was not their working time), to successfully recreate the solemn and slightly antiquated style of the original Kipling stories.

The letter to Professor Dumbledore deploys a level of formality befitting the character of the deceitful Basilisk in an attempt to dupe Dumbledore into expelling Harry from Hogwarts. The somewhat pompous tone is achieved through assured vocabulary choices (a matter of utmost importance... my duty to inform you... restricted section... strictly forbidden... Undoubtedly... unacceptable behaviour) and manipulation of grammar, including agentless passives (he has been caught many times... he has been seen in... should be expelled from) and the considered use of modal verbs (you will expel... this may lead... you will agree... should be expelled). The balanced argument adopts and maintains a highly formal style appropriate to its audience, purpose and subject matter. An authoritative tone is achieved through precise and often subject-specific vocabulary (deforestation... rainforest... economically developed... citizens... hazard... detrimental... arboreal... ground-dwelling), whilst more informal choices (a patch of rainforest... a chunk of rainforest) invite the reader to draw familiar analogies (60 full-sized football pitches... the size of Switzerland). Agentless passives (is being demolished... it has been deemed that... should be reduced), including an impersonal 'it' construction (It is estimated that), support the writer's seemingly objective stance by attributing no blame. Expanded noun phrases (One of the most debated and problematic issues of this century, deforestation... the less economically developed countries... a number of disastrous consequences) and precise use of nouns (opportunity... consequences... contribution... consideration... destruction) add weight and gravitas to the writing.

In contrast, the blog deliberately deploys informal vocabulary and grammatical constructions to create a highly assured and original narrative. A conversational style is established through the use of second-person direct address (I haven't seen you in a while... You get the idea), casual asides (my face hurt for a while after that... I play Battle Mechs too much), elliptical sentence fragments (Or at least not anymore... Again, no sign of Emma or Peter) and use of co-ordinating conjunctions to start a sentence (And I was only about... But this is the first time). Peter's distinctive voice is captured through the use of abbreviated forms (gotta... 'round here... give 'em) and colloquial vocabulary (newbies... nick) in contrast with Emma's slightly more formal manner (Which he is not... Stay with me and get ready to shoot at any moment).

The pupil can use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.

A range of punctuation is used correctly – for example:

- o commas to clarify meaning
- o His wrinkly skin hung in bags, his sunken eyes barely visible underneath a tarnished red hood. [A]
- o In addition to this, he has been seen in the restricted section of the library, simply for his own gain. [B]
- o As trees take in carbon dioxide and give out oxygen, less gas can be taken in and less oxygen is being given. [C]
- o On Tuesday, the alligator crawled up to the koala, his tail swishing like a turbine, and shouted... [D]
- o Before I had time to register this, he ran in front of me and smacked a blue chip down on the floor, and a circular, translucent blue wall popped up... [E]
- o punctuation to indicate parenthesis
- o Then, without warning, the crowd erupted in to cheers. [A]
- o Being the great and wise man you are, after reading these numerous reasons, you will expel Harry Potter... [B]
- o Animals that are arboreal (live in trees)... [C]
- o It slowly floated towards the koala, who was sleeping on his treetop perch, and landed on... [D]
- o "We managed to nick some of these [...] over there" – he pointed to a building next to the big signal tower thing – "and Luke here worked [...] some upgrades." [E]
- o ... and a plasma gun shot out (I play Battle Mechs too much). [E]
- o The light, however, should pass straight through you... [E]
- o colons, semi-colons and dashes to mark the boundary between independent clauses
- o "Everyone is jealous of me but I understand why; I am just so remarkably skilled." [A]
- o He was the best in the land; his claims to be as good as the war god were true. [A]
- o ... or that the effects must be contradicted by planting more trees: some people still believe though... [C]
- o ... and that they do not cut down the trees on purpose – they have no choice. [C]
- o Surrounding me was just like that Anonymous guy said: it was nothing like home. [E]
- o The wall around us flickered and disappeared [...] shook the ground; before we knew it, we were surrounded by robots. [E]
- o hyphens to avoid ambiguity
- o ... fat-fingered fumbler... [A]
- o ... dim-witted half-giant... [B]
- o ... ground-dwelling... [C]
- o ... midnight-blue sky... [D]

o ... an out-of-control craft... [E]

When necessary, punctuation is used precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity. For example, commas are used to avoid miscues (Being the great and wise man you are, after reading these numerous reasons), to indicate where relative clauses provide additional, non-essential information (hopped up to the koala, who was sitting in his treetop perch, and cried) and to mark nouns in apposition (Ares, God of War... one of your fellow teachers, Professor Quirrel... One of the most debated and problematic issues of this century, deforestation). Commas are also used precisely to slow the pace of the writing for stylistic effect (I am silent, and you are all silent to me).

Commas are used confidently to manage ambitious, multi-clause sentences (Near where Thesos lived was a colossal amphitheatre, where all the gladiator fights would take place and there, in the centre, stood a glistening, bronze idol of Ares, God of War, wielding his fatal blade... And, as if this was not enough, when the dim-witted half-giant, Reubeus Hagrid, bought a dragon egg, which is strictly forbidden, Harry helped the great oaf to keep the dragon a secret until it was ready to be taken away... It is estimated that, per minute, a patch of rainforest equivalent to that of 60 full-sized football pitches or, in other words, a chunk of rainforest the size of Switzerland is being demolished every year, and experts predict that, in 30-50 years time, all rainforests will be gone).

The use of a semi-colon is particularly well chosen in the Greek myth, where it is used effectively to balance 2 linked independent clauses (He was the best in the land; his claims to be as good as the war god were true).

Piece A: a Greek myth

Context: as part of a topic on Ancient Greece, the class read a variety of different Greek myths. They were then given the opportunity to write a myth using their own choice of god. The pupil chose to start their myth with a warning.

The Story of Thesos

In Ancient Greece, it was always considered wise to thank the Gods for a skill you may possess. One might go as far as comparing someone with the Gods. "He sings almost as beautifully as Apollo," one might say, but he would be careful not to forget the 'almost' for the gods were revered. Should one grow arrogant enough to say you were as good, or better, than the Gods...well, it could be fatal.

This is the story of a boy who goes by the name of Thesos. He was born the son of a rich merchant and had all the luxuries he could ever ask for. He lived in the beautiful city of Athens, where the cobbled streets would be filled with bustling crowds in bright stalls selling rich herbs and spices. Towering statues looked over all that lived there. Near where Thesos lived was a colossal amphitheatre, where all the gladiator fights would take place and there, in the centre, stood a glistening, bronze idol of Ares, God of War, wielding his fatal blade.

Most young men who lived near the amphitheatre would grow up to be successful gladiators. However, Thesos was the best. To simply watch Thesos with his sword as he slashed, stabbed and twirled would strike fear in to all who opposed him. When in the arena, whether fighting man or beast, he would soon have them dead at his feet. However, it often happens that those with incredible skill also have incredible arrogance. He was infamous for his complete lack of kindness, generosity, humility and honesty. Those who may disagree with him, Thesos would threaten to kill. Many claimed they were his friend but this was only so that they wouldn't be killed by him. Thesos was quick-tempered with his father, rude to his servants and unfriendly to his fellow citizens. But it was his arrogance which eventually undid him.

"I am so amazingly, unbelievably and extraordinarily talented. All the soldiers of Athens must be jealous of me," Thesos remarked one day to his father.

"Yes my boy." His father sighed. He had heard all of this before.

"Even the Gods must envy my skill."

"Thesos, my boy, I'm not so sure about that..."

"No God can match my skill. Ares is nothing more than a fat-fingered fumbler compared to my skill. Everyone is jealous of me but I understand why; I am just so remarkably skilled."

This, of course, was a foolish thing to say for Ares was a deadly foe and had been known to kill countless soldiers. He was one of the most dangerous enemies to have.

However, Thesos went on regardless.

"Maybe I am a god. Maybe there is a god inside of me, waiting to be released. I would make a better god of war than Ares, don't you think?"

At that moment, there was a knock on the door.

"Come in!" Thesos' father called.

In stepped a shrivelled-up hag. He really was quite old. His wrinkly skin hung in bags, his sunken eyes barely visible underneath a tarnished red hood. He leant heavily on a knobbly walking stick. He slowly hobbled over to Thesos.

“Eugh!” Thesos exclaimed in disgust, “Who are you, old crone?”

“You shouldn’t mock old age boy. I have come as a messenger for the gods. You have angered the God, Ares. Take heed of this warning and ask his pardon,” the old man said, pointing a long, crooked finger and revealing a toothless mouth.

“If Ares was so angry, he would have come himself and challenged me. But I would still win.”

“Very well.” The old hag sighed. “Now is your chance. ”

And with that, he raised his hand and there was a burst of light.

Thesos and his father shielded their eyes. When they finally lowered their hands, they saw an extraordinary sight. Gone was the tattered travelling cloak, the wrinkles and the knobbly walking stick. In their place stood a tall, muscular man in gleaming golden armour. In his right hand, where a walking cane once was, now was a long, deadly sword. Ares, god of war, had come.

“You have challenged me. Soon you may regret it,” Ares boomed, his voice echoing around the room.

“I don’t regret anything and I never will.” Thesos shot back still as smug as ever. “I demand...a duel.”

“The duel shall take place at dawn. You...” Ares said, suddenly pointing at Thesos’ father. “Go. Tell the gladiators that a fight will take place at dawn.”

As the sun rose, the rays were cast down on the amphitheatre. The crowds cheered. The god and mortal stood face to face. The bell sounded. The two competitors charged at each other and blade met blade with a clang.

The crowd was mesmerised. Soon the two fighters became frenzies of strikes and slashes. Thesos swung his sword but Ares blocked and sent him stumbling back. Ares ran forward and made a locking motion, creating a deep gash in Thesos’ shoulder. The spectators watched in awe, screaming and cheering for their beloved god but wondering if the mortal could really win.

Nobody could say who would win. They were both equal match for each other. However, something had changed. Ares had been confident, proud, careless. But as he was pushed back further and further, he found that Thesos was no average fighter. He was the best in the land; his claims to be as good as the war god were true.

The battle lasted for many hours but with a last swish of a blade, a clang could be heard as a sword fell on the stone ground.

Ares looked down at his own empty hand. Then at his opponent's hand, still clutching his weapon. A silence filled the amphitheatre. Then, without warning, the crowd erupted in to cheers. Colourful flowers and coins showered over Theseos.

"Enough!" Ares yelled, slamming his foot down. The crowd was silenced as thunder clapped overhead. He marched towards Theseos, who was doubling up with laughter.

"Not like a god to be beaten," he said, through peals of laughter. "But then again, there had to be a first time. After all –" but Theseos never got to finish his sentence, for Ares had stomped towards him and grasped him by his neck, pulling him off the ground. His head was shaking with rage, his breathing shallow.

"I told you, did I not? I told you that you will regret it and now you shall learn why." And with that his grip loosened.

Theseos tried to get up but he fell back down. Something was wrong. His legs sprang together. His feet thinned and lengthened, wrapping around his legs. His arms were fused to his legs. Theseos screamed in agony. The crowd fled, fearing that the same fate may befall them. Theseos' neck and head lengthened, getting thinner and thinner then ending in a deadly point.

Theseos still struck fear into everyone, though not quite in the same way. For Theseos had become a sword.

Piece B: a letter of complaint

Context: after exploring examples of fairy tales with a twist, pupils were asked to write a letter of complaint from the point of view of a fairy tale character of their choice. The pupil asked to use a character from one of the *Harry Potter* novels and chose to write from the point of view of the Basilisk, complaining about Harry Potter and making the case for his expulsion from Hogwarts.

Professor A.B. Dumbledore
Room 9
Floor 3
Hogwarts Castle
Scotland

The Basilisk
The Chamber of Secrets
Hogwarts Castle
Scotland

Hisssss translation:

Dear Professor Dumbledore,

I am writing to you to discuss a matter of utmost importance. I feel it is my duty to inform you that a young criminal is roaming the castle. Being the great and wise man you are, after reading these numerous reasons, you will expel Harry Potter from this school forever.

Firstly, the boy has no respect for school rules. For instance, both last year and this year, he has been caught many times roaming the castle by night. In addition to this, he has been seen in the restricted section of the library, simply for his own gain. And, as if this was not enough, when the dim-witted half-giant, Rubeus Hagrid, bought a dragon egg, which is strictly forbidden, Harry helped the great owl to keep the dragon a secret until it was ready to be taken away. Undoubtedly this is unacceptable behaviour.

Furthermore, he has a non-explanatory grudge against He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. It is an atrocious thing to harbour grudges and this may lead to outbursts of rage within lessons. He also tries to attract attention by claiming to have seen and fought against He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. He is an arrogant, lying rule-breaker with no respect for school rules or others.

My last and most important point: he is a murderer. Only last year he killed one of your fellow teachers, Professor Quirrel, ~~and~~ ~~only~~ because he was about to report him for being out of bed by night. I am sure you will agree that this is a terrible act.

Having read these points, I hope you now believe that Harry Potter should be expelled from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Yours sincerely,
The Basilisk

Piece C: a balanced argument

Context: after studying the Amazon rainforest in geography, the pupil chose to write a balanced argument about deforestation.

One of the most debated and problematic issues of this century, deforestation is the process of clearing away huge amounts of rainforest at a time. It is estimated that, per minute, a patch of rainforest equivalent to that of 60 full-sized football pitches or, in other words, a chunk of rainforest the size of Switzerland is being demolished every year, and experts predict that, in 30-50 years time, all rainforests will be gone.

For the less economically developed countries, the citizens see deforestation not as a hazard to our planet, but as an opportunity to earn money and make a living. Stopping the deforestation business would prevent them from making any money. People also argue that it would be extremely difficult to extract the coffee beans, cocoa beans and the plants we need for medicines without cutting down forest.

However, deforestation can also cause a number of disastrous consequences, perhaps the most detrimental of them being its contribution to global warming. All the machinery used to cut down and transport the wood releases huge amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, making the air we breathe lethal for humans and animals. As trees take in carbon dioxide and give out oxygen, less gas can be taken in and less oxygen is being given. Animals that are arboreal (live in trees) and other animals may lose their food source. To make it easier to get through the rainforest, the workers build roads which could crush ground-dwelling animals.

After much consideration, it has been deemed that the process of deforestation should be reduced to the minimum, or that the effects must be contradicted by planting more trees: some people still believe though that the destruction of the rainforest is good practice. Local farmers say they have no land to grow crops and that they do not cut down the trees on purpose - they have no choice. However, most people believe that planting more trees is the right thing to do.

Piece D: a fable

Context: after reading and exploring Rudyard Kipling's *Just So* stories, pupils were asked to write a fable in the style of Kipling. The pupil chose to write about how the koala got its shout.

How the koala got its shout

In the beginning, oh best beloved, the koala was silent. He would sit on a branch and watch the tallest trees tower over the dense Australian jungle. He would look up at the cascading waterfall crashing down on the unfortunate rocks that lay below. And he would remain silent.

The koala was errant and idle. Every day he would sit on a branch while the animals would shout up at him:

"Koala, koala, why must you remain silent? Come down from your treetop perch and help us work!" and the koala would answer in no more than a whisper,

"I am silent, and you are all silent to me." and the other animals would go away.

The next day the animals would come and find the koala on his same treetop perch, and would shout up at him, "Koala, koala, why must you remain silent? Come down from your treetop perch and work like the rest of us!" And the koala would answer in no more than a whisper, "I am silent, and you are all silent to me." and the animals would go away.

One Monday, the kangaroo hopped up to the koala, who was sitting in his treetop perch, and cried, "Koala, koala, why must you remain silent? Come down from your treetop perch and work like the rest of us!" And the koala said in no more than a whisper, "I am silent, and you are all silent to me." And the kangaroo hopped away.

On Tuesday, the alligator crawled up to the koala, his tail swishing like a turbine, and shouted up at the top of his croaky old voice,

"Koala, Koala, why must you remain silent? Come down from your treetop perch and work like the rest of us!" And the koala said in no more than a whisper, "I am silent, and you are all silent to me." And the alligator crawled away, tail still swishing like a turbine.

On Wednesday, the dingo came running up to the koala, great big eyes drooping, for the dingo prefers working at night and resting during day, and shouted,

"Koala, Koala, why must you remain silent? Come down from your treetop perch and work like the rest of us!" And the koala said in no more than a whisper,

"I am silent, and you are all silent to me." And the dingo ran away and curled up in his resting place to sleep.

At midnight, which is the most magical time oh Best Beloved, the kangaroo and the alligator, their eyes drooping, for this was not their working time, and the now wide-awake dingo, gathered around a thick birch tree. They looked up to the starry, midnight-blue sky and all cried:

"Why, oh why? Why must you have created such an idle burden and placed it within our midst? Please help us!" and they went away to sleep, or else carry on their work, all the while hoping that their begging would have effect.

The trees heard their pleas and decided to help them. A leaf blew off the birch tree. It slowly floated towards the koala, who was sleeping on his treetop perch, and landed on his head.

And then... magical things began to happen.

The next morning, the kangaroo once again hopped up to the koala and said, "Koala, koala, why must you remain so silent? Come down from your treetop perch and work like the rest of us!" And the koala replied in the most deep, loud bellow, "I am silent, and you are all silent to me." However, he was not silent, indeed, he had developed the loudest voice in all of the jungle!

And after this incident, oh Best Beloved, the koala has been the loudest animal in the Australian jungle, but has to this day not made up for his many missed days of work. And this, oh Best Beloved, is how the koala got its shout.

Piece E: a blog

Context: as part of their independent projects inspired by the school's production of *Peter Pan*, pupils were asked to create their own Neverland. One of the tasks was to write a diary, but the pupil chose to embed a story within a blog instead, presenting their very different version of Neverland.

Hello blog.

I haven't seen you in a while. I know, I've been neglecting you, but a lot of things have happened, most of these involving me almost being killed.

I have:

- Been shot at
- Stabbed
- Burned
- Scarred
- Had to get a robotic arm

You get the idea.

Okay, let me explain. You know all those books and movies about Peter Pan and Neverland and stuff? The way they describe Neverland is not how it is. Or at least not anymore. It all started when I was playing this game called Battle Mechs. You know, where you start off with a completely useless mech and you upgrade them and get better? Anyway, I was on the clan chat when it just came up with this:

Anonymous: you dream of this stuff, don't you?

So I said:

Destroyer Bot: Yeah. So?

Anonymous: I can take you somewhere like this.

Destroyer Bot: When?

Anonymous: Now.

Then there was a blinding flash of light and, after that, things were very weird. I woke up on this sort of landing pad. Except it was too small, and no one was paying any attention to it. Surrounding me was just like that Anonymous guy said: it was nothing like home. Metal buildings dotted everywhere, robots clunking about. To be fair, I can understand why no one was paying any attention to me. I had spawned just next to this big generator sort of thing. Everything is not trees and forests and the best dens in the world. No. It's so weird; everything is just so...technological. Once I had confirmed that I was *not* dreaming (my face hurt for a while after that), I scrambled behind the generator, and at that moment I realised my tablet was still in my hands. "A portal?" I thought. It had taken me here; maybe it could take me back. I hunched up against a wall with peeling red and yellow paint and faded letters reading: DANGER. DO NOT ENTER. I turned it on, expecting to see my usual lock page with the usual keypad for me to unlock my tablet, but instead I was thrown straight into the game. Battle Mechs. With all of my previous gaming score gone. All of the game data erased. And I was only about 2,000 XP away from getting to level 78! From what I could see, it was beginning to get dark, so I tried my best to get comfortable and go to sleep.

I was woken up the next day by a gigantic CRASH. I jumped up and saw a massive wreckage. A guy on a stretcher. Random bits of plane everywhere. So I figured the crash must have been an out-of-control craft. And, in a random spurt of utter STUPIDITY, I walked out from my hiding spot. Dumbest thing I could have ever done. One of the repair bots looked around and saw me. The others followed. Then one of them tried to shoot me.

The laser whizzed over my head, and soon the air was filled with laser bolts. I dashed back to the generator, where I saw another boy. Before I had time to register this, he ran in front of me and smacked a blue chip down on the floor, and a circular, translucent blue wall popped up out of nowhere and encased us.

"Who are you?" I said.

"The new Peter Pan," he said. Then he grabbed my face and forced my mouth open.

"EY! OT OO OO IN' OOR OOIN!" (translation: HEY! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?) He held up a small pill and dropped it into my mouth, "OT OS AAT!" I yelled (translation: WHAT WAS THAT!)

"A sleeping pill," he answered calmly. After that I dropped off completely.

I woke up some time later with lots of boys and girls crowded around me. They all looked burned, bruised and scarred.

"So, the dead boy lives," said a familiar voice. The other kids moved back. A boy with brown hair and a scar down his shoulder walked in front of me and sat on a wall.

"Sorry about all that. That's what you gotta do with the newbies. But this is the first time I've seen one walk right out. That was dumb. Also, we had to patch your arm a bit. We're not the best doctors 'round here, 'cos the trained ones work for them." He gestured outside. "Anyway, we just gave you a new one. Avoid all the hassle. I've got one too." He held up his left arm. Except it wasn't a human arm. It was clearly robotic. "We managed to nick some of these from the medical room down over there" – he pointed to a building next to the big signal tower thing – "and Luke here worked a couple of days to give 'em some upgrades. Check this out." As he said this, he tapped a button on his arm. A small hatch opened and a plasma gun shot out (I play Battle Mechs too much). A fizzing ball of energy slowly expanded with four metal claws, which then released it.

"Don't! We'll be caught!" I said.

"Nah, it's fine." Peter said. "This wall is temporarily impenetrable."

"But they can still hear us."

"*Which includes sound.* The light, however, should pass straight through you, provided you're wearing these." He held up a black T-shirt and black jeans.

"Which he is not," another girl said. "I'm Emma by the way."

Suddenly, I heard an alarm.

"Alright folks, you know the drill. To your battle stations QUICK!" Peter yelled, while tossing everyone a gun. I caught mine and realised it was just a pistol. So they get fancy guns and I get the pistol. I ran over to Emma.

"What the flipping hell am I supposed to do?" I said.

"Stay with me and get ready to shoot at any moment," she replied, not taking her eyes out from the aiming piece. The wall around us flickered and disappeared, and thundering footsteps shook the ground; before we knew it, we were surrounded by robots. I heard Peter whisper behind me, "Everyone, shoot on my command. 1, 2, 3, SHOOOT!!!" Once again the air was filled with yells and laser beams and plasma balls. I looked around for Emma, but I couldn't see her anywhere. Then it began.

It's strange, fighting a robot. They're a lot smarter than you think. I got out my pistol, but it was no use. I was instantly hit in the face by a laser. Blood was trickling down my mouth and instincts kicked in. I grabbed the pistol and feinted an attack, then ran around the other side and ripped out a wire. I looked around. Again, no sign of Emma or Peter. One boy was wrestling against another robot and was pinned against a wall. I ran and wildly shot it. Then I was grabbed from behind.

Something whacked me on the back, and then I felt a dagger slice through my left arm. Then I remembered what Peter had done with his arm and desperately searched for that button. I found it and punched down. A small hatch opened and the gun shot out. It released. The ball whacked into the nearest drone and went steamrolling through the crowd. I stared, but I couldn't stay put for too long.

A lot of things happened. I would tell you, but it seems as if we're evacuating or something. Everyone's gathering up all the equipment, guns, everything. I don't know what, but something big is happening. I have to go now. I'm really starting to hate that Anonymous guy.

_____ Over and Out _____

Exercise 2

Pupil C

This collection includes:

- A) a short story
- B) a science investigation
- C) an information text
- D) a pair of historical narratives
- E) a continuation of a chapter
- F) a formal letter

All of the statements for 'working towards the expected standard', 'working at the expected standard', and 'working at greater depth within the expected standard' are met.

The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure).

Across the collection as a whole, the pupil demonstrates the ability to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting and maintaining the appropriate form. The pupil draws independently on their experience of reading fiction and non-fiction texts to inform their writing – from the narratives depicting scenes from World War 2 to the informative piece about a hybrid species and the insightful letter to their headteacher.

In 'The Assassin', the writer demonstrates effective narrative technique by successfully withholding the identity of the unexpected perpetrator until the very end of the story. Although succinct, the piece is satisfyingly structured, with moments of tension (waiting for the moment when he would strike... his pulse quickening... preparing to pounce) and a humorous mid-point anti-climax (And then...out flew a piece of sewage) leading deftly to the conclusion. Well-placed clues (his shaggy dark coat... Hovering above him... Swoop) and the restrained ending (A dead rat lay on the cobbled street) combine with literary language (as the crescent moon was released from its prison... this embarrassment of a murder... the gloom sweeping over him in a curtain of black) to create an assured and skilful short narrative.

The write-up of a class science investigation provides a detailed analysis of the experiment. It sets out the aim in the form of a question and offers a hypothesis, using scientific reasoning (this is because... However, when too much... the bean will... therefore making it). The method is provided through a combination of commands and statements, supported by a list of equipment and a diagram, whilst the results are appropriately set out in tabular form. The conclusion presents a detailed explanation of the results, recognising the shortcomings of the original hypothesis, whilst the final evaluation considers the validity of the test, acknowledging the unreliability of some aspects of the investigation and reflecting on ways in which it might be improved. Subheadings provide helpful signposting, whilst multi-clause sentences, incorporating co-ordination and subordination, enable the writer to integrate layers of explanatory detail (Using this formula [...], I can see that when using three marbles, there is less space in the magic bean and, when using one marble, there is more space, but not much weight when turning, so it cannot propel itself at speed).

The text on the hybrid species, presented as an informative article with helpful subheadings and an illustration, maintains its form throughout, providing the reader with a convincing account of this fictitious new species. The use of scientific names (Panthera concolor... Felidae), precise, subject-specific vocabulary (interbreed... carnivorous... prey... continent) and expanded noun phrases (an interbreed of the African leopard – its mother – and the North American cougar – its father... the grasping of prey... a unique way of hunting... a highly developed sense of smell... the plentiful supply of food) creates a knowledgeable and authoritative tone, whilst telling choices of adjectives (unique) and adverbs (incredibly) subtly indicate the writer's admiration for the creature.

The historical narratives, inspired by the pupil's immersion in the World War 2 period, recreate scenes from wartime Britain largely through the eyes of children. The diary focuses on the days surrounding the declaration of war, convincingly presented through the eyes of a young schoolboy more preoccupied with childish pursuits. A sense of authenticity is created through the choice of language drawn from the pupil's reading (Mrs Jones' corner shop... counted our pennies... got a proper spanking... reading my comic... The wireless was on), although there are occasional glimpses of a more contemporary voice (tasty orange tangos... completely freaked out). Narrative structure is controlled and assured – each diary entry opens with a sense of anticipation (My day started off like this... It was hilarious... I woke up [...] about what had happened last night) and closes with a neatly satisfying ending (however, it was better than no sweets at all... ready to write in my book... This was really bad, I thought). Furthermore, by slowly revealing the previously unseen Anderson shelters through the unknowing eyes of the young diarist (crowding around something... saw what everyone was looking at... saw Dad building something... It was like the thing at school... I asked what it was), the writer creates an air of intrigue and a suggestion of innocence soon to be destroyed.

The companion third-person narrative uses literary language effectively (radiated with a sadness that had never been felt before... long-bladed grass swarmed the surrounding area with marigolds [like broods of shaggy suns] facing upward, deep in thought... an old bronze key that she stabbed blindly into the lock), whilst the use of an extended metaphor (into the sea of people... weaved out of the current, trying desperately to navigate himself) successfully conveys the plight of the young evacuee. The succinctness of the narrative belies the level of detail conveyed, with its snippets of telling dialogue (Evacuees with me!... How dare you!... Hmm...that one's too scruffy... I'll take you, boy. Come on... Get in there, boy!). The ominous "Nothing was said" and hints of danger (nightmarish journey... tiny blood-red bricks... Dangerous and sharp, her dark eyes... long precarious thorns... stabbed blindly) are suggestive, inviting the reader to predict John's fate. Despite occasionally less successful choices (his jet-black hair... a slice of crumbly carrot cake... a short, plump woman), these related pieces do indicate the versatility of this young writer.

The continuation piece, based on 'One More River', successfully recreates the style of the novel, presenting the protagonist's perspective through a third-person limited narrator. The somewhat melodramatic reaction of the teenage Lesley is effectively captured (The welling of tears transformed into hate: hate for her parents, for the world) as her rather superficial and self-centred lifestyle is threatened. Apt choices of vocabulary (piercing... raw bitterness... howls... pounded... split) convey the intensity of her emotion, which contrasts effectively with her boyfriend's unexpectedly casual response to her news. The ending is economically managed as the reader's attention is transferred to the "dumbstruck" Lee left standing on the doorstep, "his eyes raised in utter shock".

The formal letter, written to the pupil's headteacher, makes the case against homework in a reflective and respectful way. The form of the letter provides the vehicle for the writer's argument, moving with a steady logic from the specific to the general. By opening with a personal grievance (As a child currently having to complete large amounts of homework... my personal views), the writer extends the argument to a genuine concern for fellow pupils (friends and classmates struggle... their anxiety... consequently misbehave... feel worthless) and teachers (pressure of this additional workload) before broadening the scope to encompass society in general (our country's poor mental health... people in our society struggling to fit socially) and concluding with a plea for the recipient to reconsider school policy (must be another way to get your progress and attainment measures... I implore you). Rhetorical questions (How do they release their stress [...]?... Is homework really a valuable measure [...]?) and adverbs (personally... Fortunately... deeply... Surely... certainly... really) support the letter's ultimately persuasive purpose and reinforce the writer's stance.

The pupil can distinguish between the language of speech and writing and choose the appropriate register.

Across the collection, the pupil demonstrates the ability to distinguish between the language of speech and writing, choosing the appropriate register according to the context. Features of language more resonant of speech are deliberately deployed to create an appropriate level of informality when required – for example, to create a sense of authenticity in the wartime diary. However, when writing for more formal contexts, a suitably formal register is adopted, avoiding the language that might otherwise be used in speech. The pupil chooses to adopt an informal register in both the wartime diary and the short story about an assassin. The conversational style of the diary's opening (My day started off like this) combines with features of spoken language such as discourse markers (Anyway, when I finally), sentence fragments (Comical), and a casual aside (which it wasn't) to capture Ned's speaking voice, creating the easy familiarity required. Similarly, the perpetrator's utterances in 'The Assassin' (Any time now... my time to shine... Dang it!... Easy as you like!) contrast effectively with the more formal register used elsewhere in the story (dared to enter his domain... oblivious to his whereabouts).

An appropriately formal register is adopted in the article on the hybrid species (Despite originating from North America... For reasons unknown... one reason being the plentiful supply of food) and in the letter to the headteacher (not equipped with the required strategies... caused them to consequently misbehave... it seems to me that), whilst the write-up of the science investigation adopts a register consistent with the more objective style appropriate to the purpose and audience (distribution of space and weight... I can conclude that... a requirement for a fair test... was unavailable in our original investigation).

The pupil can exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this.

Throughout the collection, levels of formality are consciously controlled according to context, audience and purpose. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are manipulated to convey differing levels of formality – from the relative informality of the wartime diary to the more formal information text and the letter to the pupil's headteacher.

In the satisfyingly succinct short story 'The Assassin', relatively formal grammatical structures combine with vocabulary (for the killer to search the derelict alleyway below him... who dared to enter his domain... his pulse quickening with every moment that passed... determined to end this embarrassment of a murder... oblivious to his whereabouts... A dead rat lay on the cobbled street... readied for the feast ahead), adding substance to the crisp narrative. In contrast, the informality of the perpetrator's elliptical utterances (Any time now... my time to shine... Dang it!... Easy as you like!) and the humorous sound effects (Grack! Rack!... Swoop! Rip!) are delightfully incongruous in this grisly tale.

The write-up of a science investigation employs a level of formality consistent with the demands of this type of writing. Precise vocabulary choices, including the use of relevant technical vocabulary (rotate... invalid... template... hypothesis... formula... acceleration... propel... mass... variable), and conscious choices of grammar, including the subjunctive (If I were to continue this test... If I were to do this again), agentless passives (when too much weight is added... this test was considered a fair one) and use of modal verbs (I can conclude... This would make the test), support the reasoned tone appropriate to the writing. Occasional less precise choices (it won't turn... a lot of features... we still got results) only slightly detract from the overall level of formality.

Furthermore, whilst the first person (I think this is because... I can see that... I would time the beans) is used appropriately to provide the original hypothesis and to reflect on the outcome, the use of more impersonal subjects (The reason for this conclusion is... there is [a good distribution of space and weight]... it is probable that... the aspect of human error [played a key factor]) successfully foregrounds the experiment, supporting the more objective tone required.

In the information text, scientific names (Panthera concolor... Felidae) and precise vocabulary choices (interbreed... carnivorous... predator... prey... solitary... stalk... originating... continent) reinforce the knowledgeable and authoritative tone, whilst expanded noun phrases (the grasping of prey... a unique way of hunting... a highly developed sense of smell... the plentiful supply of food) support the concise provision of detail. Assured use of fronted adverbials (To help catch their prey... Despite originating from North America... For reasons unknown), an agentless passive (it was shipped to this warmer continent) and the somewhat formal "one reason being" convey the objective voice of the expert, whilst deliberate vocabulary choices (unique... incredibly... struggled... thrived) indicate the writer's respect for the creature's propensity for survival.

Whilst the historical narratives both relate to World War 2, and deliberately deploy language reminiscent of the period (counted our pennies... reading my comic... The wireless was on... "Evacuees with me!"), the level of formality is, nevertheless, adapted according to form and purpose.

The diary deliberately creates a sense of easy familiarity through the use of discourse markers (Anyway, when I finally... Anyway, there was a), phrasal verbs (started off... headed down ... freaked out... looking at), imprecise verbs (to get some tasty... we got outside), question tags (That was Neville Chamberlain's voice wasn't it?), sentence fragments (Comical) and a casual aside (which it wasn't), whilst the use of the subjunctive (If I were king) is wholly appropriate.

In contrast, grammar is manipulated in the companion third-person narrative to suggest a lack of familiarity and a sense of unease. The opening paragraph, which depicts the separation of a group of child evacuees from their parents, is densely packed with expanded noun phrases modified by relative clauses (the platform – on which hundreds of forlorn and bleary-eyed mothers said their final farewells... a sadness that had never been felt before... the callous demon, which would take them from their homes... the guard, who gave them a long stern stare), creating a heaviness that reflects the misery of the subject matter. The agentless passive (Nothing was said) and use of impersonal subjects (called an urgent feminine voice... a strong firm grip caught his arm... boomed a voice) convey a sense of indifference, emphasising the vulnerability of the solitary evacuee on arrival at his destination.

Similarly, in the continuation of a chapter from 'One More River', the deliberate use of nouns and noun phrases (The welling of tears... a sense of raw bitterness... The familiar chirp of birds... the gushing of water... her parents' cruelty) supports the intensity of Lesley's mood, whilst contrasting effectively with Lee's elliptical – and somewhat offhand – response (Could be worse).

The letter to the headteacher maintains a level of formality appropriate to its recipient and the significance of its subject matter, whilst never losing sight of the writer's strength of feeling about the issue. Apt and considered choices of vocabulary (unnecessary pressure... required strategies... deeply worried... spiralling effect... valuable measure... mental well-being) work in tandem with passive constructions (are not equipped... has certainly been caused by... the situation that is thrust upon them), use of the perfect form (I have chosen to write... I have seen... has caused them to consequently misbehave) and avoidance of contracted verb forms (I have personally coped... I am also concerned) to sustain the measured and polite tone. This is interwoven with the greater informality of personal references and shared experiences (I have family who are quite open at home when talking... halted clubs for 'the time being'... snappiness in an otherwise laid-back teacher) and less precise choices (gets the best out of us... to get your progress and attainment measures) which are indicative of a topic close to the writer's heart and, quite possibly, their familiarity with the recipient.

The pupil can use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.

A range of punctuation is used correctly – for example:

commas to clarify meaning

- o Without warning, the noises abruptly came to a halt. [A]
- o The victim suddenly appeared, oblivious to his whereabouts. [A]
- o ... carefully cut the template for the magic bean, being alert to not cutting the corners. [B]
- o Instead of struggling, the coupard thrived in the Sahara, one reason being the plentiful supply of food. [C]
- o ... and Mum and Dad sat lifeless, listening carefully. [D]
- o Dangerous and sharp, her dark eyes settled on John's body, studying him thoroughly. [D]
- o She mumbled on, her voice muffled as she repeated words... [E]
- o First of all, children at the age of eleven are not equipped with... [F]

punctuation to indicate parenthesis

- o Now, more infuriated than he had ever been, he repositioned his body... [A]
- o ... the bean with two marbles was the quickest, for this reason, making my hypothesis incorrect. [B]
- o The coupard (Panthera concolor cougar) is an interbreed of... [C]
- o Then he said we were at war – glumly, as though it was obvious (which it wasn't). [D]
- o ... the platform – on which hundreds of forlorn and bleary-eyed mothers said their final farewells – radiated with a sadness... [D]
- o Then, after an age of gulping, she finally... [E]
- o ... my personal views on what, I believe, is unnecessary pressure... [F]

colons, semi-colons and dashes to mark the boundary between independent clauses

- o ... double check that all the corners are taped up – if not, add more tape to secure them. [B]
- o It also has crooked claws and strong hind legs...to climb trees: the shape of the claws also supports...prey. [C]
- o This solitary animal has a unique way of hunting: stalk and ambush. [C]
- o ... we were no longer friends: we were enemies. [D]
- o ... we only had enough money to buy two sweets each; however, it was better than no sweets at all. [D]
- o ... I have seen some of my friends and classmates struggle – their anxiety during difficult work has caused them to consequently misbehave... [F]

hyphens to avoid ambiguity

- o ... world-class hearing... [C]
- o ... emerald-coloured eyes... [D]
- o ... square-shouldered man... [D]
- o ... bleary-eyed... [E]
- o ... the build-up of homework... [F]
- o ... mental well-being... [F]

When necessary, punctuation is used precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity. For example, commas are used to avoid miscues (Without warning, the noises abruptly came to a halt... cautiously scanning his surroundings, once again the gloom sweeping over him in a curtain of black... The victim suddenly appeared, oblivious to his whereabouts) and to indicate where relative clauses provide additional, non-essential information (the black rosettes, which come from the leopard, helping it to blend in... Hurrying past the guard, who gave them a long stern stare, they boarded the train). They are also used to control long, multi-clause sentences (Now, more infuriated than he had ever been, he repositioned his body, determined to end this embarrassment of a murder... Using this formula [mass x acceleration = force], I can see that when using three marbles, there is less space in the magic bean and, when using one marble, there is more space, but not much weight when turning, so it cannot propel itself at speed... She fled from Lee, her ragged dress flying out behind her, leaving her boyfriend dumbstruck, his eyes raised in utter shock).

The use of a colon to mark the boundary between independent clauses is particularly well chosen in both the information text (This solitary animal has a unique way of hunting: stalk and ambush) and in the wartime diary (From then on, we were no longer friends: we were enemies) where the clause that follows the colon elaborates on the information in the clause that precedes it.

Piece A: a short story

Context: as part of a unit on narrative writing, pupils were asked to use their skills to build tension in a story about an assassination, particularly by hiding the identity of the perpetrator.

The Assassin

The gloomy silhouettes suddenly disappeared, as the crescent moon was released from its prison. The light shone weakly onto the building opposite... just enough for the killer to search the derelict alleyway below him. The assassin gave a sinister grin, his shaggy dark coat hiding him from anyone who dared to enter his domain.

"Any time now," the murderer thought to himself. He lay low in the darkness, his eyes fixed upon the street in which the unfortunate culprit would creep out onto, waiting for the moment when he would strike. Blood raced through his body, his pulse quickening with every moment that passed.

After what felt like an eternity, with his limbs aching, the building to the right of him began to shake, before long doing so more vigorously and emitting odd noises: Grack! Racket!

"Finally," smiled the assassin, "my time to shine."

Without warning, the noises abruptly came to a halt. Tensing his body, he steadied his legs, crouching low, preparing to pounce. And then...out flew a piece of sewage.

"Dang it!" he wailed.

Now, more infuriated than he had ever been, he repositioned his body, determined to end this embarrassment of a murder.

He took a long, deep breath, cautiously scanning his surroundings, once again the gloom sweeping over him in a curtain of black. The victim suddenly appeared, oblivious to his whereabouts. Hovering above him, the assassin gave a smirk. Swoop! Rip!

"Easy as you like!" he laughed.

A dead rat lay on the cobbled street, the mud gradually oozing over the dry skin. With a sense of glee, the barn owl flew triumphantly back to its lookout, the rat dangling from his claws, as he readied for the feast ahead.

Piece B: a science investigation

Context: as part of their work in science, pupils were asked to create a fair test to investigate how changing one variable of a magic bean would affect the speed of its descent down a ramp. Having conducted the experiment and recorded their findings, pupils then wrote up their experiment in full.

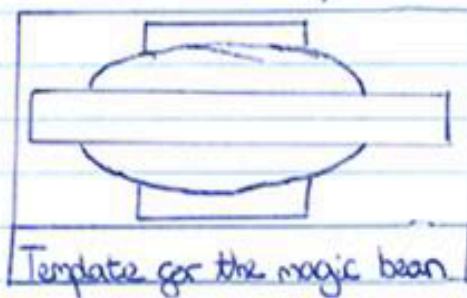
"Magic Bean" Investigation

Question: How does the amount of marbles in a "magic bean" affect the speed of its descent down a ramp?

Hypothesis: I think when adding more marbles the "magic bean" will gain speed to a certain extent (three marbles) and then will begin to slow. I think this is because heavier objects fall quicker than lighter ones. However, when too much weight is added, the bean will be unable to rotate, ~~make~~ therefore making it an invalid run.

Equipment:

- scissors
- magic bean template
- marbles
- tape
- ramp



Method:

1. First, carefully cut the template for the magic bean, being alert to not cutting the corners.
2. Next, fold the corners over and then cautiously tape them up to the main body.
3. This is then followed by placing marbles into the bean (any amount is fine).
4. The final step: double check that all the corners are taped up - if not, add more tape to secure them.

Results:

	Position they came	1	2	3
Number of marbles	Number of marbles	2 ⊙	3 ⊙	1 ⊙

marbles "magic bean"

Conclusion: From this test, I can conclude that the bean with two marbles was the quickest, for this reason, making my hypothesis incorrect. The reason for this conclusion is that $F = M \times A$. Using this formula (mass \times acceleration = force), I can see that when using three marbles, there is less space in the magic bean and, when using one marble, there is more space, but not much weight when turning, so it cannot propel itself at speed. However, when using two marbles, there is a good distribution of space and weight, which is why this was the fastest.

If we were to continue this test, the magic bean would get to a point where there is too much mass for it to turn. I can predict this as, even with three marbles in it, it was becoming too heavy to turn, which means it is probable that it would stop turning at about five marbles. From this test as a whole, I can conclude that when too much or little weight is added to a magic bean, it won't turn with speed.

Evaluation: Although this test was considered a fair one, there were a lot of features that were unreliable. Some of these were more tape on one bean, one of them misshaped and different people setting the beans off in the race. These changes limited our learning, as we were changing more than one variable - breaking a requirement for a fair test. As with any test we investigate in school, the aspects of human error played a key factor.

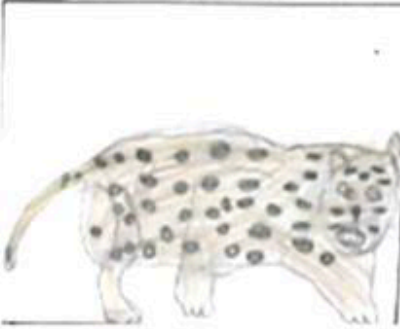
If I were to do this again, I would time the beans with a stopwatch, though this was unavailable in our original investigation. This would make the test much more precise as we would know the difference between the times they finished, making our test more detailed, rather than giving the beans the places they came in the race. This was not a very precise test, but we still got results. Although, to get the ^{real} optimum, we would have to be much more accurate with our testing.

Piece C: an information text

Context: as part of their cross-curricular topic work, pupils were asked to research 2 animals that might have the potential to form a hybrid. They then wrote an information text on this newly discovered, genetically engineered hybrid animal.

THE COUPARD

The coupard (*Panthera concolor cougar*) is an interbreed of the African leopard – its mother – and the North American cougar – its father. These two animals bred when the leopard escaped from a North American zoo, roaming into the wild where it came across a male cougar.

<p>Appearance</p> <p>This carnivorous predator has many features, all benefitting it in different ways. One of these is the black rosettes, which come from the leopard, helping it to blend in with the surrounding area. It also has crooked claws and strong hind legs, both of which assist it to climb trees: the shape of the claws also supports the grasping of prey.</p> <p>Weighing in at 50kg, this mammal can run at speeds of up to 82mph and can jump 15 feet into the air, leaping onto branches of trees where it likes to settle.</p>		<p>Habitat</p> <p>Despite originating from North America, this cat, a member of the Felidae family, lives in the sub-Saharan desert. For reasons unknown, the coupard struggled to survive in the wilds of North America and, because of its mother, born in Africa, it was shipped to this warmer continent. Instead of struggling, the coupard thrived in the Sahara, one reason being the plentiful supply of food.</p>
<p>The coupard waiting to pounce for prey.</p>	<p>Food and Hunting</p> <p>This solitary animal has a unique way of hunting: stalk and ambush. Despite its speed, the coupard prefers to stay hidden, before pouncing and digging its claws deep into the throat of its prey. Its diet consists of beetles; rodents; birds; antelope and deer; and, incredibly, sometimes baby giraffe. To help catch their prey, these animals have world-class hearing and a highly developed sense of smell.</p>	

Piece D: a pair of historical narratives

Context: after reading a range of fiction and non-fiction texts related to World War 2, and exploring the period in their history lessons, the pupil chose to write 2 different wartime narratives depicting everyday life through the perspective of children.

First-person narrative: Ned's diary

August 31st, 1939

My day started off like this: "Ned get up," my mother's voice echoed through the house. Aargh! Why did I have to get up? I thought to myself. If I were king, everyone would be able to sleep in as long as they wanted.

Anyway, when I finally got my big, lazy body out of bed, Aaron (my younger brother) and I knocked on my best friend Bryan's door. Bryan, his little brother Jon, Aaron and myself walked across the road to the park. We layed our jumpers down on the slippery wet grass. I placed the ball down. From then on, we were no longer friends: we were enemies.

When we were too shattered to continue, we stopped play and headed down to Mrs Jones' corner shop to get some tasty orange tangeres and Strawberry dreads. Caregully, we counted our pennies before we entered the store as we didn't want to hold up the queue and have an angry old man cursing at us under his breath because we were taking so long. Amazingly we only had enough money to buy two sweets each; however, it was better than no sweets at all.

September 1st, 1939

It was hilarious. Bryan got a proper spanking at school today. He showed me his back in the playground and it was red raw. Corical. The moment we got outside, I couldn't stop commentating on when he got the spanking: "Mrs Gray, she looks like she means business ... Oh that was savage, right on the sweet spot. She goes again and I feel sympathy for young Bryan there." I repeated this until we were both rolling around on the floor, dying from laughter.

Anyway, there was a much more serious matter after school. I was reading my comic when Mum called me into the living room. The wireless was on which was strange and Mum and Dad sat lifeless, listening caregully.

caught the words, "We are now at war with Germany."

That was Neville Chamberlain's voice wasn't it? I thought quietly. I raced up into my room, ready to write in my book.

September 2nd, 1939

I woke up completely grogged out about what had happened last night. I must have been dreaming, I thought to myself - not feeling reassured. When I got downstairs, I asked Mum for a bowl of cereal. Strangely, she made me toast with jam and forgot to put butter on it. Something was not right. To add to that, Dad came down in his pyjamas which he never does. I figured that I hadn't been dreaming. We were at war with Germany.

At school, everyone was crowding around something just left of the main school building. I saw Bryan at the front of the group and I waded through the crowds of people to get to my friend. Finally I saw what everyone was looking at. It must have been built overnight as it wasn't there yesterday. It had a large curved corrugated iron roof and a line of wooden benches within it. In class, Charlie Peer got a spanking but luckily Mrs Grog didn't see me laughing or I would have been in serious trouble.

As I passed through the garden at home, I saw Dad building something. What was it? I went over to have a look. It was like the thing at school only much smaller and with less benches inside.

I asked what it was.

"An Anderson Shelter to protect us from the bombing," Dad replied.

Then he said we were at war - glumly, as though it was obvious (which it wasn't).

This was bad. This was really bad, I thought.

Third-person narrative about a child evacuee

Grimy and disgusting, the platform - on which hundreds of forlorn and bleary-eyed mothers said their final farewells - radiated with a sadness that had never been felt before. The children fell out of their parents' grasp and staggered towards the callous demon, which would take them from their homes. Hurrying past the guard, who gave them a long stern stare, they boarded the train...

Finally, after a long nightmarish journey, John arrived - tired and exhausted. As sweat trickled down his jet-black hair, he stepped carefully out of the hot, stuggy carriage. His emerald-coloured eyes flickered nervously as he was pushed out into the sea of people, not knowing where or which direction he was heading.

"Evacuees with me!" called an urgent feminine voice to John's right. He weaved out of the current, trying desperately to navigate himself towards where the voice had come from. Very suddenly, the bulging mass of people faded, and, in turn, appeared a small square room, entirely produced of tiny blood-red bricks, held together with a sticky layer of golden sand. Tip

Tiptoeing quietly towards a table, John reached out his hand to grab a slice of crumbly carrot cake. However, a strong firm grip caught his arm and dragged him back to the centre of the room.

"How dare you!" boomed a voice that belonged to a solid, square-shouldered man. But this ~~telling~~ telling egg was cut short as a short, plump woman entered the room.

"Hmm... that one's too scruffy," muttered the woman. Her silky, silvery hair was tied in a tight bun. Dangerous and sharp, her dark eyes settled on John's body, studying him thoroughly. "I'll take you, boy. Come on," ordered the woman, sternly.

Nothing was said as they marched onward, passing large chipped pines and long precarious thorns until, finally, they arrived at a small cottage. The long-bladed grass swarmed the surrounding area with marigolds (like broods of shaggy suns) facing upward, deep in thought. Out of her trousers pocket, she produced an old bronze key that she stabbed blindly into the lock and turned. "Get in there, boy!" ...

Piece E: a continuation of a chapter

Context: pupils read the first chapter of *One More River* (Lynne Reid Banks). They then continued the narrative, depicting the reactions of Lesley, a young teenage girl, who had just been told that she must leave Canada to go and live in Israel, leaving her comfortable and familiar life behind.

It was necessary to rebel. To fight it. Never to give in. The welling of tears transformed into hate: hate for her parents, for the world. "Why would God want this life for me?" Lesley thought. Her screams echoed around the valley, piercing a sense of raw bitterness into the hearts of those who patrolled the area in which she lay. The familiar chirp of birds ringing around the valley only caused her howls to become louder and, determined to block out their song, Lesley's breathing began to slow, her legs curling up as her eyes peacefully closed.

She awoke suddenly to the gushing of water, her clothes a heap of rags. Lesley's eyes fluttered open, her vision all hazy. For the first time since waking up by the riverbank, she thought of her parents. "How could they betray me?" she thought, "I'm Canadian and I never won't be!" Saying this convinced her she would not leave the dream world she was living in - with Sonia, with Lee - and what about the prom dance with him? She could still make it, she convinced herself, but first she had to visit him.

After being pestered by a dozen peculiar stares, she arrived at the house belonging to Lee and his family. Lesley pounded on the door, preparing for Lee's disgust at her appearance. The door opened suddenly, Lee gazing at Lesley's face, his dark eyes blending perfectly alongside his fair, sandy hair, before he blurted, "Where've you been?" She stood silent, trying desperately not to fall into a welling of tears once again. Then, after an age of gulping, she finally regained her confidence and began to tell Lee about her parents' plan to split them apart forever.

She mumbled on, her voice muffled as she repeated words such as "terrible" and "awful" to describe her parents' cruelty. Weeping and bleary-eyed, she finished her story, stamping her foot down hard at the end. Lee looked thoughtfully at the stone steps leading up to the grant door. He then looked at Lesley and said... "Could be worse."

"Could be worse!" Lesley roared. "How could anything be worse than it is now?" She glared from Lee, her ragged dress flying out behind her, leaving her boyfriend dumbstruck, his eyes raised in utter shock.

Piece F: a formal letter

Context: towards the end of year 6, pupils were asked to reflect on an issue about which they felt strongly. Having discussed mental health as a class, the pupil decided to write to the headteacher, expressing their opinion on homework.

Thursday 17th May, 2018.

Dear Headteacher,

As a child currently having to complete large amounts of homework, I have chosen to write to you to share my personal views on what, I believe, is unnecessary pressure for results that do not value a child's true learning.

First of all, children at the age of eleven are not equipped with the required strategies to cope with the pressures that homework brings. Although I have personally coped quite well with the pressures, I have seen some of my friends and classmates struggle – their anxiety during difficult work has caused them to consequently misbehave and feel worthless about what they can and cannot do. Fortunately, I have family who are quite open at home when talking to me about the impact on mental health. From our discussions, I am deeply worried about what these pressures are doing to us at such a young age. Surely we have a life ahead of us for plenty of other important worries.

I am also concerned for the decisions of some of the parents of my friends. A number of them have found tutors and halted clubs for 'the time being' so that their children can put in the extra work. How do they release their stress now without their free time and clubs to let off steam? Of course, the parents want them to do well but it seems to me that this is a spiralling effect of the real problem: too much homework.

Another thing that I have noticed during the build-up of homework has been the amount of work for the teachers. The coincidence of the snappiness in an otherwise laid-back teacher has certainly been caused by the pressure of this additional workload affecting his free time. Surely the quality of his teaching and the way he gets the best out of us is more important. Is homework really a valuable measure of how we are doing?

In conclusion, I believe that homework is adding to our country's poor mental health and at an age where children are unable to manage the situation that is thrust upon them. There must be another way to get your progress and attainment measures and I implore you to find them before we have even greater numbers of people in our society struggling to fit socially because of their mental well-being.

Yours sincerely,

Exercise 3

Pupil B

This collection includes:

- A) a short suspense story
- B) a balanced argument
- C) a poem
- D) a formal letter
- E) a myth

All of the statements for 'working towards the expected standard', 'working at the expected standard', and 'working at greater depth within the expected standard' are met.

The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure).

Across the collection, writing is effectively adapted for a variety of purposes and audiences. The writer selects and maintains the appropriate form throughout, making well-informed choices about the features of each piece. The pupil's knowledge of language, gained from reading a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, is evident – from the formal argument and letter of complaint, to the confident narratives and the evocative poetry.

The writer draws on their knowledge of literary genres in both the short suspense story and the opening to the myth, skilfully using narrative technique to engage the reader.

The short suspense story opens effectively with dialogue (So you're sure you'll be alright on your own?... For the a-millionth time yeh... If anything happens, call me), swiftly establishing characterisation and foreshadowing the threat to the protagonist – efficiently conveyed through the subsequent TV newflash. The chilling twist at the end, as the narrator's identity is revealed, is skilfully managed for maximum impact, whilst assured use of literary language invokes nature as a witness to the events that are about to unfold (Like splintering needles darting through the night sky, a hideous storm was brewing outside... the moon was being drowned by a mass of heavy, grey clouds... The earth was holding its breath. Fear choked her with his murderous hands).

Like the short suspense story, the myth opens with dialogue, immediately creating a sense of intrigue. The writer deliberately avoids a straightforward chronological narrative, choosing instead to begin in the middle of the action before deploying a flashback (It had begun two months before when darkness had consumed the once peaceful village), culminating in the setting of the challenge which leads the protagonist full circle to the "dangerous place" where the reader first encounters him.

The pupil draws independently on what they have read to inform their writing – for example, by using repetitive patterning to reflect the language of a traditional myth (No sun meant no crops, no light and soon, no villagers... You are the person I have been awaiting... You are the person who can defeat... You are the person who can be your village's saviour) and literary language to personify the natural world (Gnarled, twisted branches clutched Votan's murky cloak... ghoul-like shadows rambled around him... darkness had consumed the once peaceful village).

The personification poem draws on the pupil's reading of both poetry and visual media, using vivid imagery to evoke the seasons (cloaking the bleak lake... Autumn's brittle pathway). Winter is characterised as a "Frost Dancer" and an "Ice Ambassador", using apt choices of vocabulary to contrast the delicate femininity of the ballet dancer as she covers the world with frost (Delicately gliding... Ornamenting each blade... Embellishing each window pane) with the work of the overtly masculine ice ambassador (Transforming Autumn's brittle pathway... Commanding any encryptions... Casting an incantation).

The piece on graffiti draws on the writer's knowledge of the subject to present a highly competent balanced argument, with interesting factual information provided in the introduction. Whilst some of the arguments in support of graffiti are not wholly convincing (we would eventually run out of paper), the arguments against it are more plausible (vital funds are lost... where money is better spent... polluted due to the toxic use of spray cans... a terrible way for them to witness 21st century artwork). The unbiased stance is appropriately maintained until the conclusion, where the writer offers their personal opinion whilst preserving a level of objectivity (Perhaps a compromise could be reached).

The letter of complaint is well structured, clear and convincing. It states its case politely, yet firmly and with authority (to inform you of the inadequate standard of service at your screening establishment). The writer establishes the reason for writing before cataloguing the problems that gave rise to the complaint, the impact on the writer and brief recommendations for improvement. The conclusion (I expect reimbursement... Should you not comply... I shall be seeking) leaves the recipient in no doubt as to what is now required as well as the consequences should the writer still not be satisfied.

The pupil can distinguish between the language of speech and writing and choose the appropriate register.

Throughout the collection, the pupil consistently demonstrates the ability to distinguish between the language of speech and writing, choosing the appropriate register according to context.

Features of language more resonant of speech are deliberately deployed to create a level of informality when required – for example, to capture the casual conversational style of the opening dialogue in the short suspense story and to distinguish the attitude of the staff from the writer's more formal tone in the letter of complaint (dismissed with a 'not my problem').

When writing for formal contexts, an appropriately formal register is adopted, avoiding the language that might otherwise be used in speech. The balanced argument and the letter of complaint both display clear indicators of formality (there is still much debate... To compensate us... I expect reimbursement), whilst the myth and the poem also adopt a register appropriate to their respective literary genres (cloaking the bleak lake in a thick coat of patterned ice... a pure voice whispered a chorus of echoes).

The pupil can exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this.

Throughout the collection, levels of formality are consciously controlled according to context, audience and purpose. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are manipulated to convey differing levels of formality – from the relative informality of the suspense story to the more formal balanced argument and letter of complaint.

The more literary pieces adopt a level of formality appropriate to their genre. For example, in the short suspense story, the writer selects language resonant of speech to present the dialogue between Charlotte and her mother (So you're sure you'll be alright... For the a-millionth time yeh... call me) as well as markers of relative informality (threw open her bedroom window... about a mile or two from her house... This was getting scary) in keeping with a modern suspense story. This contrasts with the somewhat archaic formality of the myth, recreated through apt choices of vocabulary and syntax (only to awake to what they feared the most... Votan knelt before the alter... Please, oh mighty Ix Chell, I beg you) and the avoidance of contracted verb forms (You are the person I have been awaiting). Similarly, in the poem, the writer deliberately deploys grammar and vocabulary to reflect a formality of style, condensing images through the use of expanded noun phrases (her pallid, frost-laced ballet shoes... shards of ice which suspend precariously from the frosty, wooden trees) and preposition phrases (in a glistening coat of icy droplet... with a delicate snowflake frost bunting... into every gnarled, twisted branch in his sight), contrasting sharply with the more playful informality of the 2 rhyming couplets at the end. Where writing requires a greater level of formality, in the balanced argument and the letter of complaint, this is both established and maintained through assured manipulation of grammar.

Agentless passives, sometimes incorporating progressive and perfect verb forms (is most famously associated with... where money is better spent... is being polluted... where graffiti is permitted to be displayed... was being screened... I was required to explain... I had been given... was dismissed), work in tandem with impersonal 'it' and 'there' constructions (there is still much debate... It is believed by many... it is considered that). In addition, apt choices of modal verbs (should not be legalised... could be reached... I would strongly suggest... You will also find... Should you not comply) and the subjunctive (if it were legalised... If I were you) support the writer's formal, authoritative stance.

Furthermore, in the letter, the writer deliberately signals more informal usage by using inverted commas (your 'so called' 3-star cinema... the supposedly 'sweet' popcorn... was dismissed with a 'not my problem') to highlight the inadequacies of the cinema. Assured choices of vocabulary (prevalent... infamous... alternative canvas... environmental pollution... inadequate standard of service... dismay... purchased... severe allergic reaction... establishment... compensate... reimbursement... comply) ensure that the appropriate level of formality is maintained throughout. Some slightly incongruous choices (trees are redeemed... communicating their fervour... reconciled this problem... the sound immediately desisted... the film evolved) do not detract from the required level of formality overall.

The pupil can use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.

A range of punctuation is used correctly – for example:

commas to clarify meaning

- o ...her mother questioned, carving her fingernail absent mindedly with her teeth. [A]
- o Charlotte slammed the window shut, staring in awe... [A]
- o As a result, vital funds are lost for hospitals, schools and roadworks, where money is better spent. [B]
- o Expending his pallid icicle staff, the Ice Ambassador... [C]
- o Initially, following taking our seats in the screening room, to my dismay, instead of... [D]
- o Creeping cautiously out of his thatched hut, this brave adventurer set off... [E]

punctuation to indicate parenthesis

- o There, in front of her, stood a man. [A]
- o Graffiti – otherwise recognised as 'street art' – is most famously associated with... [B]
- o Instead of communicating their fervour verbally, and disturbing others, graffiti artists... [B]
- o ...the 'U' film we were expecting (Coco)... [D]
- o Once my family and I had finally reconciled this problem, and the desired film was being screened, the sound... [D]
- o While the villagers worried and prayed each night before going to sleep, only to awake to what they feared the most, a young village boy... [E]
- o A beam of light struck the alter and, suddenly, a pure voice whispered... [E]

colons, semi-colons and dashes to mark the boundary between independent clauses

- o Charlotte was left alone in the house – this was how she preferred to spend her evenings. [A]
- o She lived on the outskirts of Locksley; the prison was about a mile or two from her house. [A]
- o Graffiti can also influence children: young infants could absentmindedly repeat inappropriate language to others... [B]
- o No sun meant no crops, no light and soon, no villagers: everything would perish with the moon in control. [E]
- o Votan knelt before the alter; his only chance to stop this eternal darkness was to reason with the Moon goddess... [E]
- o "Votan, you are a courageous boy – and are my only hope," the voice exclaimed; "my dear brother, the Sun God, has been captured..." [E]

hyphens to avoid ambiguity

- o ...frost-laced ballet shoes... [C]
 - o ...3-star cinema... [D]
 - o ...My four-year-old son... [D]
 - o ...ghoul-like shadows... [E]
- When necessary, punctuation is used precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity. For example, commas are used to avoid miscues (Due to the harsh breeze outside, the heavy oak door sealed almost immediately... To conclude, my personal opinion) and to mark nouns in apposition (the Moon goddess, Ix Chell... my dear brother, the Sun God).

Commas, colons, semi-colons and dashes are used confidently, often working in tandem to control ambitious, multi-clause sentences (Charlotte slammed the window shut, staring in awe as lightning tore through the sky; blinding her, it illuminated a lone figure leaning against a lamppost... "Votan, you are a courageous boy – and are my only hope," the voice exclaimed; "my dear brother, the Sun God, has been captured by the Lords of Death and without him, your village will never witness light again...").

The use of a colon to mark the boundary between independent clauses is particularly well chosen in the myth (No sun meant no crops, no light and soon, no villagers: everything would perish with the moon in control) where the clause that follows the colon elaborates on and explains the information in the clause that precedes it.

Piece A: a short suspense story

Context: as part of a unit of work on storytelling, pupils discussed the attributes of a good short suspense story. Having read *The Hook* (Roger Hurn), they used the title as a stimulus for their own short, chilling tale.

"So you're sure you'll be alright on your own?" her mother questioned, carrying her fingernail ~~with the bite of her teeth~~. *absent mindedly
"For the a-millionth time yeh," Charlotte answered, rolling her ^{eyes} impatiently and rhythmically tapping her freshly painted fingernails on the kitchen table.

"Ok, sweetheart, I'll be back by 9:30 at the latest. If anything happens, call me," her mother replied ^{reassuringly}. Due to the harsh breeze outside, the heavy oak door sealed almost immediately ^{after her mother left}. Charlotte was left alone in the house; this was how she preferred to spend her evenings.

Climbing up the staircase to her room, Charlotte threw open her bedroom window and clambered into bed. The wind stroked her cheeks with its invisible fingers and the cool air was a relief.

Needing sound, Charlotte switched on the TV.

"Attention everyone," the voice echoed.

"A murderer has escaped from Locksley Prison. He is known to be highly deadly. If you spot him, take caution to not confront him. This ~~has~~ horrific figure has been reportedly seen in the locality and has a hook instead of a right hand." Charlotte had heard enough.

She lived on the outskirts of Locksley; the prison was about a mile or two from her house.

Like splintering needles darting through the night sky, a hideous storm was brewing outside. Immediately, Charlotte glanced at her ~~clock~~ clock; the time was 10:15pm. This was getting scary. Shivers tore down her spine and racked her body. Thunder crashed and howled overhead. Through the window, the moon was being drowned by a mass of heavy, grey clouds. The thunder was bellowing and groaning, gorging the ~~sky~~ ^{air} with ~~its~~ ^{its} voice. Charlotte slammed the window shut, staring in awe as lightning tore through the sky; blinding her, it illuminated a lone figure leaning against a lamppost. Slowly, the silhouette ^{with} approached, increasing speed, each step.

Charlotte glanced around, padlocked the window and ran as fast as her legs could physically ~~run~~ ^{move}. She needed to lock the front door before the ^{is} person invaded her home! When she arrived downstairs, her heart stopped. The earth was holding its breath. Fear choked her with his murderous hands. There, in front of her, stood a man. ^{Attached to one} ~~On his right~~ ^{of his hands} ~~hand~~, Charlotte caught a glimpse of silver metal, before never imagining this would ^{ever} happen to her. Darkness fell.

No one ever discovered the mystery of why Charlotte disappeared so suddenly that night. ~~Charlotte's~~ ^{Her} body was never found. Despite ^{located} ~~found~~ this, an unusual object was ~~found~~ after the night of the murder: my hook.

Piece B: a balanced argument

Context: as part of a project on art in the community, pupils explored the growing popularity of graffiti. Pupils were divided in their views as to whether graffiti artists should be allowed to deface public buildings with their art and, following a class debate, wrote their own balanced arguments for and against graffiti.



Should graffiti be a legal art form or is it just an eyesore and an act of vandalism?

Graffiti - otherwise recognised as 'street art' - is most famously associated with the mid 1960s, when this unique genre of art became prevalent during the hippy movement. During the 20th century, it has been made fashionable and brought up-to-date by the infamous Banksy. However, there is still much debate surrounding whether this daring form of art is an eyesore and a simple form of vandalism or an extraordinary masterpiece. After reading this argument, which side will you be drawn to?

It is believed by many that graffiti should become a justified, legal art-form which deserves respect and acknowledgement. There are numerous reasons for this; the following opinions demonstrate the arguments in favour.

Firstly, it is considered that graffiti is environmentally friendly. Due to the fact that this genre of art provides an alternative canvas, trees are redeemed and, therefore, so are the habitats of a variety of species of animals. If the residents of our planet continue to demolish rainforests, all species will become extinct and we would eventually run out of paper.

Secondly, it allows artists to express their emotions through the artwork they produce. Instead of communicating their fervour verbally, and disturbing others, graffiti artists can create a masterpiece through their feelings. These could include anger, happiness, joy and sadness. Furthermore, towns and cities could become beautiful places, regularly attracting visitors from around the globe.

On the other hand, it is stated by many that people consider graffiti an act of vandalism and a destruction of private property. Since this expressive art form can be shown around the locality you live in, taxpayers are forced to spend millions of pounds cleaning it up. As a result, vital funds are lost for hospitals, schools and roadworks, where money is better spent. Secondly, graffiti art causes environmental pollution in cities and towns: the atmosphere around us is of huge importance but is being polluted due to the toxic use of spray cans. Graffiti can also influence children: young infants could absentmindedly repeat inappropriate language to others and adolescent citizens could see prophanaties in graffiti which is a terrible way for them to witness 21st century artwork.

To conclude, my personal opinion is that graffiti should not be legalised as a form of art. This is due to the fact that if it were legalised, everyone would want to create it and it would be everywhere. Perhaps a compromise could be reached if the government established an area where graffiti is permitted to be displayed.

After reading this argument, which side will you be drawn to?



Piece C: a poem

Context: as part of a theme of work on 'Frozen Kingdoms', pupils explored a collection of poems featuring personification, including Snow and Snow (Ted Hughes), and I am Winter, King of Seasons (Brenda Williams), as well as a BBC trailer for the Winter Olympics. They then planned and wrote their own 'winter' poems, focusing on powerful imagery and personification.



Winter



Winter is a Frost Dancer,

Delicately gliding her insipid, frosty fingers,

Ornamenting each blade of grass in a glistening coat of icy droplet,

She flexes her pallid, frost-laced ballet shoes and pirouettes tirelessly,

Every individual turn cloaking the bleak lake in a thick coat of patterned ice.

Though she has done much work, this stunning winter dancer has not yet completed
her job,

Embellishing each window pane with a delicate snowflake frost bunting,

She hopes the children will be as enchanted as she is once they awake.

Winter is an Ice Ambassador,

Transforming Autumn's brittle pathway into one of his own,

Commanding any encryptions of the previous seasons annihilated,

Expending his pallid icicle staff, the Ice Ambassador engraves an icy glow into every
gnarled, twisted branch in his sight,

Casting a incantation on the trees leaves and fluctuating them into shards of ice which
suspend precariously from the frosty, wooden trees.

The Ice Ambassador recognizes he will have to retreat somewhere else soon...

After the process of Winter has started and done,

It's time for the joyous excitement of Spring to come,

Even though this season doesn't feel sorrow and shame,

The next season will presently arise and begin their reign.

Piece D: a formal letter

Context: having revisited the features of formal writing, a scenario was provided in which a visit to a local cinema failed to go to plan. Pupils role-played ways in which they might react to failings by both staff and management, and then wrote a formal letter of complaint to the manager.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am composing this letter to inform you of the inadequate standard of service at your screening establishment: Cine-for-Everyone. My family and I were made to suffer an appalling experience when visiting your 'so-called' 3-star cinema on Sunday 22nd April this year.

Initially, following taking our seats in the screening room, to my dismay, instead of the 'U' film we were expecting (Coco), an 18-rated horror movie was screened. My four-year-old son immediately concealed himself under his seat and refused to appear until the appropriate film was shown. He is currently undergoing therapy treatment for the continuous nightmares he is experiencing. I would strongly suggest training your employees to ensure that the correct film is played at the right time.

Once my family and I had finally reconciled this problem, and the desired film was being screened, the sound immediately desisted; we could not hear anything for the first fifteen minutes. Consequently, I was required to explain a brief summary of the film to my son. Eventually, the sound of the film evolved, but in a foreign language. As a result, my son was baffled and began disrupting customers' viewing. Could you imagine suffering the embarrassment I witnessed? I would advise hiring a sound inspector to improve your systems.

Finally, as I started on the supposedly 'sweet' popcorn I had purchased, another problem occurred: I had been given salted. Due to the severe allergic reaction I have to salted popcorn, my husband immediately appealed to a member of staff, but was dismissed with a 'not my problem'. As a result of the ambulance not being contacted soon enough for my needs, my eldest son missed the birthday celebrations he had been looking forward to for several months. If I were you, I would train your staff to provide their customers with the correct order placed.

To conclude, I trust that after reading my letter, you understand the pain my family and I experienced at your establishment. To compensate us for this atrocious day, I expect reimbursement for the family ticket, our popcorn, and the parking fine we received due to leaving your cinema late. You will also find attached to this letter, the therapist's bill and receipt of my son's birthday celebration cost. Should you not comply to this request, I shall be seeking my lawyer's advice.

I look forward to a reply within the next 7 days.

Yours sincerely,

XxxxXxxxxx

Piece E: a myth

Context: as part of a topic on Mexico, pupils learnt about Mayan mythology. They explored how and why a character might embark on a quest, as well as the challenges they might face. The pupil then chose to write the opening to their own Mayan myth.

"Hello, is anybody there?" Gnarled, twisted branches clutched Votan's murky cloak. Murderous ghoulish-like shadows rambled around him. No-one answered. It had been ^{Votan's} his desire to save his village, which had ^{led} brought him to this dangerous place...

It had begun two months before when darkness had consumed the ^{once peaceful} village. Any sign ~~of~~ of light had been annihilated by the crescent moon and ~~would~~ waking up each morning was a sight to behold. No sun meant no crops, no light and soon, no villagers: everything would perish, with the moon in control.

While the villagers worried and prayed each night before going to sleep, only to awake to what they feared the most, a young village boy named Votan knew he had to take action. Creeping cautiously out of his thatched hut, ~~to~~ this brave young adventurer set off to the small temple on the outskirts of the village. Luckily, pushing open the door to it, he found the building completely empty. ~~A moment later~~ Votan knelt before the altar; his only chance to stop this eternal darkness was to reason with the Moon goddess, Ix Chell.

"Please, oh mighty Ix Chell, I beg you

to make an end to the eternal darkness thrust on our village," Votan muttered under his breath, waiting for 'himself' to speak another word. "Our beautifully grown crops ~~that~~ are dying due to ~~no sunlight~~ your darkness," he ~~stopped~~ ^{paused}, then ^{uncertainly} continued on, "Do you really wish for us to ~~die~~ expire of starvation?"

A beam of light struck the altar and, suddenly, a pure voice whispered a chorus of echoes.

"Votan, you are my a courageous boy - and are my only hope," the voice ~~was~~ exclaimed; "my dear brother, the Sun God, has been captured by the Lords of Death and without him, your village will never witness light again. You are the ~~the~~ person I have been awaiting to undertake the perilous journey to the UnderWorld. You are the person who can defeat the Lords of Death and ~~and~~ bring my brother home. You are the person who can be your village's saviour. Will you accept this daring challenge?"