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Bridging plans: from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4

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department for
children, schools and families

Bridging plans:
from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4

Contents

Introduction

Background to the series

This booklet is designed to help English departments plan for effective transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 by creating teaching and learning plans that bridge the key stages. In the literal sense, a bridge has two ends. Bridging plans will be effective only if teachers give thought to how the work at the end of Year 9 can be linked with the beginning of Year 10.

From a pupil's perspective, moving from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 may be less marked than other key stage transitions because it does not usually involve a change of school. However, some important milestones are reached. Perhaps for the first time in their lives, pupils make choices about the subjects they will study and, to some extent, the paths they will follow. They also become aware of how GCSE courses will be different, for example in having an element of assessment by coursework.

Many English departments avoid a sense of anti-climax at the end of Year 9 by offering pupils opportunities that complement or extend the work they have been doing previously. For example, some departments run a school version of the Carnegie award for children's literature or investigate language change over time, while others use units from NATE's *Cracking Drama* as a preparation for the analysis through drama of playscripts and other texts for GCSE.

The aim of these materials is to suggest additional ways in which you could help pupils make a confident start to Key Stage 4, particularly by making best use of the latter part of the summer term in Year 9. This is not just about starting GCSE courses early: it is about stimulating pupils' interest and keeping them engaged. It is also about creating a sense of moving on, with an expectation of increasing maturity and independence as a learner. The aim should be to develop bridging plans that can be incorporated into a scheme of work and, with appropriate revision, used from year to year.

How to use this booklet

A suggested sequence of steps is to:

- Read the booklet and reflect on the suggestions it contains – you might want to encourage other colleagues to do so as well.

- Take your thoughts to a meeting of the department:

    - highlight some general points from the booklet;

    - review what you currently do during the latter part of Year 9 and the first few weeks of Year 10;

    - examine pupils' performance in Year 9 to identify curricular strengths and relatively weaker areas that might be addressed as part of a bridging project;

    - consider possibilities for development, using the tables on pages 7–10 which show links to the revised English Framework strands, sub-strands and objectives and give brief summaries of the various projects included as a starting point;

    - agree on the changes you want to make, possibly delegating detailed development to a smaller group.

- Allow time to review the implementation of your plan and make changes for future years.

Developing independent learners

Increasing numbers of departments recognise the need to think about pupils, not only in terms of their capabilities in the subject, but also in terms of their learning skills. Maturing towards independence is gradual; pupils do not suddenly change as they move from one key stage to another. However, the transition between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 provides an opportunity to refocus attention of both teachers and pupils and to set up activities that could have a positive impact on pupils' learning skills.

Expectations for the end of Key Stage 4

Pupils who are effective learners have the skills to learn on their own. They can be relied on to work independently, even for long periods. Southampton LA worked with teachers to identify statements that describe effective learners at different stages of their development. These statements identify the learning skills that pupils need to be taught. The following statements are for the end of Key Stage 4. By age 16 effective learners:

- are well organised and plan their work confidently, balancing priorities;

- show independence in solving problems, selecting the most effective strategy with confidence and seeking help when needed;

- gather information efficiently and take notes in a variety of ways, selecting the method to suit the purpose;

- can reorganise their work and present it with a clear sense of audience;

- are effective team members and can recognise the different roles needed to complete a task and will often take on that role to ensure completion;

- search for a purpose for learning and will challenge and question to ensure that what they are learning is appropriate;

- explore how this new learning fits with existing knowledge and accommodate any changes to their overall 'map';

- assess their own work and can identify areas for improvement and seek help to clarify how they can improve.

Taking this list as a goal, think about some of your current Year 9 pupils. What steps do they need to take towards becoming independent learners? To support you in selecting a bridging project that is suitable to your pupils' needs as learners, you will find a reference to the relevant group or groups of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTs) within each project description.

Strategies for developing pupils' learning skills

Some pupils, or even whole classes, lack the necessary skills to work independently of their teachers. For example, in most lessons these pupils are not organised: they give up when they meet a challenge and opt out of discussion and group work. Such pupils require particular attention, but the need to develop learning skills is not confined to these groups. As they grow older, *all* pupils need to acquire a greater perception of themselves as learners.

Research shows that pupils can be taught to become more independent in their work and thus become more effective learners. It often pays to start small, by concentrating on a particular learning skill, such as organising information.

The steps for teaching a new skill may be summarised as follows:

- Model for pupils how the particular skill is carried out.

- Select tasks carefully to match your goals and to ensure that pupils experience success.

- Give good examples and make clear what the criteria of success are.

- Monitor individuals and the whole class and deal with difficulties.

- Provide constructive oral and written feedback, not just marks and grades.

As you begin to foster new habits in pupils, gradually increase expectations.

- Set challenging tasks for the whole class, building in necessary support.

- As a whole class, work collaboratively through the stages of solving a problem, gradually reducing the support you provide.

- Focus particularly on understanding problems and planning the solutions.

- Include short spells of carefully structured paired or small-group work.

- Expect pupils to share, comment on and evaluate each other's work.

- Develop thinking skills by raising questions about ways of working and encouraging reflection on strategies for learning.

Note: This section draws on *Pedagogy and practice: Teaching and learning in secondary schools, Unit 17: Developing effective learners* (DfES 0440-2004G).

English: from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4

Following assessment and reporting at the end of Year 9, it is quite common for departments to consider starting the GCSE course early. But what does this feel like for pupils? Since English is a compulsory subject, pupils may not have a sense of taking responsibility for their choices in English as they do with optional subjects. How can you make best use of the time available to promote the features of English in Key Stage 4 that make it feel exciting, new or challenging for pupils?

By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have a lifetime of language learning to draw upon. To differing degrees they have:

- become fluent speakers and discriminating listeners who can collaborate through talk and read aloud with expression;

- learned to read and respond to a range of fiction, enjoyed exploring poems and experienced a variety of plays including a Shakespeare play;

- developed reading strategies that enable them to read for information in a variety of ways and to recognise a writer's viewpoint and techniques;

- grown a distinctive personal voice as a writer, and become capable of organising their writing to reflect audience and purpose;

- understood the value of sentence variety, the power of punctuation and the need for accuracy in spelling.

In Key Stage 4 there are new perspectives to consider when targeting pupils' development within the GCSE tiering structure, but pupils will build on their Key Stage 3 experiences by:

- taking more responsibility for improving their own learning and performance;

- developing their communication skills to a higher level for formal GCSE assessment in speaking and listening across a range of contexts;

- engaging in more independent in-depth work, such as coursework investigations, critical study of substantial literary texts and extended personal writing;

- extending their analyses of writers' techniques and intentions;

- increasing their ability to shape writing for different readers and purposes;

- improving the precision and accuracy of their writing.

The short period at the end of the key stage, particularly after end-of-year assessments have taken place, offers an opportunity to develop pupils' key skills prior to GCSE, to help pupils to see learning as a continuous process which bridges the key stages and to equip them to make the transition. You will want to decide which skills your pupils are most in need of learning and to design opportunities for pupils to develop these skills in engaging and meaningful contexts. You will also want to consider whether these projects, or the Year 9-10 transition unit featured in *Transition and progression in non-fiction writing: Years 7–10* (Ref: 0053-2004), could offer opportunities for pupils to learn and apply Functional English skills at Level 1 and increasingly at Level 2.

Selecting bridging projects for development

The tables on the following pages map the English bridging projects against the strands and sub-strands of the revised English Framework which closely relate to the learning outcomes of the suggested projects (Table 1) and provide an overview of what the five projects involve (Table 2). You will want to select your project carefully, taking account of what pupils have previously studied and achieved in Year 9 – and what their next targets for improvement are – and also bearing in mind the time, staffing and resources available to you.

Consider whether you already incorporate bridging activities in your current scheme of work. If so, is there value in reviewing what you currently do? If you do not yet use bridging projects, is there value in developing one or more of the projects outlined here? You might find it useful to copy the summary tables and use them as a starting point for discussion with colleagues in your department. The last section of the booklet gives details of each project and lists necessary resources so that you can assess the suggested projects to clarify what they are offering and check whether you have, or can obtain, any materials needed.

The description of each project that follows these tables is intended as a starting point for a department's planning. Each description provides some detail about each project's intended learning outcomes and structure, guidance on such matters as resources and timing and a suggested lesson-by-lesson breakdown of the project overview. Departments will wish to use and adapt the approaches and plans provided here to ensure that the project as it is taught in school is well matched to your own pupils' learning needs and styles.

Table 1: Selecting a project to meet your pupils' needs

Framework areas	Framework strands	Framework sub-strands	Bridging project 1: pupil self-assessment	Bridging project 2: reading the media	Bridging project 3: poetry comparison	Bridging project 4: extending writing	Non-fiction writing: years 9–10
Speaking and listening	1 Listening and responding	1.1 Developing active listening skills and strategies	*				
		1.2 Understanding and responding to what speakers say in formal and informal contexts		*			
	2 Speaking and presenting	2.1 Developing and adapting speaking skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts	*	*			*
		2.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of spoken texts			*		
	3 Group discussion and interaction	3.1 Developing and adapting discussion skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts	*			*	*
		3.2 Taking roles in group discussion	*		*		
	4 Drama, role-play and performance	4.1 Using dramatic approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues					
		4.2 Developing, adapting and responding to dramatic techniques, conventions and styles					

Reading						
5 Reading for meaning	5.1 Developing and adapting active reading skills and strategies	*	*			
	5.2 Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts		*			
	5.3 Reading and engaging with a wide and varied range of texts					
6 Understanding the author's craft	6.1 Relating texts to the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they were written					
	6.2 Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning	*	*			
	6.3 Analysing writers' use of organisation, structure, layout and presentation			*	*	

Category	Strand	Element				
Writing	7 Composition: generating ideas, planning and drafting	7.1 Generating ideas, planning and drafting	*	*		*
		7.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of texts on paper and on screen	*			
	8 Composition: shaping, constructing language for expression and effect	8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas	*	*		
		8.2 Varying sentences and punctuation for clarity and effect				
		8.3 Improving vocabulary for precision and impact				
		8.4 Developing varied linguistic and literary techniques				
		8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts in a variety of forms on paper and on screen	*	*		
		8.6 Developing and using editing and proofreading skills on paper and on screen	*	*		
	9 Conventions: drawing on conventions and structures	9.1 Using the conventions of standard English				
		9.2 Using grammar accurately and appropriately	*			
		9.3 Reviewing spelling and increasing knowledge of word derivations, patterns and families	*			
Language	10 Exploring and analysing language	10.1 Exploring language variation and development according to time, place, culture, society and technology			*	
		10.2 Commenting on language use				

Table 2: Overview of English bridging projects

Project	Title	Time required	Summary	Where to find it
English bridging plan 1	Pupil self-assessment	5–6 hours	Pupils should be encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own progress as learners. This means knowing what they do well and what they could do better. This project involves developing a personal profile as a speaker, a listener, a reader and a writer. It also involves an initial exploration of the assessment objectives that underpin GCSE.	p. 13
English bridging plan 2	Reading the media	7–9 hours	Media interpretation carries significant weight in GCSE assessment. This project centres on a comparison of television, radio, web-based and printed news media to examine similarities and differences in the representation of common stories. It also focuses on the particular advantages of accessing the news in different media. The project looks at the style of presentation and the language used, and considers how the differing editorial decisions used by each medium may affect the approach to the story. Final presentations emphasise the linking of ideas with evidence, since this prepares for the writing of an informative guide to the news media. Some schools might wish to extend the project by creating newspapers as well as comparing them, or by creating film or video sequences that are aimed at different audiences and use different techniques and images.	p. 18
English bridging plan 3	Poetry comparison	6–7 hours	Poetry has a high profile in GCSE English as well as in GCSE English Literature. This unit addresses the analysis and comparison objectives from the Framework in an enjoyable way by focusing on the oral presentation of poetry. Groups of pupils choose a particular poet or period and prepare presentations, which could be linked with a sequence of images. Some pupils might want to make tape recordings that are synchronised with the images, or to create a film.	p. 22
English bridging plan 4	Extending writing	6–7 hours	Examiners' reports indicate that original writing is one of the weakest elements of GCSE coursework for many pupils. This project gives the opportunity to teach pupils how to develop, draft and revise an extended piece of original narrative writing.	p. 28
Transition and progression in non-fiction writing: Years 7–10	Year 9–10 transition unit	6–7 hours	Establishing and sustaining viewpoint in a variety of texts is an important GCSE skill. This unit focuses on how to write analysis, review and comment. In week one, pupils write a balanced analysis of the Harry Potter phenomenon taking into account a range of evidence and opinions and, in week two, pupils write a critical review of either a GCSE text or a film.	Transition and progression in non-fiction: Years 7–10, pp. 59–76

Implementing your bridging plans

Working with your department

Actively following up in Year 10 the developments initiated in Year 9 should ensure continuity and progression between the key stages – the essential purpose of your bridging plans. Whether your bridging projects are located mainly towards the end of Year 9, split evenly between Years 9 and 10, or are mainly at the beginning of Year 10, there needs to be an explicit link between the key stages, so that pupils can see that they are developing what they have begun. Discuss with colleagues how you will overcome potential obstacles to this process. Points to consider include:

- There may be significant changes in pupil groupings and staff allocations between Year 9 and Year 10. How can you ensure that these changes will not inhibit what you do and that all pupils gain full benefit from your bridging course plans?

- Do your plans involve and cater for the needs of all pupils in the year group including EAL, SEN, G&T, etc.?

- What records or notes will need to be kept by pupils and teachers and how will they be transferred?

- How will you round off the work in Year 9 and re-engage with it in Year 10?

Detailed planning, which might be delegated to a smaller group of colleagues, might raise various questions to consider, such as:

- What adaptations will you need to make to your scheme of work in order to incorporate the selected projects?

- What new material or adaptations to existing material do you propose to include?

- How should the projects be personalised to meet the needs of all pupils?

- How will you ensure that teachers are briefed and that resources are prepared in time?

Networking within your school

To ensure effective implementation of these plans, your school's senior leadership team will need to be involved. Support from the leadership team might include, for example:

- coordinating bridging plans across subjects;

- fostering development of pupils' learning skills as a whole-school focus through transition to Key Stage 4.

You might seek the assistance of the leadership team in making arrangements such as:

- teacher release to develop ideas;

- timetable changes towards the end of term;

- increased access to computer facilities.

You might also want to liaise directly with another subject department:

- to work on a joint initiative, for example by working with the history department to explore the past and present media presentation of war;

- to seek support, for example by coordinating the assessment of spelling or writing across the curriculum.

Networking with other schools and the LA

There are considerable advantages to setting up or linking into local development groups to pool ideas and perhaps develop shared materials. This is an effective way of making best use of local capacity. Possibilities to consider are:

- linking with one or more local departments to initiate a joint development;

- linking into LA facilities and networks by working with your English consultant and keeping them informed of developments.

Project 1: Pupil self-assessment

Learning outcomes

Pupils maximise their chances of making progress during Key Stage 4 by taking greater responsibility for their own learning. This means knowing what they do well, what they need to do better and how their experience at Key Stage 3 has prepared them for the different but related challenges of Key Stage 4. This project helps develop the personal, learning and thinking skills of **reflective learners.**

Objectives

English Framework sub-strands	Relevant Year 9 objectives	Relevant Year 10 objectives
1.1 Developing active listening skills and strategies	● Respond to speakers and give constructive feedback, analysing skills, subject matter, intended listeners and the purpose of talk	● Analyse, compare and contrast features of speech in a range of contexts and relate them to their own speech
2.1 Developing and adapting speaking skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts	● Select from a wide repertoire of resources and ways of organising and structuring talk to present information appropriately and persuasively for listeners in a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts ● Develop and choose effectively from a repertoire of verbal and non-verbal techniques which actively involve listeners	● Present or contribute to talk in clear, effective and flexible ways in a range of contexts which demand the understanding and application of complex or challenging content ● Sustain the interest of listeners and influence their responses by selecting effective verbal and non-verbal techniques
3.1 Developing and adapting discussion skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts	● Recognise strengths and identify areas for development in their own and others' contributions ● Move a discussion forward by developing and drawing together ideas arising from discussion	● Compare and take account of different points of view in discussion ● Make appropriate judgements about how and when best to intervene or take a lead in discussion
3.2 Taking roles in group discussion	● Choose appropriately from a wide variety of roles and apply the skills they require to plan, organise or sustain a range of different discussions	● Apply and adapt the repertoire of skills required by a range of roles in order to make sustained and relevant contributions and influence the outcomes of group discussion

Background to the project

This project outlines a sequence of lessons designed to help pupils help themselves in English. It introduces pupils to the assessment objectives for GCSE English in a way that gives them confidence by enabling them to recognise how much they know and can do. The timings are flexible to allow for variations in relation to the needs and experience of pupils.

Resources

- Evidence of pupils' work during Key Stage 3, including APP assessments

- Copies of self-assessment profiles

- GCSE assessment objectives and a GCSE oral moderation tape

- Footage odf speaking and listening from English department training and *Literacy and learning* materials.

- *Teaching speaking and listening* (www.teachingspeakinglistening.org.uk/)

- Teaching for progression: speaking and listening (DCSF 00750-2008PDF-EN-03)

Structure of the project

Introduction	Pupils use a time line to reflect on their development as speakers, listeners, readers and writers, and then identify progress in reading and writing during the key stage.	1 hour
Main body of the project	Pupils are introduced to the criteria for the formal assessment of speaking and listening at GCSE. They then complete personal self-assessment profiles, using evidence of past work, and use these as the basis for setting personal targets for future progress.	3–4 hours
Plenary stage	Teacher and pupils share and discuss the experience of self- and peer-assessment and consider how it can be used to improve their learning in Key Stage 4.	1 hour

Lesson 1: The good news

Introduce the project by outlining the objectives and emphasising that it is an opportunity for pupils to develop their skills as reflective learners. Point out the vital link between confident use of language and future success – in school and beyond. Stress the importance of pupils recognising their own development and of knowing what choices they have as speakers, listeners, readers and writers.

Model for pupils how to create a 'life time line' (i.e. a horizontal line with a section for each year) and to mark in the high and low points of their personal histories as readers and writers. Then ask them to do their own life time lines, going back as far as they can remember and using different colours for reading and writing experiences. Take examples of high and low points and encourage discussion of the most memorable moments.

In whole-class discussion, draw on your knowledge of the Framework, and of the class, to give examples of things that pupils can do better now as readers and writers than they could when they started Key Stage 3. You could use the profiles in Reading and Writing Challenge to offer pupils a language for describing their own development or remind them of specific pieces of fiction and non-fiction work that you know they have done. Allow a short time to talk in pairs and then ask pupils to write down examples of their own progress under the headings of 'reader' and 'writer'.

Collect examples under each heading, and encourage pupils to add to their own lists as they are reminded of what they can do by what others say. Hear from each pupil about some aspect of reading or writing where they are pleased with the progress they have made in Key Stage 3, and discuss what might constitute evidence for their claims (for example, written work in folders or the range of books they have read and enjoyed). Ask pupils to think, before the next lesson, about the effectiveness with which they speak and listen.

Lessons 2–4: Speaking and listening

Pupils need to know that GCSE English, unlike Key Stage 3, includes the formal assessment of speaking and listening. Point out that speaking and listening are assessed by the teacher and over time. Use footage of oral communication (such as the GCSE standardising tape that should still be in schools or video clips from the *Teaching speaking and listening* and *Literacy and learning* materials) to clarify expectations and to familiarise the pupils with the ideas of assessment and constructive feedback. Show one person or group discussion on the tape and model the type of feedback that would be helpful to the speakers featured on the tape, drawing as appropriate on the criteria and commentaries provided by the boards.

Draw out that:

- assessment should be concerned with making decisions about the quality of a piece of work, based on clear and agreed criteria for success;

- constructive feedback is concerned with giving guidance about how the quality of the work can be improved.

In the introduction, explain the ground rules for assessment and constructive feedback: each demands honesty, trust and openness. Assessment and feedback must be guided by the assessment criteria and the quality of the work, and not by appearances and relationships. Point out the value of words and phrases such as:

- *because, if, explain, describe;*

- *when you…, try to…, next time…*; in helpful feedback.

Show the class a second extract from the tape and give pairs of pupils time to assess and comment on it together, using a simplified mark scheme. They can then discuss their assessment and give feedback in groups of four. The class can come to a common agreement in a plenary session.

Suggest that pupils reflect on and identify their strengths and weaknesses in speaking and listening by working in pairs during group discussion. They can take it in turns to observe each other and give feedback about how they ask or answer questions; how they grasp ideas or get the wrong end of the stick; how clearly and confidently they explain ideas in more formal settings; how they justify their opinions and give clear examples or how far they rely on bald assertion; how they respond to talking in unfamiliar contexts; how effectively they challenge in debate, etc.

Show and discuss suitable footage from English department training or the *Literacy and learning* materials. Then ask pupils to prepare and present a formal talk, as individuals or in a group, which can be assessed using GCSE criteria.

Lesson 5: Self-assessment

Give pupils a self-assessment profile such as the one provided at the end of this project, or one developed within your school, to help them to recognise where it is best to focus their efforts. Explain that each assessment category links with what they have learned in Key Stage 3 and also features in GCSE assessment. Remind them that they have been learning with objectives in mind for years, so that addressing the GCSE assessment objectives in addition to Year 10 learning objectives is not a process that is new to them. Give as many examples of the categories as the pupils need to feel confident in their understanding before they complete the self-assessment. If possible, use anonymised material written by Key Stage 4 pupils or examination board coursework exemplars and Key Stage 3 pieces written in school. Give pupils access to their own APP assessments and any recent test papers to inform their judgements and provide examples. Encourage pupils to think about the range of reading they enjoy as well as the quality of their understanding of what they read. For pupils leaving Key Stage 3 on the borderline between levels, e.g. insecure level 5 or only just short of level 7, try to indicate precise areas of personal development in reading and writing based on teacher assessment and analysis of key areas of test performance. Once pupils have completed an initial impression audit of personal strengths and comparative weaknesses, ask them to

discuss the evidence for their judgements with a partner. The pairs discuss and decide on their individual priorities for the current term and for the coming year. Each pair then joins another pair, and each person uses a completed profile to describe his or her partner's strengths, citing examples as much as possible. The profiles are then returned to their owners, who explain what their top priorities are for future learning. (They could be written up for homework and then confirmed with the teacher.) Finally teacher and pupils share priorities and discuss the experience of self- and peer-assessment. When discussing how these processes can help them to improve their learning in Key Stage 4, they might refer to the Year 10 learning objectives and GCSE assessment objectives.

Developing the project in Year 10

Pupils' images of themselves as learners, and their recognition of what they know and what they need to know, underpin progress in Years 10 and 11. The process of self-assessment as outlined in this project can help prepare pupils for GCSE, since in Year 10 they will be expected to take greater responsibility for their own learning, to manage coursework materials, assignments and timing and to prioritise their efforts in relation to their pattern of achievement. By introducing pupils to the GCSE assessment objectives early on in Year 10, teachers can involve pupils in identifying their personal targets, negotiating aspects of their learning and monitoring their own progress. It may also be possible to continue and extend the peer-group assessment featured in the project.

Self-assessment profile

Name: _____

Please tick as appropriate.

Reading Are you effective at:	Usually	Sometimes	Not often
● using different strategies for reading literary and non-literary texts?			
● showing that you understand clearly what the text states?			
● realising what the text implies (suggests) but does not say explicitly?			
● recognising how a text is organised to carry a particular meaning?			
● using examples from a text to back up what you say about it?			
● finding the important bits of information from different texts and putting them together in your own words?			
● making comments about particular words a writer has chosen?			
● explaining the effect a writer's choices have on a reader?			
● writing about what you think a writer was trying to achieve?			
● understanding how language varies according to time and place?			

Writing Are you effective at:	Usually	Sometimes	Not often
• imagining, planning and writing a story that can catch and keep the interest of readers?			
• collecting ideas and planning a piece of non-fiction writing so that it is organised effectively?			
• writing in different ways for different readers and purposes?			
• holding a reader's interest by choosing the best words?			
• writing a range of sentences that begin and develop in different ways?			
• making your meaning clear by using paragraphs and punctuation effectively?			
• writing legibly and spelling most words correctly?			
Speaking and listening Are you effective at:	Usually	Sometimes	Not often
• speaking clearly in different situations (e.g. giving a talk)?			
• using standard English when appropriate?			
• listening well and contributing effectively in discussion?			
• adopting different roles and using techniques that help to communicate effectively with an audience?			

Project 2: Reading the media

Learning outcomes

Analysis of the media carries significant weight in GCSE coursework. This project will give pupils a stimulating and enjoyable approach to the study of media representation in a range of different forms. It also prepares them for the formal analytical writing required in many GCSE specifications since it includes consideration of the characteristics and advantages of different media. The project develops the personal, learning and thinking skills of **independent enquiries** and **team players**.

Objectives

English Framework sub-strands	Relevant Year 9 objectives	Relevant Year 10 objectives
1.2 Understanding and responding to what speakers say in formal and informal contexts	• Analyse the underlying themes or issues in a range of different contexts, identifying implied and explicit meanings and the speaker's intentions	• Compare, contrast and synthesise what they hear in different contexts, distinguishing between implied and explicit meanings and between key ideas, detail and illustration, and make judgements about speakers' intentions
2.1 Developing and adapting speaking skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts	• Select from a wide repertoire of resources and ways of organising and structuring talk to present information appropriately and persuasively for listeners in a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts • Develop and choose effectively from a repertoire of verbal and non-verbal techniques which actively involve listeners	• Present or contribute to talk in clear, effective and flexible ways in a range of contexts which demand the understanding and application of complex or challenging content • Sustain the interest of listeners and influence their responses by selecting effective verbal and non-verbal techniques
5.1 Developing and adapting active reading skills and strategies	• Select from a range of strategies the most appropriate ways to locate, retrieve and compare information and ideas from a variety of texts • Use a repertoire of reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within texts • Make relevant notes in a range of formats and approaches when researching a variety of sources	• Select, compare and contrast information carefully from texts for specific tasks, taking account of the origin and purpose of the sources and knowing how to recognise bias and opinion • Draw on a repertoire of reading strategies in order to analyse, compare and respond to layers of meaning, subtlety and allusion in texts • Summarise and synthesise relevant information from a range of sources, selecting the most useful note form for the purpose

6.2 Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning	• Analyse in depth and detail writers' use of literary, rhetorical and grammatical features and their effects on different readers	• Compare and contrast how writers use specific literary, rhetorical and grammatical features to shape meaning, how techniques differ between different texts and writers, and the potential impact on different readers
7.1 Generating ideas, planning and drafting	• Link their selection of ideas and planning choices explicitly to a clear sense of task, purpose and audience and the individuality of their own writing	• Draw efficiently on and adapt a range of possible ways to generate, plan and shape ideas for impact, according to task, purpose and audience

Background to the project

This project centres on a comparison of television, radio, web-based and printed news media to examine similarities and differences in the representation of common stories and to focus on the advantages and disadvantages of accessing the news in different media. The project focuses on the style of presentation and the language used, and considers how the differing editorial decisions used by each medium may affect the approach to the story. Throughout there will be an emphasis on supporting ideas with specific evidence.

Resources

- Recordings of radio and TV news bulletins
- Access to internet news materials
- Copies of a selection of different newspapers
- PowerPoint software if appropriate
- Audio and video/DVD players

Structure of the project

Introduction	The teacher introduces the project by describing the GCSE requirements for studying media. As a class, pupils then read, view or listen to news items in different media and compare the features of each.	1 hour
Main body of the project	Groups of pupils study news items from different media and complete a comparison. The groups then prepare a presentation comparing the items from the different media.	4–5 hours
Conclusion	A presentation by groups of pupils of their findings, using evidence from the news media to support their views. All pupils then draw on those presentations to write an informative piece on the media.	2–3 hours

Lesson 1

Introduce the project by explaining that the class will be looking at the different ways of receiving news today. Gather suggestions from the class as to the ways in which we can access news, ranging from newspapers to text messages. Use the suggestions to describe the way in which technology has transformed news in the last hundred years. Explain to the class that the project will allow groups to examine the advantages and drawbacks of the different media. Model the process by comparing reports in different newspapers of a particular story or stories with a recording of a news programme from a different medium. Use a comparison grid such as the one provided at the end of this project to focus the comparison of different media.

Having modelled the analysis of the items of news, divide the class into groups. Each group should consider possible news stories they could investigate. They should agree to record bulletins, collect newspapers and, if available, save web-based news items relating to the possible theme they have selected. For homework pupils can look at and record news programmes focusing on a particular story and collect newspapers covering the same story.

Lesson 2

Groups share their evidence and findings from the homework task. Model the use of the comparison grid, taking examples from the groups' work. As they begin working in their groups, remind them to search for telling evidence from the materials they have collected to complete the comparison grid. Access to a computer suite will assist the groups in finding web-based news to compare with their homework collections (the use of the web-based materials will require careful monitoring). Groups could also access online versions of newspapers to compare the news items. Video/DVD and tape/CD/MP3 players will be required so that the groups can consider any radio and TV news items they have recorded. Suggest that groups focus on a particular story or theme, such as sports reports, in their work. Use guided sessions to support groups as they access relevant information from the web. In a plenary session, groups report their findings and identify the particular news stories and media they plan to investigate.

Lessons 3–6

The groups continue to work on the comparisons of the news items from different media. Shared sessions at the beginning of each lesson will help the groups to refocus their work. In the shared sessions, use some of the emerging examples to explore bias, viewpoint and the style of language used in items from different media. Remind groups of the final presentation, which will cover the findings they have made. (Give groups a time limit for the presentation and emphasise the need to select a telling quotation to illustrate the point rather than using the whole news item.) Emphasise that the groups' work will be helped if they are able to focus on a strong news story developing over a few days, since this will enable them to follow the emerging themes.

The final presentations are likely to be quite complex as groups will be examining a variety of different media. If computers are being used for the project and pupils have the relevant experience, a PowerPoint presentation may well be appropriate for some groups. PowerPoint allows items from the web to be copied and pasted into slides as required. Video/DVD and tape/CD/MP3 players can be used to play extracts from the recordings the groups have made to support the presentation. Where applicable, homework sessions can be used to investigate further news items. Use plenary sessions to report on progress and to revisit the aims of the project.

Lesson 7

The groups make presentations of their project findings to the rest of the class. If it is possible to invite a senior member of staff or other visitor to the presentations; this will help to raise the profile of the occasion. At the end of the session, review with the class the particular advantages and drawbacks of the different news media that have been covered.

Lessons 8–9

Draw on the presentations and the findings about the media to model for pupils how to write a guide to the news media for a specific readership. Demonstrate how to plan, open, close and write such a piece, with audience and purpose in mind. Pay deliberate attention to PEE/PEA – the linking of Point, Evidence and Explanation/Analysis. While most groups work on their planning, join one group to ensure that they produce an OHT or PowerPoint slide exemplar for discussion. Pupils can complete their versions for homework. In the final lesson revisit the aims of the project and review what the pupils have gained for their future work at GCSE.

Developing the project in Year 10

This project contributes to Year 10 work in a range of ways. In particular it develops skills in media interpretation, which is a significant feature in many GCSE specifications, both as coursework and in examination. The presentations, which are typical of the formal speaking required for GCSE speaking and listening, give useful practice in collaborative working and in articulating ideas. The comparison of different media extends pupils' experience of writing with a specific viewpoint for a designated audience and purpose. Such writing has a high profile in GCSE criteria, and for some boards the writing done by pupils during the project would be a useful rehearsal for a coursework media assignment.

Media comparison grid

Name: _____

	Newspapers	TV	Radio	Web
Headline or title of story				
How up to date?				
Speed of updating				
Length of item in pages or time				
Reliability of information				
Style of comment and explanation of news				
Style of language				
How easy to revisit and reread news?				
Use of interviews				
Use of illustrations				
Bias or 'angle' taken by publisher to the story				

Project 3: Poetry comparison

Learning outcomes

Pupils develop their skills of oral communication and working with others by preparing and delivering presentations about poems. This helps them to engage in critical analysis of the type expected at GCSE. Extension possibilities include making tape recordings that are synchronised with the images or using the Devon Education Services pack *Poem: image: film* to extend their exploration of the way medium influences meaning. This project develops the personal, learning and thinking skills of **team workers**.

Objectives

English Framework sub-strands	Relevant Year 9 objectives	Relevant Year 10 objectives
2.2 Using and adapting the conventions and forms of spoken texts	● Use and adapt a range of conventions and forms of spoken texts in different contexts for different purposes	● Choose from a repertoire of conventions and forms of spoken texts, and adapt them to achieve a range of planned effects in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts
3.2 Taking roles in group discussion	● Choose appropriately from a wide variety of roles and apply the skills required to plan, organise or sustain a range of different discussions	● Apply and adapt the repertoire of skills required by a range of roles in order to make sustained and relevant contributions and influence the outcomes of group discussion
5.1 Developing and adapting active reading skills and strategies	● Select from a range of strategies the most appropriate ways to locate, retrieve and compare information and ideas from a variety of texts ● Use a repertoire of reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within texts ● Make relevant notes in a range of formats and approaches when researching a variety of sources	● Select, compare and contrast information carefully from texts for specific tasks, taking account of the origin and purpose of the sources and knowing how to recognise bias and opinion ● Draw on a repertoire of reading strategies in order to analyse, compare and respond to layers of meaning, subtlety and allusion in texts ● Summarise and synthesise relevant information from a range of sources, selecting the most useful note form for the purpose

5.2 Understanding and responding to ideas, viewpoints, themes and purposes in texts	• Analyse and respond to the range of ideas and differing viewpoints, purposes and themes in a variety of texts • Develop interpretations of texts, supporting points with detailed textual evidence	• Analyse, compare and contrast ideas, viewpoints, purposes and themes, both within a text and between texts • Build an interpretation of a whole text, recognising links between ideas, themes or characters and supporting points with precise analysis, evidence and explanation
6.2 Analysing how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning	• Analyse in depth and detail writers' use of literary, rhetorical and grammatical features and their effects on different readers	• Compare and contrast how writers use specific literary, rhetorical and grammatical features to shape meaning, how techniques differ between different texts and writers, and the potential impact on different readers
10.2 Commenting on language use	• Analyse a range of texts or language uses, drawing on terminology related to literary, linguistic and grammatical features	• Draw on a wide repertoire of language terms as appropriate, when analysing, comparing and contrasting texts, including their own

Background to the project

This project links speaking and listening, reading and writing by using the oral presentation of poetry as an enjoyable preparation for critical comparison. It addresses the poetry-related assessment objectives for GCSE English and (especially) GCSE English Literature. The project reflects Seamus Heaney's analysis of the way the enjoyment of poetry is enlarged into appreciation, thus deepening a reader's engagement with poetry: stage one is *'the experience of enjoying poetry, feeling it intensely and getting to know many individual poems and kinds of poem. Then comes a second stage when the reader begins to classify and compare these experiences, to see one in the light of the other.'*

Resources

• Class copies of a short poem that is open to different interpretations. Anthologies such as *Short and Sweet* edited by Simon Armitage (Faber ISBN-10 0 571 20001 X) or *101 sonnets: From Shakespeare to Heaney* edited by Don Paterson (Faber ISBN-13 9780 5712 15577) include many such poems. Both are also available as audiobooks.

• Linked group sets of poems (e.g. poets or poetry clusters from GCSE poetry anthologies, war poetry, love poetry, sonnets from different centuries).

• Exemplar comparisons written by Key Stage 4 pupils.

• *Poem: image: film*, £39.99 (for book and DVD) from Devon Education Services, www.deseducation. org/eshop/search_products.asp?eshop=1

Structure of the project

Introduction	The teacher reminds pupils of the possibilities for dramatic presentation of poetry by having groups present the same short poem in different ways.	1 hour
Main body of the project	Groups of pupils develop dramatic presentations of poems and present them to the whole class. Pupils then use a comparison checklist to identify similarities and differences between poems and, with demonstration and guidance from the teacher, plan and write a critical comparison.	4–5 hours
Conclusion	The class review what they have learned, and how this could contribute to their GCSE work.	1 hour

Lesson 1

Share with pupils the GCSE assessment objectives that relate to poetry. Point out that a creative and enjoyable performance of poems is also a critical activity, since it requires understanding of what the writer was trying to do and how particular techniques contribute to the impact of a poem. Stress that the group presentation of a poem needs to be developed collaboratively with the audience in mind. Remind pupils how to exploit the potential of a presentation by demonstrating (with the help of a pre-rehearsed small group or groups) how a poem or few lines can mean different things when read in different ways. Then divide the class into groups and have each group present the same short poem using a different style of presentation. Ideally the poem will have something of the enigmatic resonance of Charles Causley's *I am the Song*, but any short poem will do as long as it has scope for multiple interpretation. The *Short and Sweet* anthology edited by Simon Armitage is a useful source of suitable poems. Possible styles of presentation include, but are not limited to:

- reading all or parts of the verse in unison;
- taking a line each;
- dramatising dialogue;
- rapping or chanting;
- saying words or phrases in differing numbers of voices;
- having one voice reading while others mime or echo;
- using movement and positioning;
- making a tape recording;
- finding objects or images that link with the poem;
- using repetition and echoing to emphasise key words;
- adding sounds such as stamping or clapping, whispering or shouting;
- providing a reading that challenges the apparent mood of the poem.

The vital point is that each group should produce a reading that reveals and reinforces the meanings they find in the poem. After groups have presented the poem, discuss the varying impact of the techniques used, and what pupils found most challenging. Talk about how they arrived at their group decisions and ask for examples of effective collaboration.

Lessons 2–3

Work with a selection of poems that offer a fruitful basis for comparison by having a link between them based on similarity or difference. The link might be that they are all by the same poet, are all on the same subject, were written in the same period but in different cultures or were written at different times but in the same form, e.g. sonnets.

Give each group a different poem. During lesson 2, groups read their way into understanding and prepare their presentations, drawing on the range of methods used in the previous lesson. It can be more helpful for them to ask each other 'How shall we read it aloud?' rather than 'What does it mean?'. Understanding can develop during the process of creating a reading.

Lesson 3 is the presentations. After each presentation, each group in the audience is asked to make one positive comment and to ask one question.

Lessons 4–5

Creative and critical approaches come together in lesson 4. Using a starter based on the pupil checklist provided at the end of this project, ensure that pupils have a shared understanding of key terms. Show how to plan a critical comparison of two of the presented poems. Point out that it is better to compare the poems feature by feature, rather than considering one whole poem and then the other. Explore one or two features, drawing on textual evidence suggested by pupils as much as possible and modelling the use of connectives for comparison and contrast. Stress the importance of explaining differences and similarities, not just identifying them. Allocate groups different features to comment on and use the plenary to review understanding.

In lesson 5 give groups of pupils the opportunity to plan a complete comparison based on the checklist. Each group has two poems in the centre of a large sheet of paper, and groups look for and underline or highlight textual evidence relating to categories from the checklist. Work with one group to produce an OHT for class discussion in the plenary. Pupils could complete this for homework.

Lesson 6

Use lesson 6 for reading over the critical comparisons and then introduce some of the criteria by which writing about literary texts is judged at GCSE. For a 'C' grade the criteria are:

- knowing the poems well enough to select appropriate details;
- giving a structured and relevant response to a particular question;
- commenting on meaning and style;
- explaining how literary effects are achieved, e.g. use of imagery;
- using details to support points made;
- analysing the impact of language and poetic techniques;
- relating form to content and meaning;
- sustaining the comparison of similarities and differences.

Model the application of these criteria to a critical comparison written by a pupil or taken from GCSE exemplar material, before pupils assess each other's work. Do not ask for overall judgements; instead ask pupils to identify positive examples related to the criteria above.

Finish with a review of what has been learned in terms of the key skill of working together, as well as the engagement with poetry. Introduce pupils to the assessment objectives for GCSE English and English Literature and explain how what they have been doing prepares them for GCSE.

Extension possibilities include making tape recordings of a group of poems, linking poems with still or moving images, developing classroom displays and presenting other groups of poems to a wider pupil or parent audience. The Key Stage 3 teaching resource *Poem: image: film*, produced by Devon Education Services, offers a stimulating set of teacher guidance and pupil support materials and provides an admirable introduction to linking poetry with moving image.

Developing the project in Year 10

This project prepares pupils for Year 10 in a range of ways. In terms of speaking and listening it gives them practice in speaking formally to an audience, and in articulating ideas and in responding to what they have heard. By writing a comparative critical essay they engage with aspects of the criteria that are vital for those seeking higher grades at GCSE.

Pupil checklist for literary comparison

Name: _____

Time	● When was it written? ● Connotations of that time for readers ● Language of that time
Place	● Where was it written and for whom? ● What difference does that make?
Authorial intention	● What was the writer trying to say or do? ● How do we know? ● Point of view ● 'Message'? ● What doesn't the author tell us?
Structure and form	● Visual shape ● Link between form and content ● Opening ● Ending
Language choices	● Register (formal, informal) ● Tone ● Language choices ● Vocabulary ● Dialect? ● Standard English?

Images	- Metaphors - Similes - Personification - Symbols
Sounds	- Assonance (repeated vowel sounds) - Alliteration (repeated consonants) - Onomatopoeia (sound matching sense) - Enjambment (sense flows over line ending) - Rhythm (the heartbeat of the poem) - Rhyme (words that sound similar)

Project 4: Extending writing

Learning outcomes

After completing this project, pupils will know what is expected at GCSE in terms of original extended writing, and be more confident about planning, writing and revising their own original writing assignment. They will also have developed some of the skills needed for writing effectively under the time constraints of GCSE examinations. The project develops the personal, learning and thinking skills of **creative thinkers**.

Objectives

English Framework sub-strands	Relevant Year 9 objectives	Relevant Year 10 objectives
3.1 Developing and adapting discussion skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts	• Move a discussion forward by developing and drawing together ideas arising from discussion	• Make appropriate judgements about when and how best to intervene or take a lead in discussion
6.3 Analysing writers' use of organisation, structure, layout and presentation	• Analyse how meaning is conveyed in different ways according to structural and organisational choices at sentence and text level	• Compare and contrast how different writers shape texts through structure and organisation and explain the effectiveness of their choices
7.1 Generating ideas, planning and drafting	• Link their selection of ideas and planning choices explicitly to a clear sense of task, purpose and audience and the individuality of their own writing	• Draw efficiently on and adapt a range of possible ways to generate, plan and shape ideas for impact, according to task, purpose and audience
8.1 Developing viewpoint, voice and ideas	• Establish and sustain distinctive character, point of view and voice in their fiction writing by drawing on a wide range of techniques and devices used by writers	• Develop and deploy in their own fiction writing a range of carefully selected techniques, drawn from a variety of texts, to establish and sustain a distinctive use of character, point of view and voice
8.5 Structuring, organising and presenting texts in a variety of forms on paper and on screen	• Shape and craft language within individual paragraphs, and structure ideas between them to achieve particular literary, transactional or rhetorical effects with purpose and audience in mind	• Shape, craft and draw on a range of paragraph structures, links and combinations to convey ideas and achieve particular literary, transactional or rhetorical effects with purpose and audience in mind

Background to the project

This project outlines a sequence of lessons providing pupils with the opportunity to write an extended piece of original narrative writing. The number of lessons can be increased as appropriate. The project builds intentionally on the approaches to teaching writing outlined in English department training. Evidence from examiners' reports indicates that, for many pupils, personal writing is one of the weakest elements of GCSE English coursework. This project gives the opportunity to teach pupils how to develop, draft and revise an extended piece of original writing and therefore to enhance their chances of producing an effective coursework assignment.

Resources

- A selection of very short stories.
- GCSE coursework guidelines relating to original writing.

Structure of the project

Introduction	The teacher outlines the GCSE expectations for original writing as a key element of coursework and examinations and shares an exemplar (very short) short story with the class as a focus for discussion.	1 hour
Main body of the project	It would invite frustration and failure to expect pupils just to launch into inspired stories. However, by linking reading with writing, the teacher identifies key aspects of structure and expression that pupils can try to emulate in 'short burst' writing and eventually incorporate into their own stories. During a sequence of lessons built around shared discussion and independent exploration, pupils plan and craft an extended narrative.	4–5 hours
Conclusion	As a class, pupils reflect on their struggles and satisfactions during the writing of a sustained narrative, and relate their achievements back to GCSE criteria.	1 hour

Lesson 1

Introduce the project by explaining that it is an opportunity to practise writing an extended piece of original narrative writing, and that such writing, in addition to its intrinsic satisfaction, is an important feature of the work at GCSE with many boards. Use extracts from the GCSE specification in use in the school to explain what will be required and, if appropriate, show exemplar coursework provided by the relevant examination board. Point out that the skills needed for writing a successful narrative in non-timed coursework situations also underpin effective writing in timed examinations.

The underpinning teaching sequence shown below, with which pupils should be familiar, remains fundamental:

- establish clear aims;
- provide examples;
- explore key features of the text;
- define the conventions;

- demonstrate through shared writing how it is written;

- scaffold pupils' first attempts;

- pupils write independently;

- review to draw out key learning.

Use a short story that is brief enough to be covered in a lesson, and where the writer's structure and organisation are clear. (Many science fiction stories are ideal for this.) Through shared reading, model the way in which the writer organises the writing into 'chunks' such as opening, development and conclusion. This could be a short story written by a GCSE pupil or by a published author. Represent this process in simple diagram form and draw out features of the writing that have particular impact. Look at setting the scene; introducing characters and a problem; intensifying the problem; complicating the plot; developing the characterisation, mood or atmosphere as appropriate and finding a resolution – preferably of the non-predictable variety. For homework, divide the class into groups and ask each group to read, or begin the reading of, a different short story in preparation for the next lesson.

Lesson 2

Begin the lesson by briefly recapping the process you took the class through when looking at the story in the previous lesson. Make the point that no one diagram will fit every story and that they might need to adapt the format. Ask the groups to discuss the short story they have read, exploring the structure of the story and identifying particularly successful features of characterisation, setting and plot. Using a large sheet of paper or OHT, each group should prepare a diagram, modelled on those used in the first lesson, to present to the rest of the class in a plenary session. Support one or two groups through guided work. Groups then share their findings with the class using the diagram they have produced. If time allows, draw out with the class those features that make an effective short story, particularly the endings. For homework ask the class to reflect on the stories they have read and heard described. They should choose a feature of one of the stories that they can adapt and use as inspiration for their own writing.

Lesson 3

Demonstrate the process of 'short burst' writing by taking a character and writing as much as possible about that character in a very short time. Explain that this is a way of generating 'raw material' that can be developed later, through drafting, into a fully rounded piece of description. Ask the pupils to try this themselves, writing as quickly as possible in note form, using individual words and phrases rather than complete sentences. It is a good idea to set a time limit of perhaps two or three minutes. Once finished, ask pairs to speak to their partner in the voice of that character, then to share what they have written and comment as response partners. Pupils should be reminded to apply a protocol of making comments about what they liked in their partner's writing before making suggestions for improvements.

Demonstrate to the class the process of developing the 'short burst' writing, written earlier as raw material, into sentences and paragraphs. Emphasise that it is a process of taking some of the stronger ideas, images and words and rejecting less effective ones. Ask pupils to use the same writing process to create a setting for the character, but to sketch the setting in one minute before moving into writing. Again they could use their response partner to begin the process of developing the writing. Remind the class of the diagrams used to analyse the stories they read earlier. Suggest that they draft out a structure for their own writing using a similar process of organisation. Response partners can again be used to develop this outline plan of what they are hoping to produce. Support one or two groups with their work in guided sessions. If time permits, ask some of the pupils to share their ideas in a plenary session. A card-based planning process, with episodes of 'short burst' writing on card, can be useful since they can start with the obvious order, and then deliberately change the sequence to the least obvious.

Lesson 4

In a shared writing session, demonstrate the process of developing the work produced by volunteer pupils in a previous lesson. Emphasise the importance of creating a particular effect on the reader through the language chosen. Ask for suggestions from the class of changes that will improve the writing. The class then continue the process, working on their own pieces of initial writing to create something more effective and developed. Encourage the use of response partners to help them gain feedback and advice on the writing as it develops. Support one or two groups in guided sessions as they work on this task and ask those pupils to share their progress in a plenary session. For homework, pupils can continue to work on their writing.

Lesson 5

Remind pupils of the importance of a satisfactory ending to a short story by showing or reading aloud the final sentences of different stories and asking the class to guess what had happened previously. Revisit some of the examples from the stories read earlier. Discuss with the class a variety of possible endings for the story created during earlier demonstration writing sessions. Examine the effectiveness of the suggestions as a satisfactory ending for the story. Using their response partners as necessary, ask the pupils to work on the ending for their own story, remembering the requirements for an effective ending. Remind pupils of the need for careful reading and checking as part of the process of drafting. Ask the pupils to continue working on their writing for the rest of the lesson. Support one or two groups in guided sessions as appropriate. Pupils share pieces of writing with which they are pleased as part of a plenary session.

Lesson 6

Pupils read and respond to their partner's story using the checklist provided at the end of this project. Discuss the process of writing a sustained narrative with its challenges and satisfactions, first in pairs and then as a class. Ensure that the discussion covers word, sentence and text level issues by 'priming' particular pupils to raise points or by having OHTs of passages that raise interesting issues. Use shared writing to build those ideas into an advice sheet for GCSE pupils. For homework, pupils could write personal advice to themselves or to their writing partners. In some schools it might be possible to create and 'publish' a class short story collection that other pupils could use as a resource.

Developing the project in Year 10

The exploration of extended writing during the project should enable pupils to tackle the challenge of GCSE original writing coursework in Year 10 with greater confidence. It should also help to prepare them for writing under time constraints in the GCSE examination, when they need to plan more rapidly and write accurately and legibly even though they are writing at speed. The skills that have been the focus of the project are useful to pupils as readers and not just as writers. If they are able to read with a writer's eye, identifying and commenting analytically on the techniques used, they are more likely to meet the reading criteria for higher grades. Some teachers might choose to start Year 10 by hearing or reading a range of the stories written in Year 9 to remind pupils of their capabilities as writers and to signal the continuity of work across the key stages.

Writing response checklist

Name: _____

Ask your writing partner some (but not all) of the questions below, and ask them to give you the evidence for their answers.

Question	Answer, with evidence
General	
What have you learned about writing an extended story?	
Have you suggested things to the readers, or just told them things, and left no space for their interpretation?	
How have you kept the reader interested?	
Are your descriptions full (or too full) of sense impressions?	
Does the story really drive the writing, or does it meander?	
Word level	
What examples of effective verbs are there?	
Have you overdone the use of adjectives and adverbs?	
Is your vocabulary choice effective?	
How accurate is the spelling?	
Sentence level	
How well have you varied your sentences for impact?	
Have you joined sentences effectively?	
Where have you used punctuation to help your reader understand the meaning?	
Text level	
What proves that you wrote with the reader in mind?	
Is the opening successful in 'hooking' the reader?	
How did you prepare your readers for the ending?	
How would you want your readers to feel at the end of the story?	

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