



The Sutton Academy

Knowledge Rich Curriculum Plan

English – Unit: *Narrative writing*

Year 9



Unit: Blood Brothers					
Lesson/Learning Sequence	Intended Knowledge: <i>Students will know that...</i>	Tiered Vocabulary	Prior Knowledge: <i>In order to know this students, need to already know that...</i>	Wider Curriculum Links	Assessment
introduction to narrative writing	• Structure is like the skeleton that holds everything together. • It helps the reader understand the story • Structure gives a story a beginning, middle, and end. • It builds tension and emotion and creates suspense and excitement • Structure helps everything make sense and keeps the audience interested. • Narrative arc are the different stages of a story: exposition – inciting incident – rising action – climax – falling action – resolution • The beginning of a story is important – it makes people want to keep reading, sets the mood and tone and introduces key information				narrative arc: 1. Exposition 2. Inciting incident 3. Rising action 4. Climax 5. Falling action 6. Resolution 1. <i>The Enemy</i> by Charlie Higson Hook Technique: • Immediate action and danger: The story begins mid-event with Small Sam being taken, which instantly creates tension. • Character focus: We learn about Sam’s nickname and background, making him relatable and vulnerable. • Grim setting: The description of the “grown-ups” as grotesque and threatening builds a sense of horror and urgency. Why it works: It throws the reader straight into a dangerous situation, making them want to know what happens next and why the world is like this. 2. <i>The Lie Tree</i> by Frances Hardinge Hook Technique: • Atmospheric imagery: The opening uses vivid, unsettling metaphors (“chewing on a rotten tooth”) to create a mood of discomfort and mystery. • Hints of the strange: The mention of a “little Chinese snake” in a crate adds intrigue and suggests something unusual is happening. • Character insight: Faith’s observations and care for her brother and the snake reveal her personality and hint at deeper themes. Why it works: It builds a rich, eerie setting and introduces a thoughtful protagonist, encouraging the reader to explore the mystery further.

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					3. <i>We Were Liars</i> by E. Lockhart Hook Technique: • Contradiction and irony: The opening lists ideal traits (“No one is a criminal”) while hinting that these claims may not be true. • Poetic structure: The fragmented, rhythmic style draws attention and creates emotional tension. • Foreshadowing: The mention of desperate love and hidden pain suggests secrets and drama beneath the surface. Why it works: It creates a sense of unease and curiosity about the Sinclair family, making the reader question what’s really going on.
The Signalman	• The Signalman • Setting: railway cutting with a signal box, isolated, gloomy atmospheric • Characters: signalman – troubled, narrator – visitor, interested • Key images: mysterious figure, red light • Events: sees a ghost before tragic accidents, ends with signalman’s death • Pathetic fallacy is a device where the weather or setting reflects the emotions or mood of the story or characters • Writer’s use pathetic fallacy to – create atmosphere, reflect a character’s emotions, hint that something bad might happen, make the reader more involved in the story.				Gothic features: • Dark and mysterious settings such as: castles, forests, graveyards, abandoned houses • Stormy weather such as fog, wind, thunder and lightning • Isolation and entrapment • Supernatural elements such as ghosts, monsters, curses, nightmares and unexplained events • Decay and ruin • Villains, victims and heroes • Madness, secrets <u>Understanding the text</u> Retrieval (finding details in the text) 1. Where does the narrator first see the signalman? He first sees him standing at the door of his signal box, down in a deep railway cutting.  <i>Page 1</i> — “He was standing at the door of his box... down in the deep trench...” 2. How does the narrator get down to the signalman’s post from the railway above? By following a rough, zigzag path cut into the side of the cutting.  <i>Page 2</i> — “There, by dint of looking closely

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					about me, I found a rough zigzag descending path notched out, which I followed.” 3. What physical description is given of the signalman when he is first introduced? He is described as “a dark, sallow man, with a dark beard and rather heavy eyebrows.”  <i>Page 2</i> 4. What warning words does the narrator call out to the signalman? “Halloa! Below there!”  <i>Page 1</i> 5. What job does the signalman do in the story? He operates the railway signals and telegraph, maintaining safety on the line.  <i>Page 3</i> — “To change that signal, to trim those lights, and to turn this iron handle now and then, was all he had to do under that head.” Explanation (clarifying meaning) 6. Why does the narrator think the signalman is intelligent, despite his humble job? The signalman speaks clearly, has self-taught knowledge of mathematics and languages, and once studied natural philosophy.  <i>Page 3–4</i> — “He had taught himself a language... worked at fractions and decimals... been a student of natural philosophy.” 7. What is the signalman’s main fear about the strange appearances near the tunnel? He believes the ghostly figure is warning him about disasters on the railway, but he doesn’t know what or when they will happen.  <i>Page 9</i> — “What is the danger? Where is the danger?... Some dreadful calamity will happen.” 8. How does the signalman describe the ghostly figure’s actions each time it appears? It waves its arm violently and cries “Halloa! Below there! Look out!” the first time; later it covers its face in mourning; finally, it waves again in desperate warning.  <i>Pages 6–8</i> Inference (reading between the lines)

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					9. Why do you think Dickens sets the story near a tunnel and railway cutting rather than on an open track? The confined, dark setting creates isolation and fear — perfect for a gothic, supernatural atmosphere. It also mirrors the signalman’s mental entrapment. 10. How does the signalman’s behaviour show he is anxious and haunted by the visions? He is pale, nervous, frequently checks the red light, and reacts fearfully to imagined bell rings.  <i>Page 4 & 8</i> — “He twice broke off with a fallen colour... opened the door... and looked out towards the red light...” 11. What does the narrator’s calm, rational attitude tell us about Victorian ideas of science versus superstition? It reflects the Victorian belief in reason and science, contrasting with fear of the supernatural. The narrator tries to explain the visions through psychology and sensory error.  <i>Page 7</i> — “This figure must be a deception of his sense of sight... figures originating in disease of the delicate nerves...” Vocabulary 12. What does the word “foreboding” mean in the story? Can you think of a synonym? <i>Foreboding</i> means a strong feeling that something bad is going to happen. Synonym: dread, apprehension, unease. 13. Dickens writes of “a dripping wet wall of jagged stone.” What impression do these words give of the setting? The setting feels cold, oppressive, and tomb-like — evoking discomfort and fear.  <i>Page 2</i> Gothic Horror Conventions 14. How does Dickens use the setting (the cutting, the tunnel, the darkness) to create a Gothic atmosphere? The deep, damp cutting and the dark tunnel create isolation and entrapment; the red warning light adds an eerie glow;

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					and the echoing sounds build tension and dread — all classic Gothic elements.  <i>Page 2</i> — “A dripping-wet wall of jagged stone... a gloomy red light, and the gloomier entrance to a black tunnel...” Pathetic fallacy 1. “The cutting was extremely deep, and unusually precipitate. It was made through a clammy stone...” • Pathetic fallacy: The description of the cutting as “deep” and “clammy” gives the setting human-like qualities of coldness and discomfort. • Effect on reader: It creates a sense of unease and isolation, suggesting that something unpleasant or sinister might happen. The word “clammy” evokes a damp, lifeless feeling, reinforcing the spooky mood. 2. “...a gloomy red light, and the gloomier entrance to a black tunnel...” • Pathetic fallacy: The light and tunnel are described as “gloomy,” projecting a mood of darkness and foreboding onto the environment. • Effect on reader: It makes the reader anticipate danger or mystery. The “black tunnel” feels like a gateway to the unknown, heightening tension and suspense. 3. “...so little sunlight ever found its way to this spot, that it had an earthy, deadly smell...” • Pathetic fallacy: The lack of sunlight and the “deadly smell” suggest decay and death, giving the place an ominous personality. • Effect on reader: It reinforces the idea that this setting is unnatural and threatening. The sensory detail of smell makes the atmosphere more vivid and unsettling.
Pathetic fallacy	• Pathetic fallacy can be used to foreshadow events, reflect a				How does the weather or landscape mirror the mood of the scene?

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	character's internal emotions, create tension and suspense				- The fog is described as “thick,” “filthy,” and “evil-smelling,” which mirrors a mood of confusion, menace, and claustrophobia. - The landscape becomes threatening: the fog “hemmed us in,” suggesting entrapment and isolation. What emotions are being suggested through the environment? - Fear and vulnerability: People are “groping their way blindly,” clutching at railings, which suggests helplessness. - Unease and danger: The fog “choked and blinded” and “led a dark army,” giving it almost human, sinister qualities. - Disorientation: Familiar places are “disguised,” making the world feel strange and unsafe. How does this technique make the reader feel — and why is it effective in ghost stories? - It creates a sense of dread and suspense because the environment feels alive and hostile. - The reader feels trapped and uncertain, just like the characters, which heightens tension. - In ghost stories, this works well because the setting becomes part of the threat, blurring the line between natural and supernatural. Repeat and reload The wind blew sharp and bitter: sharp gusts sliced through the streets while bitter chills gnawed at every exposed surface. The snow fell soft and silent: soft flakes blanketed the rooftops while silent drifts muffled every sound. The sun blazed hot and merciless: hot rays scorched the earth while merciless heat shimmered across the horizon.

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					The storm raged wild and violent: wild gusts tore at the trees while violent sheets of rain hammered the ground. The mist lingered pale and ghostly: pale wisps curled around the hills while ghostly tendrils crept across the fields. The abandoned house At the edge of the moor, crouched the abandoned house. The mist lingered pale and ghostly: pale wisps curled around the hills while ghostly tendrils crept across the fields. The roof of the house sagged like tired shoulders beneath a sky bruised purple with storm clouds. Wind clawed at the broken shutters, rattling them like bones. Chaotic and wild, the garden lay strangled under weeds. Rain began to spit against the cracked windows. No one had crossed its threshold for years — or so they said. But tonight, someone would. Someone had to.
Lamb To The Slaughter	- Key images: A frozen leg of lamb; a cosy home setting; a police investigation. - Important events: - Mary Maloney waits for her husband to come home. - He tells her shocking news (implied divorce). - She kills him with a frozen leg of lamb. - She cooks the lamb and serves it to the investigating officers. - Characters: Mary Maloney (devoted wife), Patrick Maloney (police officer, victim), other policemen. - Setting: A warm, domestic home that contrasts with the violent act. - Tension is the feeling of suspense, unease or anticipation				1. What are the connotations of the word 'lamb'? - Innocence and purity - Gentleness and vulnerability - Sacrifice (often linked to religious or symbolic meaning) 2. What are the connotations of the word 'slaughter'? - Brutality and violence - Death and destruction - Something sudden and merciless 3. Predict: What do you think the story 'Lamb to the Slaughter' might be about? Use the word <i>because</i> to explain your ideas. - I think the story might be about someone who is innocent being killed or betrayed because the phrase suggests a victim being led unknowingly to their death, like a lamb to slaughter. Understanding the text Retrieval (find details in the text)

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	Writers create tension by pacing, setting, characterisation, dialogue, foreshadowing, structural choices				What is Mary Maloney doing at the beginning of the story? She is waiting for her husband to come home from work, sewing, and preparing drinks.  <i>Page 1, Paragraphs 1–3</i> What does Patrick Maloney tell Mary when he arrives home? He tells her he is leaving her, though the exact words are not quoted.  <i>Page 3, Paragraphs 2–4</i> What item does Mary use to kill her husband? A frozen leg of lamb.  <i>Page 4, Paragraph 1</i> Where does Mary go after committing the murder? She goes to the grocery store to buy vegetables and cheesecake.  <i>Page 4–5, Paragraphs 4–6</i> What do the police officers do with the leg of lamb? They eat it, not realising it is the murder weapon.  <i>Page 8–9, Final paragraphs</i> Explanation (clarifying meaning) Why does Mary go to the grocery store after the murder? To create an alibi and make everything appear normal.  <i>Page 5, Paragraphs 6–7</i> How does Dahl show Mary’s calmness and control after the crime? She rehearses her voice and smile, plans her story, and interacts naturally with the grocer.  <i>Page 4–5, Paragraphs 3–6</i> Why do the police not suspect Mary of the murder? She appears emotionally distraught, has a believable alibi, and is well-known to them.  <i>Page 6–7, Paragraphs 2–4</i> Inference (reading between the lines)

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					9. What clues suggest that Mary's actions are carefully planned rather than impulsive? She immediately begins rehearsing her story, goes shopping to establish an alibi, and cooks the murder weapon. 📄 <i>Page 4–5, Paragraphs 3–6</i> 10. How does Mary manipulate the police officers during their investigation? She plays the grieving wife, offers them hospitality, and encourages them to eat the leg of lamb. 📄 <i>Page 8, Paragraphs 3–6</i> 11. What does the ending suggest about justice in the story? Justice is subverted; the murderer gets away with the crime while the police unknowingly destroy the evidence. 📄 <i>Page 9, Final paragraph</i> Vocabulary 12. Dahl describes Mary's voice as "placid." What does this word mean, and what does it suggest about her character? <i>Placid</i> means calm and peaceful. It suggests Mary appears gentle and composed, masking her capability for violence. 📄 <i>Page 1, Paragraph 2</i> Genre Conventions 14. How does Dahl subvert the typical crime story by making the murderer sympathetic? Mary is portrayed as a loving, pregnant wife betrayed by her husband, which evokes sympathy despite her crime. 📄 <i>Throughout, especially Pages 1–3</i> 15. In what ways does the story use dark humour or irony to entertain the reader? The police eat the murder weapon while discussing how close it might be, and Mary giggles at the irony. 📄 <i>Page 9, Final paragraph</i>

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					1. “And he told her. It didn’t take long, four or five minutes at most, and she sat very still through it all, watching him with a kind of dazed horror as he went further and further away from her with each word.” • How it creates tension: The short sentence “And he told her” is abrupt and ominous — we don’t know what he said, which builds suspense. Her “dazed horror” suggests something shocking, but the details are withheld. • Effect on reader: The reader feels curiosity and dread, wanting to know what was said and fearing the consequences. 2. “She might just as well have hit him with a steel bar.” • How it creates tension: This violent simile foreshadows the murder and shocks the reader because it contrasts with her calm demeanour earlier. • Effect on reader: It creates a jarring moment that makes the reader anticipate sudden, extreme action. 3. “She carried it upstairs, held the thin bone-end tight in both hands, and made herself a strong drink.” • How it creates tension: The calm, methodical description of her actions after the killing feels chilling. The drink suggests she is steadying herself, which implies guilt and planning. • Effect on reader: The reader feels uneasy because her composure contrasts with the violence, making her seem unpredictable and dangerous. 4. “It’s probably right under our noses.” • How it creates tension: This line is ironic because the murder weapon (the leg of lamb) is literally under their noses, being cooked. The reader knows what the detectives don’t. • Effect on reader: It creates dramatic irony, making the reader feel amused yet tense, wondering if she will get away with it.

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Tension	Tension can foreshadow conflict or danger, reflect a character's emotional state, create suspense				1. How does Dickens make the reader feel anxious or afraid? - The stranger is described in vivid, unsettling detail: "a fearful man... with a great iron on his leg," "soaked in water," "smothered in mud," "glared and growled." These words suggest violence and desperation. - The threat is immediate: "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!" This shocking line creates instant fear and danger. - The repetition of "A man..." builds intensity, making him seem larger-than-life and terrifying. 2. What do we learn about Pip's situation and emotions? - Pip is a vulnerable child, alone in a graveyard, which makes him an easy target. - He is terrified: "trembling while he ate the bread ravenously." His fear is physical and overwhelming. - Pip's poverty is shown when his pockets contain only "a piece of bread," highlighting his helplessness. 3. How does the setting contribute to the tension? - The graveyard setting is eerie and symbolic of death, adding to the sense of danger. - The "church porch" and "high tombstone" create a bleak, lonely atmosphere. 4. Why might Dickens start the novel this way? - It grabs attention immediately with drama and fear. - It makes readers sympathise with Pip from the start, creating emotional investment in his story. End-loaded sentences After trudging along the windswept cliff path, passing jagged rocks and listening to the relentless crash of waves below, looming against the storm-darkened sky, they finally stood before the abandoned lighthouse.

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					After weaving through tangled roots, brushing past dripping ferns, and listening to the distant call of unseen birds, they finally stood before the ancient oak. After crossing crowded streets, dodging honking cars, and passing rows of shuttered shops, she reached the narrow alley where a single flickering neon sign glowed against the crumbling brick walls. After trudging across endless dunes, shielding their eyes from the burning sun, and feeling the grit of sand in every breath, they came upon a well rising from the barren expanse. After climbing the creaking steps, brushing past cobwebs, and hearing the hollow echo of their own footsteps, they entered the dim hallway.
The Sniper	Setting: Dublin rooftops at night during the Irish Civil War. Characters: The Republican sniper and his enemy (later revealed to be his brother). Key images: The sniper lying on a rooftop, hungry and tense. The flash of gunfire in the darkness. The sniper tricking the enemy by pretending to be dead. The shocking twist when he discovers he has killed his own brother. Important events: Sniper kills enemy soldier and enemy sniper. Climactic moment: he goes to see who he killed. Ending: realisation of fratricide. Definition of Conflict: Conflict is the struggle between opposing forces that drives the plot and develops characters. It can be internal (within a character) or external (between characters, society, or nature).				1. What are the connotations of the word 'sniper'? - A sniper is secretive, precise, and deadly. - Connotations include stealth, isolation, and cold efficiency because snipers often work alone and kill from a hidden position. - It suggests danger and tension because their victims rarely see them coming. 2. Predict: What do you think the story <i>The Sniper</i> might be about? <i>I think the story might be about a soldier hiding and waiting to shoot an enemy during a battle because the word "sniper" suggests someone who kills from a distance and the setting is during a war.</i> - It might also explore the sniper's feelings because being alone and killing silently could create emotional conflict. Understanding the text Retrieval (find details in the text)

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	Role in Narrative: Conflict is central to stories like <i>The Sniper</i>, shaping decisions and revealing themes such as identity, morality, and survival. Techniques to Show Conflict: Writers use characterisation, setting, action and violence, symbolism, dialogue and silence, and contrast/irony to explore conflict. Effect on Reader: Conflict engages readers emotionally, encouraging empathy and reflection. In war stories, it often evokes shock, sadness, and moral questioning. Symbolic and Thematic Impact: Conflict often represents larger issues (e.g., civil war, family division) and highlights the human cost of violence and division.				Where is the sniper positioned at the beginning of the story? On a rooftop near O’Connell Bridge in Dublin. 📄 <i>Paragraph 2</i> What does the sniper do that gives away his position? He lights a cigarette, and the flash is seen by an enemy. 📄 <i>Paragraph 4</i> Who is the enemy the sniper shoots first? A man in the turret of an armored car, followed by an old woman who was informing on him. 📄 <i>Paragraphs 7–8</i> How does the sniper trick the enemy sniper? He fakes his own death using his cap and rifle, then shoots the enemy when he exposes himself. 📄 <i>Paragraphs 14–16</i> What shocking discovery does the sniper make at the end? The enemy sniper he killed is his own brother. 📄 <i>Final paragraph</i> Explanation (clarifying meaning) Why does the sniper take the risk of lighting a cigarette? He is hungry, tired, and craving relief; he decides to take the risk despite knowing it's dangerous. 📄 <i>Paragraph 3</i> How does O’Flaherty show the sniper’s physical pain and emotional reaction after being shot? Through detailed description of his wound, the dressing process, and his emotional breakdown after killing. 📄 <i>Paragraphs 10–11 and 18–19</i> Why is the ending of the story so powerful? It reveals the tragic irony of civil war—he has unknowingly killed his own brother. 📄 <i>Final paragraph</i> Inference (reading between the lines) What clues suggest the sniper is young and inexperienced? His face is described as that of a student, and he takes unnecessary risks like smoking. 📄 <i>Paragraph 2 and 3</i>

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					10. How does the sniper feel after killing the enemy sniper? He is overwhelmed with remorse, horror, and self-loathing.  <i>Paragraph 18</i> 11. What does the ending suggest about the emotional cost of war? War dehumanizes and divides families, leaving lasting emotional trauma.  <i>Final paragraph</i> Vocabulary 12. O’Flaherty describes the sniper’s eyes as having “the cold gleam of the fanatic.” What does this phrase suggest about his mindset? It suggests he is intensely focused, emotionally hardened, and possibly consumed by ideology.  <i>Paragraph 2</i> Genre Conventions 13. How does O’Flaherty use setting and atmosphere to build tension? The dark, war-torn city, sudden gunfire, and rooftop isolation create suspense and danger.  <i>Paragraphs 1–2 and throughout</i> 14. In what ways does the story explore the theme of conflict—both physical and emotional? It shows the physical violence of war and the emotional devastation, especially through the sniper’s remorse and the final revelation.  <i>Paragraphs 7–8, 18–19, and final paragraph</i> 1. “He must kill that enemy or be killed himself.” - How it conveys conflict: This line shows external conflict (man vs. man) and the harsh reality of war — survival depends on killing. It also hints at internal conflict, as the sniper faces a moral dilemma. - Effect on the reader: Creates tension and urgency. The reader feels the sniper’s desperation and may reflect

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					on the brutal choices soldiers face, questioning the morality of war. 2. “His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.” - How it conveys conflict: This reveals internal conflict — the sniper’s psychological breakdown after killing. His guilt and anger show the emotional toll of violence. - Effect on the reader: Evokes sympathy and sadness. The reader sees the human cost of war, making the sniper more vulnerable and relatable. 3. “Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother’s face.” - How it conveys conflict: This is the ultimate ironic twist — the external conflict (enemy vs. enemy) becomes deeply personal. It symbolises civil war tearing families apart. - Effect on the reader: Shock and heartbreak. The reader feels the tragedy and futility of war, reinforcing themes of division and loss.
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