

Moondial Writing Sequence

Year 5/6

HIAS English Team
Spring 2020
Final version

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Using the Home Learning Materials

The materials

- Each writing booklet contains a sequence of 5 lessons.
- You should set aside time to complete each of the lessons in order.
- Each lesson will take no more than 30 mins to complete.

How to use

- Read the instructions carefully before you start a task.
- Each lesson has a simple explanation and examples to get you started.

How can parents, carers and siblings help?

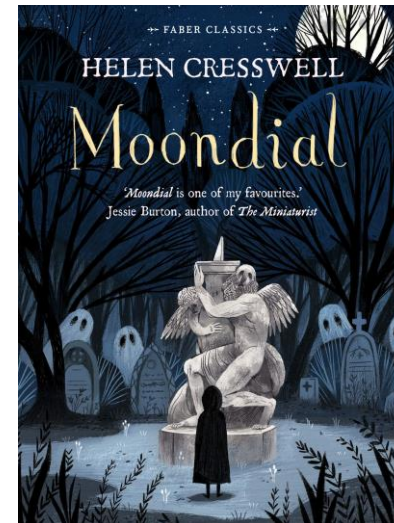
- Read the extracts aloud with your child
- Collect interesting words and phrases on paper / post-its as they read
- Talk to your children about their ideas before they write
- Adapt any of the resources and materials as you feel necessary to support your child's needs

5 day writing sequence

This writing sequence uses the prologue to *Moondial* by Helen Cresswell.

Teaching sequence:

- 1) Response to Reading
- 2) Vocabulary
- 3) Exploring the Writing
- 4) Grammar Practice and Play
- 5) Writing Challenges



Further printable resources are available at the end of the sequence.

It is midnight in that most dark and secret place. If you should chance – and why should you? – to be walking there, you would be blindfolded by the night. You would hear the hooting of a lone owl from the church tower, the scuff of your own steps on the gravel. You would smell the ancient, musty scent of the yews that line the path, and the curious green odour of dew on grass. You put out a hand. It gropes to find the ungiving touch of stone. The shock of it brings an uprush of fear so strong that you can almost taste it.

At that moment your fifth sense is restored. A slow silver light yawns over the garden. Shapes make themselves, statues loom. Ahead, the glass of the orangery gleams like water. You notice the shadow the moon has made at your feet as you would never notice a mere daytime shadow.

You stand motionless, with all five senses sharp, alert as a fox.

But if by some chance you should possess another, a sixth sense, what then? First a tingle of the spine, a sudden chill, a shudder. You are standing at a crossroads, looking up at a statue. A huge stone man seems to be locked in struggle with another figure, that of a boy. But the presence you feel is all about you now, and with a lifting of the hairs at the back of your neck you are certain, *certain* that you are being watched.

You turn slowly, half dreading what you might see. But the path before you is empty. Your gaze moves to the great, moonwashed face of the house itself. The windows are blank and shuttered, though that strange sixth sense is insisting on hints, whispers, secrets.

The scene fades and you realize that the moon is going back behind the clouds, and then you run. And as you run through the disappearing garden you feel that a mighty wind is blowing and voices are clamouring in that empty place.

What you also hear, and what you will remember ever afterwards with a shudder, even in the full light of day, is the lonely sobbing of a child.

Lesson 1 – Response to Reading

Read the prologue to *Moondial*. It is set in the grounds of a large stately home, Belton House.

As you read make notes:

- Do you have any questions?
- Is there any vocabulary you don't understand?
- What does it remind you of?
- How does it make you feel?

Read the text again before you answer the following questions:

What does the inclusion of the question “and why should you?” suggest about the house and its grounds?

What does the author describe as “your fifth sense”?

Imagine you are walking the National Trust walk around Belton using this website:




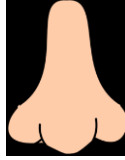
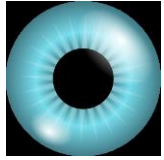
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/belton-house/trails/beltons-moondial-walk>

Would you like to visit Belton House? Would you prefer to visit in the daytime or after dark?

Lesson 2 – Vocabulary

Read the prologue again. Read the text aloud and think about how different sections should sound to create atmosphere.

The prologue uses vocabulary that appeals to the senses to place the reader in the setting. Record vocabulary from the text relating to the five senses in the table below.

				
			“the ancient, musty scent of the yews”	

Lesson 3- Exploring the Writing

Read the prologue again.

The purpose of the writing is to entertain.

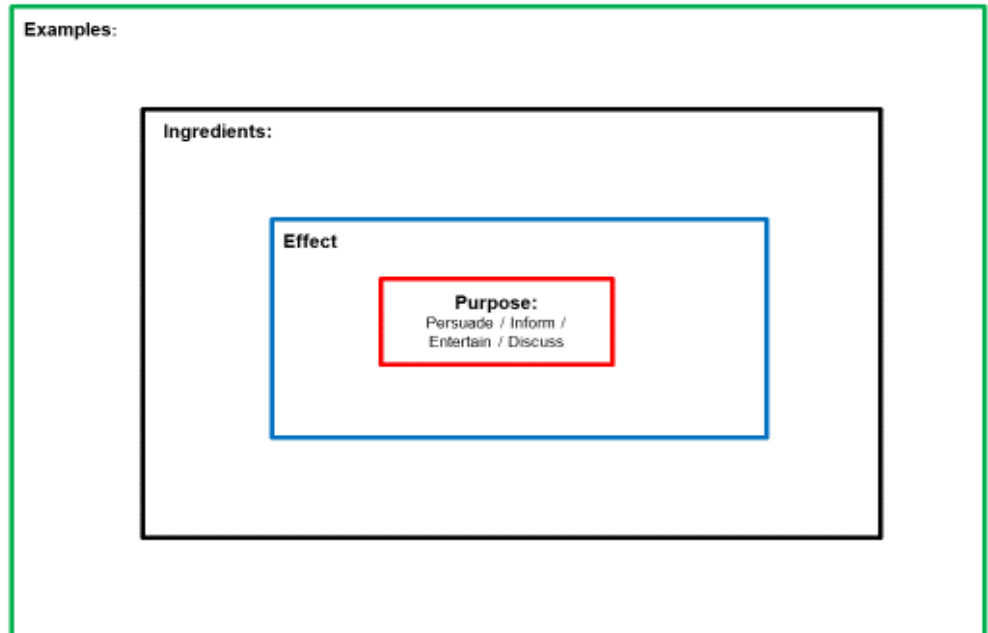
But what is the effect the author creates?

Do they make the reader feel like they are there?

Do they create an atmosphere of suspense?

How has the author achieved this?

Collect examples that demonstrate how this has been achieved effectively in the text.



Lesson 4 – Grammar Practice and Play

You are standing at a crossroads, looking up at a statue. A huge stone man seems to be locked in struggle with another figure, that of a boy. But the presence you feel is all about you now, and with a lifting of the hairs at the back of your neck you are *certain, certain* that you are being watched.

You turn slowly, half dreading what you might see. But the path before you is empty. Your gaze moves to the great, moonwashed face of the house itself. The windows are blank and shuttered, though that strange sixth sense is insisting on hints, whispers, secrets.

The scene fades and you realize that the moon is going back behind the clouds, and then you run. And as you run through the disappearing garden you feel that a mighty wind is blowing and voices are clamouring in that empty place.

Lesson 4 – Grammar Practice and Play

Explain:

- What is the effect of the repetition of the word 'certain'?
- The prologue is written in second person ("you") and present tense. How does this add to its effectiveness?



Change the underlined sections:

- Replace the underlined noun phrase with an alternative.
- Select synonyms for the underlined words.



Create your own:

- Imitate the author's style by writing a sensory setting description in second person and present tense. Use one of the two pictures in the resources section to inspire you, or create your own setting. Look back at your work from the previous lesson to help you create your own piece.

Lesson 5 – Writing Challenges

Using what you have learnt so far, choose one of the following three challenges to complete:

- 1) Who would live in a place like this? Write a character description of the owner of the house and include details about their occupation, hobbies and family.
- 2) Imagine that the house and its grounds are to be sold. Using evidence from the prologue, write an estate agent's advert for the house. Think about the purpose, audience and form of the advert and how you will need to adapt your language choices.
- 3) Write the opening to the first chapter of the novel. How will the story develop from this spooky prologue? Who will the characters be?

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Examples:

Ingredients:

Effect

Purpose:

Persuade / Inform /
Entertain / Discuss

Lesson 4 – Grammar Practice and Play

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Lesson 4 – Grammar Practice and Play



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HIAS English team

The HIAS English team offer a wide range of high-quality services to support schools in improving outcomes for learners, including courses, bespoke consultancy and in-house training.

During the current school closures, we are still offering school support in a variety of ways such as video conferencing, phone calls and bespoke creation of resources remotely. Coming soon will be teacher training via virtual classrooms. We would be happy to discuss your needs.

For further details referring to English, please contact:

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For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following details:

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