

Year 7 Homework Project  
EGA English Faculty

# INDEPENDENT NOVEL STUDY



YEAR 7 HOMEWORK PROJECT

FIVE WEEKS

# **BACKGROUND RESEARCH**

## **THE AUTHOR**

**You should do some research on the author of your novel and present this to the class in an interesting format. You could produce a handout using ICT, or create an information poster for the classroom wall. Alternatively, you could compile a powerpoint presentation for the class to watch.**

### **WHAT SORT OF INFORMATION WILL BE USEFUL?**

- ✓ Biographical information – for example, date and place of birth, educational achievements and family background
- ✓ Is the writer well-known for anything other than writing?
- ✓ Information about other books, articles or screenplays produced by this author
- ✓ Has any of this author's writing been televised or made into a film?
- ✓ Anything else that you find interesting – if you are interested, it is likely that your classmates will be too!

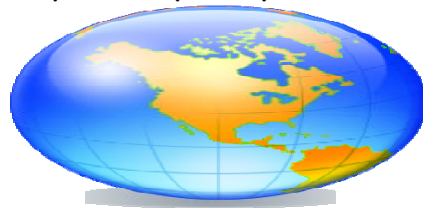


### **HOW WILL YOU FIND THE INFORMATION YOU NEED?**

- ✓ The internet is a good starting point. You could type the author's name into a search engine like 'Google' and pick out interesting information.
- ✓ Some books will contain brief details about the author.
- ✓ Look at your book and see who the publisher is. Go to their website as most of these contain author profiles.
- ✓ Go to the school library or public library and look for the literature section – the library classification is about 820. You may find information about your writer there.
- ✓ Ask the librarian if you need help.

# **BACKGROUND RESEARCH SETTING AND HISTORY**

Your novel may be set in an exotic, foreign location, or in a place you know well, like London. Or it may be set in an exciting period in history. Do some research on the setting of your novel, or the historical period, or both! When you have some interesting information to share with the class, write or type up your notes, including pictures if possible, and share your knowledge when you do your presentation.



Information about a place should include:

- ✓ Its geographical location – how far away is it and is it near any major cities?
- ✓ Have you been there? If so, did the writer accurately re-create the atmosphere of the place?
- ✓ Would you like to go there? Why, or why not?
- ✓ Give information about the climate and the lifestyle of the people.
- ✓ What sort of jobs and educational opportunities exist in this place?
- ✓ How different is it to London?

Information about the historical period should include:

- ✓ The dates when the novel was set
- ✓ Ways in which everyday life was different for the characters in your novel, compared to everyday life now.
- ✓ How the historical period affects the story – does it add to the interest or just make it confusing?
- ✓ Any historical facts which you have learned from reading your novel.

## **HOW WILL YOU FIND THE INFORMATION YOU NEED?**

- ✓ The internet is a good starting point. You could type the name of the place into a search engine like 'Google' and pick out interesting information.
- ✓ Go to the school library or public library and look for the geography or history sections. You may find information about your place or historical period there.
- ✓ Look up the name of the place in an encyclopaedia or World Book
- ✓ Ask the librarian if you need help.

# Creative Writing

Imagine that you are a character in your novel. You can choose any character who interests you – it doesn't have to be a main character. Think about what they would write in their diary at the end of each day. Then keep a diary for them, updating it as the events unfold in the story. For example:

Dear Diary,

I can't believe how horrible the wicked stepmother is being to Cinderella! Every day she has to get up and wash, clean and scrub for everybody. And just when she gets the chance to go to a big party, she's not allowed! The palace have invited every girl in the kingdom to the party where Prince Charming will choose his wife, yet poor old Cinders has to stay at home and work. It is so unfair. I will have to try and think of a way for her to go as she would enjoy it so much. The only thing I am worried about is that she might fall in love with the Prince, when I'd really like to keep her all to myself. I have never met anybody with such a kind, sweet nature.

Goodnight,

Buttons

You should write about eight entries, keeping up with the events in the story. Remember, don't just write a summary of the story – try to reflect the narrator's personality too. Make your writing lively, so that the class will enjoy hearing you read some extracts to them.



## TASK 1

# DESIGN YOUR OWN BOOK COVER

Look at the novel you have chosen. What do you think of the cover?

Do you think you could make a better job of designing it?

If you choose this task you must:

- Design a new cover for the back. This will include the front cover, spine and back of the book.
- The front cover should be illustrated appropriately for the target audience.
- The title and author of the book should be clearly visible
- The title and author should be clear and easy to read on the spine of the book
- The back cover should include some blurb and extracts from reviews. (You should make these up)
- You should mention if the book has won any prizes or been nominated for any awards.
- Your design should be ready for you to show the class when you do your homework presentation at the end of the unit. You should be prepared to answer questions about your design choices.



# Studying a Character

Choose a character which interests you from your novel. Use the boxes below to collect quotations which will help you to build a character study.

*Make a list of quotations which give facts about the character. For example, age, address, appearance.*

*Make a list of things that other people say about the character, and say what this tells us about them.*

<i>What they say</i>	<i>What this tells us about the character</i>

*Make a list of things that the character says or does, then think about what this tells us about the character.*

<i>What the character says or does</i>	<i>What this tells us about the character</i>

*Now use your grids to write an essay, in paragraphs, about the character. For example, look at the table below:*

<i>Things that the character says or does</i>	<i>What this tells us about them</i>
<b>'Smiling evilly, he went through all of the bags in the room and put all the money he could find into his pocket.'</b>	<b>The character is a thief and he does not feel guilty about stealing from others</b>

*You can now turn this into a paragraph:*

**Damien is not a likeable character. We can tell this as he steals from his friends and seems to enjoy it. When he 'went through all of the bags in the room and put all the money he could find into his pocket,' he was 'smiling evilly'. This shows the reader that he does not care about how upset his friends will be to lose their money, and that he does not feel guilty about stealing.**

*Your essay should contain at least six paragraphs of detailed writing about your chosen character. If you get stuck, ask your teacher for help. Please don't leave it too long to ask,*

# Writing a Prequel to the Novel

When you have finished reading your novel, think about what might have happened to the characters before the story began. Then write an extra chapter, which could be read as an introduction to the story. However, it should still be entertaining and it should have a plot of its own. This is known as a **prequel**.

Plan your prequel carefully. Make notes in each box.

Which character will be the focus of the prequel? It doesn't have to be the main character in the novel. Another character may have interested you more and you could tell their story.

**Who are you writing about?**

A prequel should be written in the same style as the original story. For example, if it is written in first person, you must begin the story in first person. Or if it has a particular historical setting, you must write in the language of that time.

**What writing style will you choose?**

How will you begin your story? Will it lead straight into the beginning of the novel, or will some time have to pass in between? Days or months or years?

**When will your story begin?**

You will not have time to write a whole story, so you should decide what the main event of your chapter will be. If too much happens it will be confusing for the reader.

**What will the main event be?**

You must have a clear and satisfying ending. Think about what will happen to your character, as well as any other minor characters. Make sure that there are no loose ends to tie up, as your prequel should not rely on the novel to answer any questions. **How will the story end?**

Now look closely through your notes and begin to write your story. This should be at least 300 words and you must take care to use accurate spelling and punctuation. Check it carefully when you have finished and redraft it if there are mistakes or if you want to make the vocabulary more exciting.



# Writing a Review

## Write a review of your novel for pupils at your school

Reviews are written about all kinds of products and texts - music, television, films, computer games, plays and books. Reviews play an important role in the broadcasting, publishing, film and computer industries as they offer us judgements and guidance on how to spend our money. Therefore, they should be detailed and reliable.

When you write a review, you must include the following information:

- A summary of the text - but don't give away the ending
- Facts about the genre, writer and target audience of the novel
- An evaluation or rating

You should also include the following stylistic conventions:

- Lots of adjectives
- Jokes, puns and wordplay
- Written in the present tense
- Use rhetorical questions to make the reader think
- Bold print and headlines
- Include a visual image
- Between 200 and 500 words
- Include personal opinion



# Writing a Sequel to the Novel

When you have finished reading your novel, think about what might happen to the characters after the story has finished. Then write an extra chapter for the story. This is known as a **sequel**.

Plan your sequel carefully. Make notes in each box.

Which character will be the focus of the sequel? It doesn't have to be the main character in the novel. Another character may have interested you more and you could tell their story.

**Who are you writing about?**

A sequel should be written in the same style as the original story. For example, If it is written in first person, you must continue in first person. Or if it has a particular historical setting, you must write in the language of that time.

**What writing style will you choose?**

How will you begin your story? Will it follow straight on from the ending, or will some time have passed in between? Days or months or years?

**When will your story begin?**

You will not have time to write a whole story, so you should decide what the main event of your chapter will be. If too much happens it will be confusing for the reader.

**What will the main event be?**

You must have a clear and satisfying ending. Think about what will happen to your character, as well as any other minor characters. Make sure that there are no loose ends to tie up.

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