



Monster by Michael Grant

Curriculum Links

Option 1

1 x curriculum links overview

5 x 1 hour lessons

Option 2

1 x curriculum links overview

5 x 1 hour lessons

Comprehension Q to be used with guided reading.

Curriculum Links: Overview

The following lessons are based around and built from the new 9-1 framework as set out by the government. The lessons aim to meet the needs of pupils for both literature and language at GCSE English level.

For literature

- Respond to and explain explicit and implicit meanings in texts.
- Show understanding of how writers use structure form and language to create meanings.
- Use textual references to support ideas.
- Show understanding of how context informs texts.

For Language

Critical Reading & Comprehension

- Summarise and evaluate with accuracy.
- Understand and explain implicit and explicit meanings.
- Analyse and evaluate use of language, grammar and structure.
- Support ideas with textual and wider references.
- Make links between texts.

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Writing

- Communicate effectively sustaining interest.
- Produce texts that are well structured convey meaning effectively.
- Use a variety of sentence structures, language features for desired audience.
- Correct use of SPAG.

Bullet points based on Government Guidelines for 9-1 English Literature & English Language.

Speaking & Listening

- Articulate ideas and opinions clearly.
- Use facts, opinions or text to support ideas.
- Respond to others ideas and questions.
- Use formal English to express ideas.
- Understand and meet needs of audience.
- Organise and structure arguments, debate and presentations.

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Building skills in literary analysis

Curriculum Links

Identifying elements of narrative structure.

Discern between important events and lesser events.

Responding to a text.

Exploring how a writer creates a setting in a text.

Exploring how a writer creates atmosphere, tension and an imagined world.

Linking visualisation of character with quotations from the text.

Opening Chapters in Novels.

The opening to any story is the most important part *because it introduces the key ideas that will be developed* as the story progresses.

Tasks.

Read the opening 'Shade Darby Four Years Earlier'.

It might help to highlight parts of the text that you connect to.

Answer the following questions.

Exploring the characters.

1. Make a list of all the different characters that are introduced.

Think of two of your own words to describe each character.

2. Choose two characters and draw how you imagine them to be.

Find lines/words from the text that describes each character.

Place the quotations around the character to show their personality.

3. Who do you think are the main characters?

Can you explain why this is?

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Exploring narrative structure

1. Make a list of all the events that happen – yes, it can be everything!
2. Once you have compiled your list have a discussion and decide which events you think are the *most important* and which *you think are not*.
3. Highlight the points that you think are the most important – come up with reasons why you think this is the case.

Share your ideas and explanations with the class

You might like to keep this list and see how it compares as the story progresses

Class discussion.

What type of world does the writer present in the opening chapter?

Think about

How the writer describes the place.

What it would be like to live there.

The dangers of the world shown.

How you would feel as child living there?

Writing Task

Summarise the events in the opening chapter.

You will have to decide what would be important for a would-be reader to know.

Key skill – summarising information from a text.

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Lesson & Curriculum Links

Exploring the effects of descriptive language: Chapters 1-6
Exploring meanings created in a text.

Curriculum links

Identifying descriptive language in a text.
Explaining the effects and meanings created through descriptive language.
Writing about descriptive language.
Linking atmosphere to wider events in a text.
Close reading.
Understanding how dialogue creates implicit and explicit meanings

Exploring descriptive language

In *Monster* Michael Grant uses lots of descriptive language to help create images and scenarios that really bring the narrative alive. Writers do this in order for readers to be able to connect with and see the world they have created.

Task 1

Read the following extract and find the descriptive language. Explain the effect of the language, how this effect is achieved and what a reader understands or sees from this.

Look for strong adjectives and verbs, simile, metaphor etc.

The ground was plowed into furrows, which tripped Cruz repeatedly. And, too, there were the six-foot-tall stalks that snatched at her with Velcro talons, and slapped her with heavy ears of corn. They came to a halt when they reached the first charred and broken cornstalks and advanced more slowly after that, as if sneaking up on someone. Then suddenly, there it was, looking for all the world as if a rogue tractor had come through dragging a narrow plow. The rich, black earth was gouged, with a mound of ejected clods marking the spot where the rock went subterranean. (pg 79-80)

Linking question.

The description comes at an important point in the novel. Explore what sort of atmosphere the writer creates.

Does the writer show the characters skipping through the countryside without a care in the world? If not, why not?

Your exploration should cover what sort of atmosphere the writer creates and why he does that.

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What is the writer trying to convey to readers?

Try to link your answers to the importance of this particular part of the story.

Exploring the rock

In chapters 4 and 6 the characters Justin and then Shade both ingest the rock. They do this for different reasons.

Read through Justin's experience of ingesting the rock (pgs 81 – 90)

Read through Shade's experience as well. (pgs 124 – 217)

Questions

1. Compare how the rock affects Justin and Shade.
2. What do their monster manifestations show about them?
3. Do you think the rock changes people completely or does it bring out parts of their personalities?

Class Discussion

Explore the quotation from the novel.

Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Yes, but if power corrupts evil people surely good people have power too.

Prepare for a class discussion based on your feelings and opinions of the quotation.

Things to think about for your discussion.

Do you agree that power corrupts?

Do you think good people can have power and use it for good?

Think about how this is shown in the novel.

Think about examples in society.

Can you think of how people have used power in a negative way?

Can you think of how people have used power in a positive way?

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Exploring themes: article writing, creative writing and debate

Curriculum Links

Identifying themes in a text.
Relating themes to context.
Exploring narrative voice and POV.
Article writing.
Structure argument.

Creative Writing

Resting realistic characters and scenarios.
Using figurative and descriptive language.
Creating a sense of atmosphere through scenario .

Speaking & Listening

Articulate opinions.
Engage in structured debate.
Respond to others questions and ideas.
Use appropriate language for audience.

Exploring Themes in *Monster*.

Writers will often explore different themes in a book. Themes are things that arise as central ideas in a novel. We've already looked at the theme of *using power for good or evil*. Now we are going to look at the theme of gender and how it is explored in the novel.

Exploring the theme of gender.

Michael Grant explores the theme of gender through the character Cruz. When Shade and Cruz we meet for the first time, we find Cruz struggling with the judgment of others at school over what gender Cruz actually is. (Chp 1)

In Chapter 6 we are introduced to Cruz's family. The writer shows her father's disapproval of her mixed gender identity. The writer shows, throughout the novel, Cruz's inner thoughts about her identity and how she is navigating it.

Explore the issue of gender by completing the following tasks.

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Task 1

Class discussion.

Prepare for a class discussion. Use the questions to help you structure your discussion.

Explore how gender is shown in the novel.

1. How does the writer approach and address issues of gender in the novel?
2. How does the society perceive and respond to Cruz's gender identity?
3. How does this impact upon Cruz?
4. What makes Shade so accepting of it?

Challenge Question.

What is the narrator's perspective of Cruz's gender identity?

Task 2.

Research and write an article for a newspaper that explores the statement below.

How has the idea of gender changed in the last 20 years?

You might like to use parts of the novel.

You might like to use the internet and find experiences of gender and identity.

Audience.

You can choose either: a magazine aimed at your age group; the Lifestyle section of a broadsheet newspaper; or a student magazine.

Task 3.

A debate or presentation.

Prepare for a debate or presentation on the following theme.

How should society respond to difference? Does it help if society understands difference or should difference be ignored?

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Help with structuring your presentation/debate.

Think about the types of difference you want to cover.

Decide on your opinions and feelings.

Tackle each part of the questions separately.

Give examples of difference.

Try and find evidence to support your ideas – newspapers, online articles etc.

Think about your audience – make sure they will understand.

Task 4

Creative Writing.

You've read about Cruz and the difference she struggles with. Now it's your turn to write a creative piece on difference.

Imagine you are a character that is different or feels different in some way. Show how the character feels about and navigates that difference in the world.

It can be any type of difference: religious, disability, race, gender, illness or accident or family.

You can place your character in any situation: being at school, being at home, being with friends, being in the street etc.

It doesn't have to be a whole story; it can concentrate on one event.

You decide how best to present your idea in creative writing.

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Exploring character through drama and structure

Curriculum Links

Understanding how characters are constructed.

Following and explaining characters' changes and journeys within a text.

Exploring meanings created through texts.

Linking texts to meanings within society.

Creative Writing: writing descriptively using a stimulus.

Speaking & Listening: expressing ideas, forming an opinion and using evidence.

Exploring characters, their journeys through a novel and the meanings created.

Writers create characters that we can believe in. We engage with them because the writer makes them and the world they live in seem real to us. Within the space of a novel we are in their world. We follow what they do, react to what they feel and think about their actions.

If we think about characters like a person we haven't met but are observing then we are watching their lives unfold before us as the novel progresses.

From this view, we can *analyse* their journey in a book and *evaluate* the **meanings** that are created through that journey.

Complete the tasks to help you understand a character and the meanings created through their narrative journey.

Task 1

What type of character is Dekka?

Find examples from the text that show her personality. You could begin by looking at page 258.

How does she feel about her superpowers?

What does this suggest about her personality?

How does Dekka compare to another character who also has superpowers?

Challenge

What do you think the writer is trying to show through this comparison?

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Task 2

Track three or four characters' journeys through the novel. Use a timeline with bullet points to show the events in their lives.

Highlight the most important events.

Challenge

Explain why they are important and how a particular event has created change for them in the story.

Task 3

The characters all end up ingesting the rock which gives them superpowers.

Imagine you are like one of the characters and can morph into a creature with superpowers.

Write a description of the change from human to superpowered creature.

You should aim to create *atmosphere* and use *descriptive language*.

Task 4

Class discussion and debate.

Through the characters Dekka and Peaks we learn of experiments on humans.

Peaks tells Dekka '***Your country needs you. The human race needs you.***' in order to persuade her to fight for the government and overthrow the other monsters. (pg 239)

Thinking about what Peaks says, **discuss whether it would be right to experiment on humans if the human race depended upon it?**

Thinking points

How could we decide who should be experimented on?

If people volunteered, would this be ethical?

What kind of consequences would there be?

Would everyone be equal?

Present your ideas to the class as a structured debate.

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Understanding action and drama in a novel driven by both

Curriculum links

Exploring implicit and explicit meanings.
Exploring structural elements in a text.
Articulating evaluations.
Exploring dialogue, character and meaning.
Creating drama and events using dialogue.

Creative Writing

Exploring dramatic actions and effects.
Exploring the role and function of the narrator.

Looking at the function of action and drama in *Monster*.

Michael Grant's novel *Monster* is a story that uses action and drama to drive the story forward. Writers will use different things to drive a story but in *Monster* we see a lot of action. Part of the reason for this action is because the characters can morph into super-powered creatures. Obviously, this leads the writing to be action packed with lots of dramatic events.

Task 1

There are two things that cause the action and dramatic events to happen; these are, the super-powered characters and the rock. In chapter 25 the rock has landed in the ocean.

How important do you think the rock is in the story?

Write a few paragraphs explaining why you think it is important.

Task 2

Literary debate

What is more important to the story: the rock or the characters?

In groups, answer the question giving reasons/ evidence for your opinions.

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Task 3

In chapter 21 (364) the characters Shade , Peaks and Drake meet. Plot the dramatic events or action that has led to this meeting.

You should aim to summarise these using either bullet points or a timeline.

Thinking Question

Is there one event that leads them all to this point?

You may find there is more than one answer to this question.

Task 3

(345-352)

The characters talk a lot in the story. In some stories writers will let the narrator describe things with additional dialogue. In *Monster* the writer uses dialogue to build relationships between characters and show their feelings. We can learn a lot about a story from what characters say.

Each writer will do this differently with particular effects.

Write a piece of dialogue using two of three characters. Like the story the characters have superpowers and are saving the world. Write about the event of the struggle for power.

Use a narrator to help with the action and description.

You should aim for the writing to be mostly dialogue.

Set it out like a play thereby avoiding he said and she said.

Prepare to act out your piece of dramatic action to the whole class.

Think about your classmates feedback

Are their impressions what you expected?

Did they reveal anything new that you weren't expecting?

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