# **Literary Unit: Literary Fiction and Creative Writing Lesson Activities and Resources**

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| **Activity title** | **POST – 16 RESIT: Literary texts Unit: Paper 2**  ***Exploring effects and impact***  **Reading unseen prose fiction texts from 21st century and Original Creative Writing.** |
| **Instructions for teachers** | Here are learning resources, with a focus on literary fiction to explore extracts from two 21st century short stories, to enable the following:   1. **Discussion points**: speaking and listening opportunities- exploring fiction, creativity and imaginative ideas, expressing responses to material presented. 2. **Reading opportunities** for learners to be able to:  * identify and interpret explicit and implicit ideas and information from texts * select and synthesise evidence from a single text and one other text * draw inferences and justify points of view by referring closely to evidence from the text * use a broad understanding of the text’s context to inform their reading, eg genre or setting * explore connections across texts to develop their understanding of the ideas, attitudes and values presented in them * comment on writers’ choices of vocabulary, form, grammatical features and how these create meaning * analyse and compare writers’ use of language, paying attention to detail * identify the main themes and ideas in a text * use appropriate linguistic and literary terminology to support their analysis * evaluate how form and structure contribute to the effectiveness and impact of a text.  1. **Writing opportunities** in preparation for original creative writing:  * organise and structure ideas in narrative writing to create deliberate effects * select and emphasise key ideas and information * maintain a consistent viewpoint across a piece of writing, making conscious decisions, for example, about point of view * make considered choices of vocabulary and grammar to create deliberate effects * use the knowledge gained from wider reading of prose fiction and literary non-fiction texts to inform language choices and literary techniques * use language creatively and imaginatively * adapt tone, style and register as appropriate * select and emphasis key ideas to create meaning and influence readers * make appropriate use of information provided by others * use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect with accurate punctuation and spelling.  1. **Speaking and listening skills** are integral with opportunities for discussion in groups and presenting ideas individually in support of responses to ideas in texts.   **Please note:** Supporting texts at end of ‘Description’: Timings allocated are approximate as timing depends on, for example, context of learning, class size; lesson content/plan is written for the teacher to deliver to the learners, to amend as appropriate. |
| **Introduction** | **4 sections: Section 1 is 45 minutes, Section 2 is 45 minutes, Section 3 is 60 minutes, Section 4 50 minutes. However, they can each be divided up across lessons if required.**  Here are opportunities to continue to get to know your learners and generate a ‘supportive’ and ‘safe’ learning environment by using accessible subject- matter that invites learners to think and talk about aspects of their own lives and imaginatively, creatively engage with what is familiar to them to make it ‘unfamiliar’, different and ‘literary’. This series of activities are available to enable learners to know it is possible, within difficult exam constraints, to generate creative, imaginative responses by drawing on their own experiences, what they know from their own lives. These activities also provide opportunities to re- consider, review and reflect on useful and interesting literary techniques that can ‘lift’ their own writing. Learners are given the opportunity to explore ‘models’ of creative literary prose to inform their own knowledge, understanding and application of creative writing. They also explore the demands of each exam question in component 2 in some detail.  There are opportunities to embed peer -support throughout this activity as well as develop independent learning.  The focus is to build the learners’ confidence in their own writing, develop their writing skill, in order to have an informed and constructive attempt at Question 5/6 (40 marks). |
| **This activity prepares to Reading questions 1-4 and Writing questions 5 and 6** | This activity provides learners with an accessible more ‘holistic’’ revision session. It focuses minds on Paper 2 of the exam through encouraging the use of the following skills:  **Reading**  Identifying and interpreting explicit and implicit ideas and information from texts (Q1); exploring language and structure and relevant subject terminology (Q2, 3); exploring connections across texts to develop their understanding of the ideas, attitudes and values presented in them (Q4).  **Writing**  Opportunities for learners to create their own imaginative responses in a narrative structure, exploring ‘models’, using literary techniques (Q5,6).  Opportunities for speaking and listening skills to be revisited are included in an embedded approach. |

**Description**

**Section 1: 45 minutes**

**Introduction:** Teacher explains aims and objectives of the lesson- refer to (1), (2) in instructions.

**(5 minutes).**

**Starter, reading point:** Learners read Extract 1. Once read, write down first impressions: *any surprises? What does it make you think of? How would you describe it as a story, what type of story do you think it is? What strikes you about it? Underline one sentence that stands out from it for you.* Then: **Notes on a post it** – get them to note down what this story brings to mind – what’s it about – one word or short phrase answers – and stick on board. **(10 minutes)**

**Share responses to extract; pool ideas:** Bring out and explore any *themes/ideas* emerging from learners’ post-it notes, any ideas that identify it as a literary prose texts – eg settings, character, plot , structure etcm - discuss this as an example of prose fiction. Bring out how it turns an ordinary situation into something a surprising/extraordinary -explore how the writer builds on the ordinary and then starts to introduce unease and twists towards the end. **(10 minutes)**

**Talking point: How does this text build a sense of place and situation?**

Explore with class eg description – adjectives, the senses: sound, texture, verbs of stillness and space etc Then ask learners to carry out - in pairs or small groups -the ‘*what has changed?’* task below.

The purpose: for learners to grasp the value of imaginative descriptive detail, use of adjectives, similes, repetition for example, to create an engaging sense of place with a touch of atmosphere and mystery- in only a few relatively simple words. **(10 minutes)**

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| **What has changed?**   1. Apart from the mirrors and floors, the room is a whiteout: white walls, high white ceiling. It contains a white pedestal sink with a large basin, two tall arched windows at the front, two square ones at the back and that’s all. Walking to the front window — slowly, carefully — is like strolling through a dream. There’s nobody down there in the wet square, but she peers like a spy in case anyone looks up from another building. This is the tallest place in the whole square. Whatever is to be seen, she’ll see it first. 2. Apart from the mirrors and floors, the room is a whiteout: walls, ceiling. It contains a sink with a basin, windows at the front, two at the back and that’s all. Walking to the front window. There’s nobody down there in the square, but she peers in case anyone looks up from another building. This is the tallest place in the square. Whatever is to be seen, she’ll see it first.   **Discuss what has changed in (2), what is the text like now? Why?**  **Note down examples from the texts to support your responses.** |

**Introducing techniques of *character development, surprise, heightened emotion and sense of intrigue*** through suggestion: **less is more.**

Ask learners to reflect on what impact the introduction of certain details towards the end of the extract have on their responses to Lottie:

Impact of:

* Learning that her name is ‘Lottie’.
* Reading about ‘gran’ and ‘dad’.
* What strikes them about what they learn here: is there a lot of detail? What impression do they make of this in terms of Lottie’s situation?
* What do they think of the idea that sometimes ‘less is more’ in story telling? What does this add?
* Do you feel you want to find out more? Why?
* What themes do you think this story explores?

**Classroom conversations about the story:**

* Teacher to pool learners’ ideas together as they discuss their responses.
* Ideas then ‘framed’ by the teacher, in terms of storytelling techniques, their effectiveness and impact on the reader.
* The power of narrative structure, word and phrase choice, descriptive detail and timing should become clear to learners in terms of effectiveness and impact of storytelling.
* The value of leaving the ‘bite’ of intrigue for the reader to catch (the ‘hook’), as the story progresses towards the end: a useful trick for them to learn about effective narrative structure that has impact. **(15 minutes)**

**Section 2: 45 minutes**

**Reading prose fiction: Extract 2**: Learners read Extract 2. Once read:

* *Write down first impressions: any surprises?*
* *What does it make them think of?*
* *How would they describe it as a story, what type of story do they think it is?*
* *What strikes them about it?*
* *Underline one sentence that stands out to them.*

Then: Notes on a post it – get them to note down what this story brings to mind – what’s it about – one word or short phrase answers – and stick on board. **(10 minutes)**

**Talking point in response to prose fiction**

Share responses to extract; pool ideas: bring out and explore any themes/ideas emerging from learners’ post-it notes, any ideas that identify it as a literary prose texts – eg settings , character, plot , structure etc – discuss this as an example of prose fiction.

Bring out how fiction can turn an ordinary situation into something a surprising/extraordinary – explore how the writer builds on the ordinary and then starts to introduce unease and twists towards the end.

(**10 minutes)**

**Talking point: How does this text build a sense of place and situation?**

Explore with class eg description – adjectives, the senses: sound, texture, verbs of stillness and space, use of contrast, juxtaposing ideas etc.

Learners carry out (in pairs or small groups) the ‘*what has changed?’* task below.

**The purpose**: for learners to grasp the value of imaginative descriptive detail , use of adjectives, similes, repetition, contrast, sounds for example, to create an engaging sense of place, character, and a dreamy atmosphere - using a few carefully chosen words and phrases that hint at things and take the reader places beyond the ‘laundromat’. **(10 minutes)**

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| Tara sat in front of the washing machine. She looked at the way the clothes moved in circles, sometimes showing a little bit of colour but mostly just black; she listened to the machine, a constant hum that echoed in the room where she waited. She thought about the way the clothes resembled a hurricane and how if she put her hand in the machine the clothes wouldn’t touch her, just like standing in the eye of a hurricane, knowing you’re in danger but at the same time knowing you are safe. When the machine beeped she took out the clothes and put them in the dryer; the ones that were delicate she extended on a drying rack.  Once again, Tara sat and watched the machine dry the clothes. This time she thought of the ocean: the way the machine rolled and threw the clothes to the other side made her imagine herself at the beach, watching the waves crash onto one another and hearing the sounds of the seagulls while they hunted for fish and crabs on the sand. Tara’s body started to heat up from the ocean sun, but the moment the dryer beeped, she once again became cold with routine.  Tara sat in front of the washing machine. She looked at the way the clothes moved. She listened to the machine, in the room where she waited. She thought about the clothes and how if she put her hand in the machine the clothes wouldn’t touch her. Knowing you’re in danger but at the same time knowing you are safe. When the machine beeped she took out the clothes and put them in the dryer.  Once again, Tara sat and watched the machine dry the clothes. This time the way the machine rolled and threw the clothes to the other side made her imagine herself at the beach, but the moment the dryer beeped, she once again became cold with routine.  **Discuss what has changed in (2), what is the text like now? Why?**  **Note down examples from the texts to support your responses.** |

**Exploring storytelling techniques: narrative structure, shifts – their effectiveness and impact on the reader**

Learners asked to think about theimpact of the introduction of certain details has on their responses to the story, *towards the end* of the extract. Ask them to discuss the following, in pairs or groups – allocate different aspects to different groupings of learners:

* Character development introduction of surprising details.
* Building of a sense of intrigue: less is more - the power of suggestion: inference.
* What impact the introduction of certain details has on their responses to the story *towards the end* of the extract.
* The introduction of the pronoun ‘*they*’.
* The introduction of idea that she is trying to ‘*trick’ ‘them’.*
* The idea that she is dreaming of freedom.
* How does the idea of ‘less is more’ work on the reader, do you think? What does this add?
* Do you feel you want to find out more? Why?
* What themes do you think this story explores?

**Classroom conversations about the story**

* Teacher to pool learners’ ideas together as they discuss their responses.
* Ideas then ‘framed’ by the teacher, in terms of storytelling techniques, their effectiveness and impact on the reader.
* The power of narrative structure, word and phrase choice, descriptive detail and timing should become clear to learners in terms of effectiveness and impact of storytelling.
* The value of leaving the ‘bite’ of intrigue for the reader to catch (the ‘hook’), as the story progresses towards the end: a useful trick for them to learn about effective narrative structure that has impact. **(15 minutes)**

**Section 3: 60 minutes**

**Creative writing opportunity (Q 5/6 preparation) Using extracts 1 and 2 as models to prompt learners’ writing.**

How to write a story, follow your reading (eg **in the exam, learners can use the extracts to help structure and ‘feed’ their story using ideas from it for example)** – *write as a reader, read as a writer.*

This activity is really powerful if the teacher also participates at the same time and at the end read out their ‘story’ as model example, once learners shared some parts of their responses (or teacher can have a version already prepared).

**Imagine task** Ask learners to respond creatively to the following prompts, make up their responses. They should be encouraged to imagine and also draw on what is familiar to them to help in their descriptions (a good tip, use *what they know* to help them in their writing).

Two sentences per prompt, teacher gives about between (30 secs – 1 minute) per prompt. These can either be written down on folded strips for students to unfold as directed or the teacher can read them out to the whole class:

* You are going upstairs to a room. It’s daylight outside. Describe the stairs and your surroundings as you go upstairs.
* You pass two different landings as you go up the stairs and catch glimpses into other rooms or hallways – what do you see? Can you hear anything?
* You reach the top of the stairs and find the room – can you hear anything, any odd sensations, tastes, smells- are there windows – any views?
* What does it feel like to be there? Why you are there? Are you meeting someone? Are you escaping from something? Tell us a bit of detail of your story.
* Imagine you are somewhere else, somewhere you would love to be - describe this place – sounds, sights, climate, colours…and the contrast to the room.
* You see- or hear- some people from the windows- or from downstairs – describe this and how it makes you feel (possible simile /metaphor here)?
* Look around you, is this what you hoped for – this place? What do you notice the more you look into the room?
* It starts to rain outside – the room darkens as the skies turn grey – what sounds can you hear, describe how the room’s atmosphere changes. What is it like (possible simile/metaphor here)?
* You feel trapped, describe this feeling – what is it like? Tell us a hint of detail of your story, give us a bit more of a clue as to why you are there.
* You remember someone important to you and this memory comforts you - who are you remembering, describe them, what they mean to you.
* Tell us a hint of detail of your story, give us a bit more of a clue as to why you are there: is it to do with the person you are remembering?
* Make something happen to change things in the room and to change things for you.

The end.

**(20 minutes)**

**Selecting from their own material:** Learners now read through what they have written and choose parts they like the most – words/phrases/descriptions/event. In pairs, let them share what they have written and exchange the parts they like the most with each other.m Teacher asks for volunteers to share anything of what they have written.m Teacher then shares their own attempt and they discuss the narrative process. Add ‘viewpoint’ as a focus in discussion -what do they think about the first- person point of view? Do they prefer writing in first- person? Why? **(10 minutes)**

**Turn their story into third person point of view**: how different is it: discuss in pairs and then as a whole class. Which version is preferred and why? **(10 minutes)**

**Compare storytelling versions**: ask learners to compare their ‘story’ to extract 1/2: how different are they? Why? Is their version an improvement? What themes are emerging – the same as the extracts or different? How could they improve on their own version?

Share ideas in pairs. Feed back to class. Teacher points out positive examples of narrative structure, language use- effectiveness of writing and impact on reader. **(10 minutes)**

**Learners self-assess:***How can I develop my work beyond what I am doing at present? Why will this be an improvement?*

**On finishing any work:**

* Learners identify the areas of their work they feel most confident about and those they feel they need to do more work on. Make a note of these and follow up on them at the next opportunity.
* Compare it to previous work; identify common mistakes and target these as an area for improvement.
* **Create a personal checklist** of five things they need to improve. Use this checklist to assess every piece of work they do. Once they are consistently doing all the things on the checklist, write a new one.

**(10 minutes)**

**Section 4**

**Exam question:** this activity builds on everything learners have worked on in this unit. The idea is for learners to be able to do something as well as they possibly can having prepared for it and read model examples, so they experience the benefits of what they have learned from what they have read and written so far.

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| **Reminder:**  **Learners should consider spending about 45-50 minutes of the two hour exam time on the writing section;** this includes the time taken to choose the task they will respond to and to plan their response. It is important that learners take time to carefully read through the requirements of both tasks so that they can decide on the task which best suits them.m **It is equally important that learners plan their response before they begin writing. This will help them to organise their ideas in order to make their writing coherent and to give it a clear structure.m It also gives them some space to consider the language techniques they may use to meet the purpose of the task.**  Using all the preparatory work in previous activities, get learners **to plan** the structure of their story – remembering the sequencing of the questions from the previous *Imagine* task.  Get them to note down brief ideas for beginning – middle – end, for example:   * brief idea of **descriptive detail**, sense of place * brief reasons for given situation (eg being in the room) hinted at- ***less is more*** (for intrigue) – imagine being somewhere else you would rather be… introduce idea of contrast, simile * brief ideas about something **shifting** (weather, noises, arrival?) * brief ideas about **something happening at end to change things** again. |

* **Exam question (50 minutes)**

**The Room**

Use this as the title for your story.

In your writing you should:

* choose a clear viewpoint
* describe the setting
* explore your characters thoughts and feelings about being in the room.

(40 marks)

* **Proof reading- the need for technical accuracy reminder:**

**Assessment criteria states:**

* *Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.*
* *AO6 is assessed in both writing tasks. There are* ***16 marks*** *available for AO6 in Component 1 and Component 2.*
* *AO6 encompasses four different elements: vocabulary choice, sentence structure, accurate spelling and accurate punctuation.*
* *Learners’ relative performance in all four elements will be considered when deciding on a level and mark:* ***there is a balance to be had between ambitiousness and accuracy.***

**With this in mind:**

Once completed, **advise learners to check over their work**. Remind them that what they have written is actually a draft and so it can be ‘corrected’ when reading it through. In the exam they must allow 5 minutes at the end to check over their work. Check that:

* **What they have written** **makes sense**, important words have not been left out of sentences.
* **The writing is in paragraphs.** If paragraphs need to be created they must use **//** to mark where they think the paragraph should begin. This will make a difference as it is showing the examiner that the learner understands the importance of paragraphing, even if it was forgotten when first writing in the exam.
* **Check punctuation marks have not been left out** e.g. question marks, commas, full-stops, apostrophes.
* Could a semi-colon be added, an exclamation mark – for variety?
* **Are spellings as good as can be**? Use the extracts in the exam paper to help check if you are using some of the same words.
* **Create a personal checklist** of five things they need to improve. Use this checklist to assess every piece of work they do. Once they are consistently doing all the things on the checklist, write a new one.

**(10 minutes)**

* **Hand work in for teacher assessment.**

**Links to source materials below.**

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| Extract 1  **THE OLD REHEARSAL ROOMS** by Clare Weze  Extract begins:  ‘The stairs are covered in thick grey carpet.  and ends:  What a quaint, pathetic pair of words. The air in the street had gone strangely still, as if it was a solid mass she had to fight her way through to get home.’  633 words  Link to extract below.  <https://www.barefictionmagazine.co.uk/2018/08/short-story-the-old-rehearsal-rooms-by-clare-weze/> |

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| Extract 2  **Laundromat,** Unknown  By Mulix  Extract begins  ‘Tara sat in front of the washing machine.  and ends  After finishing, she went to the bedding placed in the corner of the room and slept. She dreamt of the day she would finally be freed, the day she would be able to smell something that wasn’t laundry detergent.’  485 words  Link to extract below.  <https://www.fairlightbooks.co.uk/short_stories/laundromat/> |

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