

Night-time

Creative writing home study unit

HIAS English Team
Spring 2020
Final version

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Using the home learning materials

How to use the materials

- This resource bank includes materials for several stages of learning – you can use these as individual lessons or work through them as a journey.
- You should complete all of the stages in order and aim to apply the learning from each stage to the final piece of writing.
- It is up to you how you use your time. It is likely that you will take between 3 and 6 hours to complete all the stages, but this is not a timed piece of writing and it is not to be treated as an exam piece. Take as long as you like!
- You may find it useful to discuss some of the stages with other students. However, if you prefer to work completely independently, that's fine.
- Where some stages suggest that you think about or make notes on a resource, you can use any format you like. If you would like more guidance on how to do this, examples and printable resources are attached at the end of this pack.
- Your teacher may ask you to send in your work at the end of each stage, or they may ask you to manage your own study and send in the finished piece of writing. Check that you know what your teacher expects you to do before you start.



This symbol means that it may be useful to contact a classmate and discuss ideas at this point

This symbol means that there is a resource to help you at the end of this pack



Learning stages

This home learning journey leads towards a range of narrative writing outcomes of your choice. The stimulus text is the opening chapter from Erin Morganstern's novel, *The Night Circus* (Doubleday, 2011). This extract is freely available online. The motif of *night-time* is a common feature in many texts; pupils are invited to explore the differing ways that night-time can be used symbolically and to write a narrative that takes place at night.

1. Building your ideas
2. Exploring the symbolism of night-time #1
3. Vocabulary expansion #1
4. Exploring the symbolism of night-time #2
5. Vocabulary expansion #2
6. Exploring text extract
7. Noticing the way the text is structured
8. Noticing the way the writer has crafted sentences
9. Writing challenge
10. Review, edit, publish

Building your ideas

Night-time means different things to different people at different points in their lives. What does night-time mean to you? Consider:

- Do you enjoy going out at night-time?
- Does it scare you?
- Does it bring back special moments or unpleasant memories?
- What books have you read that are set at night-time or where the night is important?
- What films / TV series have you watched where night scenes dominate?

1) Write a paragraph to capture your thinking: there is no right or wrong – this is about *your* opinion and experiences.

Using the images and text extracts on the next 5 slides, begin to build your ideas and understanding about night-time (you do not need to print them). Explore the list of possible night-time themes below.

2) Using the letters on each image and extract, decide which is associated with which theme. Each may go with several themes.

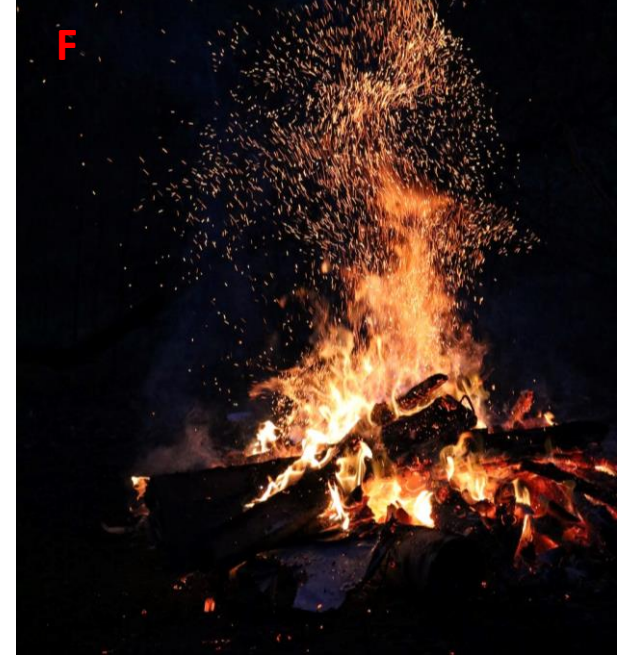
Night-time as a cover that hides things
Night-time as a dream space
Night-time – restlessness and insomnia
Night-time – nocturnal
Night-time – wildness/excitement H
Night-time – fear, darkness and anxiety
<i>One of your own</i>



E



F

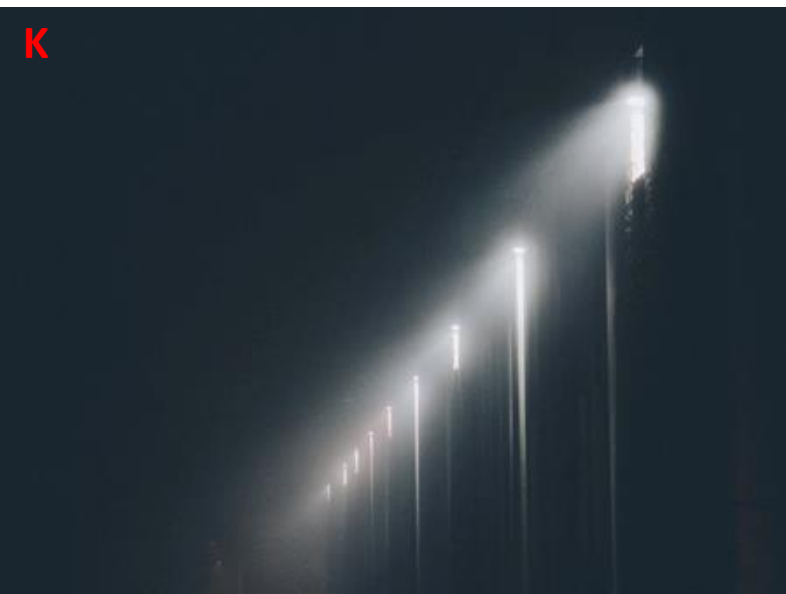


H



G





Building your ideas

M As night fell the blue haze of day lifted to reveal the stars. Shay always felt that this was closer to the truth of who we are. He wondered, if we were nocturnal would we feel more connected to those far away stars, perhaps sensing the fragility of Earth all the more. To him the night was when the curtain was pulled back, when we got to see out of the window we call "the sky" to the universe beyond.

Angela Abraham, @daisydescriptionari

N Stars filled the sky like pale corn into freshly turned ground. It was the promise of life in the darkness, a sense of warmth springing from the cold. It was a vastness to bring humbleness and an eternal space to bring gratitude for the cosiness of home. No matter the years that passed, Leo saw each night sky as a fresh gift given anew. It was the moment anyone that knew him would see his eyes smile and his breathing deepen just a little.

Angela Abraham, @daisydescriptionari

O People say the darkness "presses in," it doesn't. The darkness kisses up to your skin closer than a mother and whispers excitement into your ears. The darkness is your best friend, it's funny and glib, flattering and cool. The darkness will be your favourite thing right up until your exits are blocked, then it has no reason to hide. If it was easy to spot darkness there wouldn't be a problem. How often are you confused with day and night? But I can tell you now, if you don't understand your own emotions and motivations I can't help you. You are a character, this is your story, now what do you want? What do you fear? Know that and you can unlock your own cage and step into the light.

Angela Abraham, @daisydescriptionari

Building your ideas

P She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

George Gordon, Lord Byron

R Darkness comes as strong protective arms,
holding us close until the promised dawn.
Within it we are as children once more, safe
in shields of duvet. Yet in this place so open
to the skies, resting in the cricket's lullaby,
our eyes are as bright as the constellations
above; our stardust atoms seeking the stars
until they can bathe in the light of the sun.
Angela Abraham, @daisydescriptionari

Q Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's off'rings, and withered murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost

Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 7

S Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, 'Hold, hold.'

Lady Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 5

Exploring the symbolism of night-time #1

Reflect on the images, extracts and your notes from the previous section.

Using the questions below, explore layers of meaning and ideas around the symbolism of the night. Try to discuss the questions with someone else in your house, or a friend online:

- Is night-time a time of danger or safety?
- Is night-time a space of lawlessness or freedom?
- Why do normal rules appear to be suspended at night?
- How is this useful to writers?

Capture some notes that you will use later. Again, this is based on your own opinion and prior experience, so your thoughts might be different to the people you have discussed the questions with.

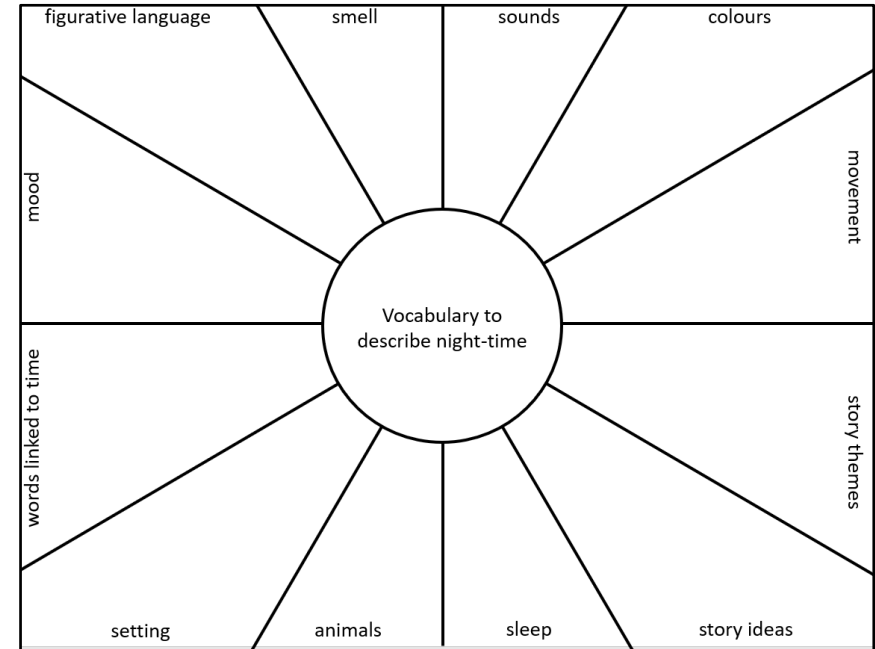


Vocabulary expansion #1

Build and organise your vocabulary to describe night-time.


Your task is to **collect interesting vocabulary** from the extracts, images and word bank and to organise them for yourself, thinking about what you will need to describe. Expand your vocabulary list by searching a thesaurus for new words. Make sure that you know exactly what each word means and how it would be used in a sentence – if it is a new word to you, check the meaning in a dictionary.

Use the from the resource pages (at the end) for your vocabulary bank. You could change the section headings if you wish.



grim	closed	huddled	dreary	peering	blearily	visible	reflected
haunted	dreaming	spectres	extinguished	suffocating	disappears	fading	ghostly
aglow	dusk	sparkling	twilight	luminosity	sparks	flicker	illumination
dim	unexpectedly	unremarkable	curtained	encasing	dissipate	dismal	unnoticed
gloomy	alone	echo	mysterious	romantic	lonesome	fading	quiet
muffled	colourless	shroud	scarf	blanket	incandescent	unsettling	fateful
muted	sombre	murky	misty	vision	phantom	torment	nightmare
opaque	obscure	ominous	sinister	evil	peaceful	lawless	misgiving

HIAS HOME LEARNING RESOURCE



Building your knowledge

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes.
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

George Gordon, Lord Byron

Now o'er the one half-world
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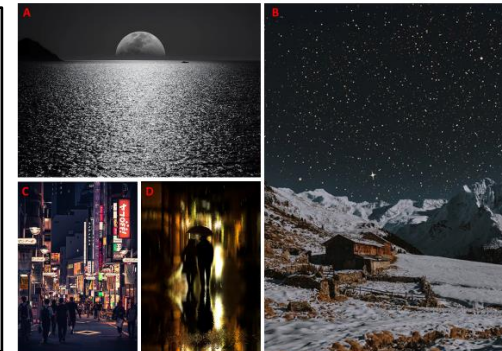
Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 7

Darkness comes as strong protective arms,
hoisting us close until the promised dawn
Within it we are as children once more, safe
in shields of duvet. Yet in this place so open
to the skies, resting in the crickler's library,
our eyes are as bright as the constellations
above, our starlust aloms seeking the stars
until they can bathe in the light of the sun.

Angela Abraham, @deasydescriptions1

Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dimmest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, 'Hold, hold!'

Lady Macbeth, Act 1 Scene 5



Exploring the symbolism of night-time #2

Create a mind map to explore the symbolism of night-time, based on your work from the last 2 sections and the example on the next page. Use the master on page XX if you wish and the word bank on page XX to support your thinking.

Utilise colours for each element added. For example:

- 1) Examples
- 2) Vocabulary linked to feelings/emotions
- 3) Vocabulary linked to events/items



Exploring the symbolism of night-time #2

Challenge yourself further:
 Consider the texts you have read and are studying and add in references or quotations to your mind map. You may find that you are able to make interesting connections between them.



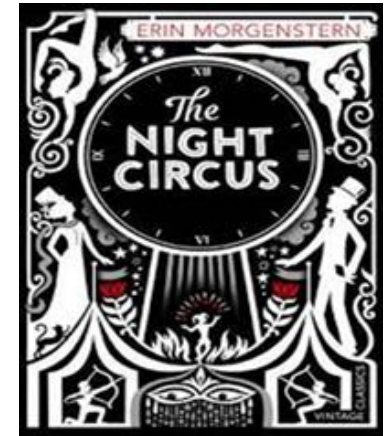
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***The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern**

The rest of the unit will now focus on chapter one of *The Night Circus*.

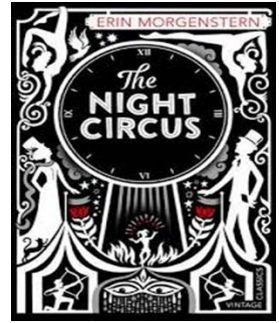
Please read the text which is available on the next two slides (it is also available to print with wider margins for your notes at the end of this pack).

Read the chapter several times to be sure that you have absorbed it fully.



The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern

Chapter 1



The circus arrives without warning.

No announcements precede it, no paper notices on downtown posts and billboards, no mentions or advertisements in local newspapers. It is simply there, where yesterday it was not.

The towering tents are striped in white and black, no golds and crimsons to be seen. No colour at all, save for the neighbouring trees and the grass of the surrounding fields. Black-and-white stripes on grey sky; countless tents of varying shapes and sizes, with an elaborate wrought-iron fence encasing them in a colourless world. Even what little ground is visible from outside is black or white, painted or powdered, or treated with some other circus trick.

But it is not open for business. Not just yet.

Within hours everyone in town has heard about it. By afternoon the news has spread several towns over. Word of mouth is a more effective method of advertisement than typeset words and exclamation points on paper pamphlets or posters. It is impressive and unusual news, the sudden appearance of a mysterious circus. People marvel at the staggering height of the tallest tents. They stare at the clock that sits just inside the gates that no one can properly describe.

And the black sign painted in white letters that hangs upon the gates, the one that reads:

Opens at Nightfall

Closes at Dawn

“What kind of circus only opens at night?” people ask. No one has a proper answer, yet as dusk approaches there is a substantial crowd of spectators gathering outside the gates.

You are amongst them, of course. Your curiosity got the better of you, as curiosity is wont to do. You stand in the fading light, the scarf around your neck pulled up against the chilly evening breeze, waiting to see for yourself exactly what kind of circus only opens as the sun sets.

The ticket booth clearly visible behind the gates is closed and barred. The tents are still, save for when they ripple ever so slightly in the wind. The only movement within the circus is the clock that ticks by the passing minutes, if such a wonder of sculpture can even be called a clock.

The circus looks abandoned and empty. But you think perhaps you can smell caramel wafting through the evening breeze, beneath the crisp scent of the autumn leaves. A subtle sweetness at the edges of the cold.

The sun disappears completely beyond the horizon, and the remaining luminosity shifts from dusk to twilight. The people around you are growing restless from waiting, a sea of shuffling feet, murmuring about abandoning the endeavour in search of someplace warmer to pass the evening. You yourself are debating departing when it happens.

First, there is a popping sound. It is barely audible over the wind and conversation. A soft noise like a kettle about to boil for tea. Then comes the light.

All over the tents, small lights begin to flicker, as though the entirety of the circus is covered in particularly bright fireflies. The waiting crowd quiets as it watches this display of illumination. Someone near you gasps. A small child claps his hands with glee at the sight. When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears.

Stretched across the top of the gates, hidden in curls of iron, more firefly-like lights flicker to life. They pop as they brighten, some accompanied by a shower of glowing white sparks and a bit of smoke. The people nearest the gates take a few steps back. At first, it is only a random pattern of lights. But as more of them ignite, it becomes clear that they are aligned in scripted letters. First, a C is distinguishable, followed by more letters. A q, oddly, and several e's. When the final bulb pops alight, and the smoke and sparks dissipate, it is finally legible, this elaborate incandescent sign. Leaning to your left to gain a better view, you can see that it reads:

Le Cirque des Rêves

Some in the crowd smile knowingly, while others frown and look questioningly at their neighbours. A child near you tugs on her mother's sleeve, begging to know what it says.

"The Circus of Dreams," comes the reply. The girl smiles delightedly.

Then the iron gates shudder and unlock, seemingly by their own volition. They swing outward, inviting the crowd inside.

Now the circus is open.

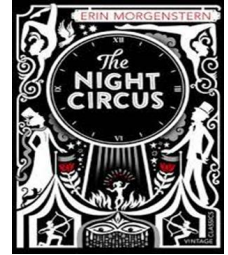
Now you may enter.

Vocabulary expansion #2

Reread the text extract and identify unfamiliar words.

Use context clues, read on and read back to identify meaning.

Complete the grid as below – a blank can be printed from the resources section but you may find it more convenient to draw out the table by hand.



Unknown vocabulary	What I think it means	Dictionary definition (if there is more than one meaning, choose the appropriate one)	Word in an example sentence
No announcements precede it ...	<i>go before something</i>	<i>come before in order</i>	<i>If your warning had preceded their actions, the accident might have been prevented.</i>
... posts and billboards , no <u>mentions</u> or advertisements ...			
... there is a substantial crowd of spectators gathering ...			



Exploring text extract

In this section, you will be exploring your understanding of chapter one in more detail, using the ‘read aloud - think aloud’ technique to **develop your comprehension** of the text.

This means that you should make notes around the text that track your thinking as you read – ask questions, make predictions, notice interesting details or choices of word, explore possible interpretations, draw the images you see in your mind’s eye – whatever helps to capture your thought process.

A modelled example based on the first 3 paragraphs is provided on the next slide. Use this to understand how to text annotate and the depth of thinking needed.

Exploring text extract

Modelled example of 'thinking aloud' from the first section of 'The Night Circus'.

The circus arrives without warning. *suggests danger was a warning necessary?*

No announcements precede it, no paper notices on downtown posts and billboards, no mentions or advertisements in local newspapers. It is simply there, where yesterday it was not. *are only newspapers available? No social media, what time period is this set in? circus must have arrived overnight how did nobody notice? usually trucks etc. would be noisy*

The towering tents are striped in white and black no golds and crimsons to be seen. No colour at all, save for the neighbouring trees and the grass of the surrounding fields. *circus would usually be colourful = something odd about the circus itself*

Black-and-white stripes on grey sky; countless tents of varying shapes and sizes, with an elaborate wrought-iron fence encasing them in a colourless world. Even what little ground is visible from outside is black or white powdered or treated with some other circus trick. *means loads - again, how did no one notice the arrival?*

powdered, or treated with some other circus trick. *why paint the ground? Is that normal? Would it look cool or horrible? what tricks are in the circus?*

No warning + black + white = *mysterious? sinister? danger?*



Noticing the way the text is structured #1

This is a deliberately intriguing opening to the story and the writer intends to hook the reader from the very beginning by setting up a mystery to be solved:

How does the circus arrive so suddenly?

Why is it so different from other circuses?

Why does it only open at night?

Most of us can spot a hook when we see one!

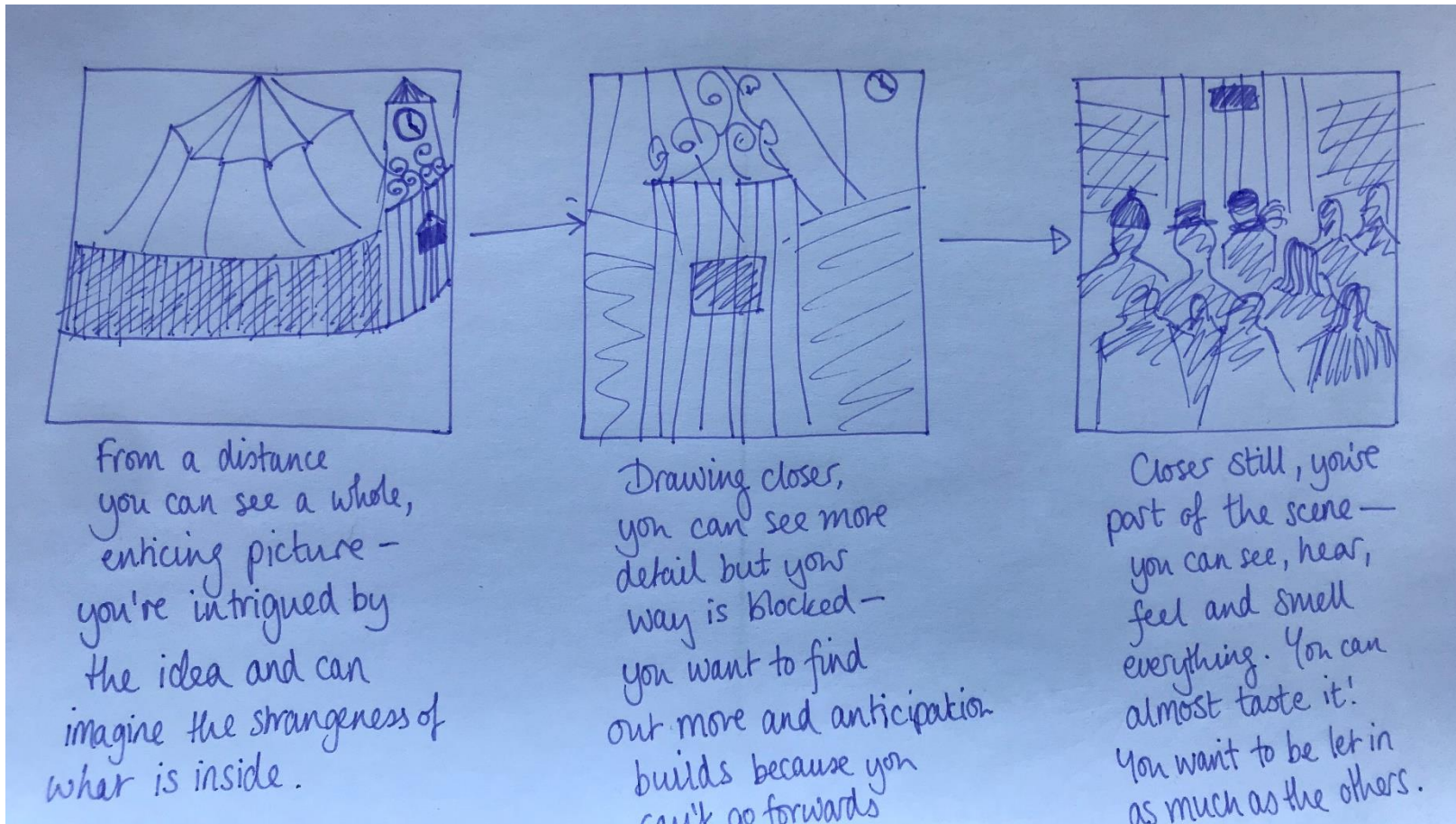
Now look at the way the writer draws you in closer and closer by shifting the focus of description. It is helpful to visualise each section as if it is a shot from a film – consider what you would see on the screen if the director decided to frame exactly what is described.

Explore the example done for you on the next page and then choose one of the following options to explore the shifts in focus across the rest of the text:

- 1. Annotate each paragraph with a title (one word or a short phrase) and highlight the moment the focus changes**
- 2. Draw the images you see in your mind's eye for each section and write a short description of the effect on the reader – what you think, feel, imagine or want to do.**

Noticing the shifts in focus

As the writer moves the focus of description on in each section, it is as if you – the reader – are being pulled into the scene and becoming part of it. It feels more and more real as the details of what you experience with your senses are included, but at the same time, the more difficult it is to see clearly what is behind the gates. When something gets between you and what you want to know, the more the anticipation is built up.



Noticing the way the text is structured #2

One technique this writer uses to help the reader understand how time is passing and things are changing is to use repeated references to light and darkness. We find these in almost every paragraph.

“What kind of circus is only open at night?” people ask. No one has a proper answer, yet **as dusk approaches** there is a substantial crowd of spectators gathering outside the gates.

You are among them, of course. Your curiosity got the better of you, as curiosity is wont to do. You stand in **the fading light**, the scarf around your neck pulled up tight against the chilly evening breeze, waiting to see for yourself exactly what kind of circus only opens **when the sun sets**.

The ticket booth **clearly visible** behind the gates is closed and barred. The tents are still, save for when they ripple ever so slightly in the wind. The only movement within the circus is the clock that ticks by the passing minutes, if such a wonder of sculpture can even be called a clock.

The circus looks abandoned and empty. But you think perhaps you can smell caramel wafting through the evening breeze, beneath the crisp scent of the autumn leaves. A subtle sweetness at the edges of the cold.

The sun disappears completely beyond the horizon, and **the remaining luminosity shifts from dusk to twilight**. The people around you are growing restless from waiting, a sea of shuffling feet, murmuring about abandoning the endeavour in search of someplace warmer to pass the evening. You yourself are debating departing when it happens.

Review the whole text and highlight all the references to light and darkness you can find. Once you have highlighted them all, go back and re-read just the references to darkness and light. Think about the feeling that is meant to be created by the description of the dark/light at that point in the text.

Noticing the way the text is structured #2

Complete a table that explores the intended effect on the reader of the references to light and dark in each paragraph where these appear. A couple of rows have been completed for you.

What happens in the paragraph? What references are made to light and dark?	Intended effect on the reader Ideas being hinted at Feeling being created	Interesting vocabulary
Crowd gathers outside the gate to find out about the circus. <i>'as dusk approaches...'</i>	Creates anticipation – makes you think something will happen at dusk. Not spooky, but strange – dusk is a crossing point between day and night and makes you think that you might cross a boundary.	dusk
You're in the crowd, waiting to go in. <i>'the fading light'</i> <i>'when the sun sets'</i>	Slight feeling of unease – fading and setting suggest endings (and possibly even death?)	fading
Etc...		



Noticing the way the writer has crafted sentences

4 steps to effective sentence imitation:

1. Find an interesting sentence and think about why it works in terms of the feeling it creates.
2. Explore the grammatical structure of the sentence and identify which words are the key content words and which make a framework that holds it all together.
3. Keep the framework words as they are.
4. Replace content words to change the meaning.

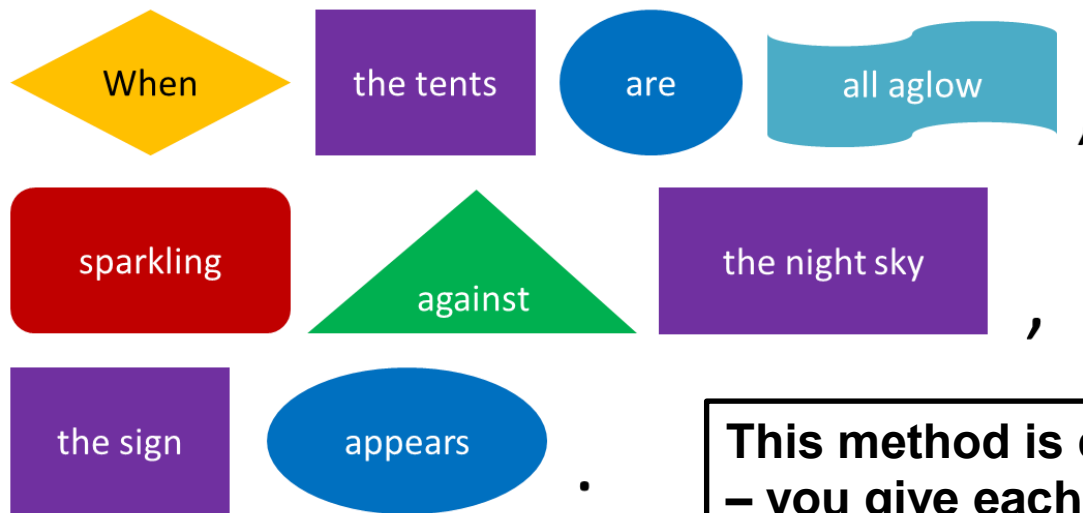
When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears. Stretched across the top of the gates, hidden in curls of iron, more firefly-like lights flicker to life.

Step 1:

These are lovely sentences for describing the way the lights of the sign that announces the circus is open turn on – the writer includes a lot of detail and makes the reader wait and wait until the very end of the second sentence for the lights to ‘flicker to life’. The sentence structure itself adds description after description, building anticipation until the final pay-off in each sentence.

Step 2: there are different ways of noticing sentence structure...

When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears.



This method is called 'shape coding' – you give each type of word a shape so you can see the structure of the sentence. In this case, you can spot that the purple rectangles are all noun phrases starting with 'the' and the blue ovals are both verbs.

Step 2: other strategies for noticing sentence structure

Original sentence

When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears.

Replacing content words with blankety blank

When the blanks are blankety-blank, blanking against the blankety-blank, the blank blanks.

Replacing content words with nonsense words

When the plinks are snorgly blort, fingling against the dingle mort, the sentire affleggs.

Replacing content words with grammatical terms

When the noun phrase are adjectival phrase, participle-ing preposition the noun phrase, the noun phrase verb

Step 3: creating a framework

Original sentence

When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears.

Replacing content words with blankety blank

When the blanks are blankety-blank, blanking against the blankety-blank, the blank blanks.

Replacing content words with nonsense words

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Replacing content words with grammatical terms

When the noun phrase are adjectival phrase, participle-ing preposition the noun phrase, the noun phrase verb

When the _____ are _____, _____ing
against the _____, the _____.

Step 4: replacing content words

When the _____ are _____, _____ing
against the _____, the _____.

When the window displays are bright and rich with colour and texture, glowing against the early evening shadows, the enchanted shoppers gather.

Sentence imitation

- Choose 4 sentences from the text that you like and think are interesting
- Notice their sentence structure using the method you prefer
- Create a framework from each sentence
- Re-write the sentence for a different setting or idea

Writing challenge

Choose one of the following writing tasks:

- Select a scene from a text you have read (this could be one you have studied or a book or film you have enjoyed) that takes place at night-time but is not fully told in the text – write the story of this scene.
- Write the next part of *The Night Circus* – what happens when you go through the gates and enter the circus itself?
- Write a story inspired by one of the pictures or extracts from the first session in this pack.

Three key reminders:

- 1. Use references to light and dark to show how time is moving on and build up anticipation**
- 2. Use the vocabulary you have explored**
- 3. Use some of the ambitious sentence structures you have imitated**

Plan your own writing carefully

Plan out your own story using a table that is quite similar to the one that you used to analyse *The Night Circus*, but this time begin each row by thinking about what you want the reader to feel and think at each point in the story, then think of how you will use details in description, including references to light and darkness, to create that effect. *Here is an example of what a good plan might look like – this student is planning a piece of writing about what it is like to be homeless in London as night falls.*

Desired effect	What’s happening? Reference to light/dark	Details
Lively, exciting, enjoyable – a place you want to be. Hub of activity. Warm and friendly. Noisy.	Evening/dusk. Bright shops – London Oxford Street. Lots of people	Sparkling, illumination, flicker, twilight, aglow, lots of colour, sun had disappeared completely; towering skyscrapers. Incandescent. Like ants (simile)
Quietens down – seems peaceful then shifts to threatening- dreary & surreptitious.	Lights gradually go out as people leave. Night settles. Empty, dark etc.	Dissipate, fading, disappears, empty, deserted
Loneliness and fear. Really quiet – too quiet.	Totally dark- shadowy. Cold and miserable.	Furtive, huddled, muffled, ghostly, void, groped, blurred, shroud.



Review and evaluate

- **Have you:**
 - Used references to light and dark to link paragraphs together and show time moving on?
 - Used interesting sentence structures imitated from the text?
 - Thought carefully about your vocabulary choices?
- **Have you:**
 - Created the atmosphere that you wanted to create?
 - Made the reader feel as if they are being drawn in closer and closer?
 - Used sensory details to make the reader experience the moment?

Edit and improve



What do you need to **ADD** to your writing?

Does your writing need more detail for the reader – maybe to build a more vivid description, or add detail to help the reader understand the event / issue / character viewpoint?

said

What do you need to **REPLACE** or **REVISE** in your writing?

This might be individual words / phrases or a whole paragraph. Could you revise some of your choices to more appropriate words or more / less intense word choices? Think in particular about the intensity of the verbs you use.



What words / phrases / paragraphs should you **TAKE AWAY**?

Perhaps they are overloaded with adjectives, perhaps there is unnecessary repetition. You need to think about quality rather than quantity. Sometimes less writing is more powerful. Consider how to make the moments of clarity stand out.



Which words / phrases / paragraphs need to **MOVE AROUND** ?

You need to make sure your writing makes sense and flows easily for the reader. How will you ensure your writing has cohesion and a strong overall structure?

Polish and publish

Hand in the final version of your narrative to your teacher.

Extra credit: If you have typed your work, print your final version with wide margins and double-spaced lines. In the space around the text, annotate your writing to explain the choices you have made and the way that you have included the key features from this unit. Photograph this annotated version to hand in.

Night-time

RESOURCES

wildness /
excitement

nocturnal

dream space

literature/film

Night-Time as...

fear, darkness
and anxiety

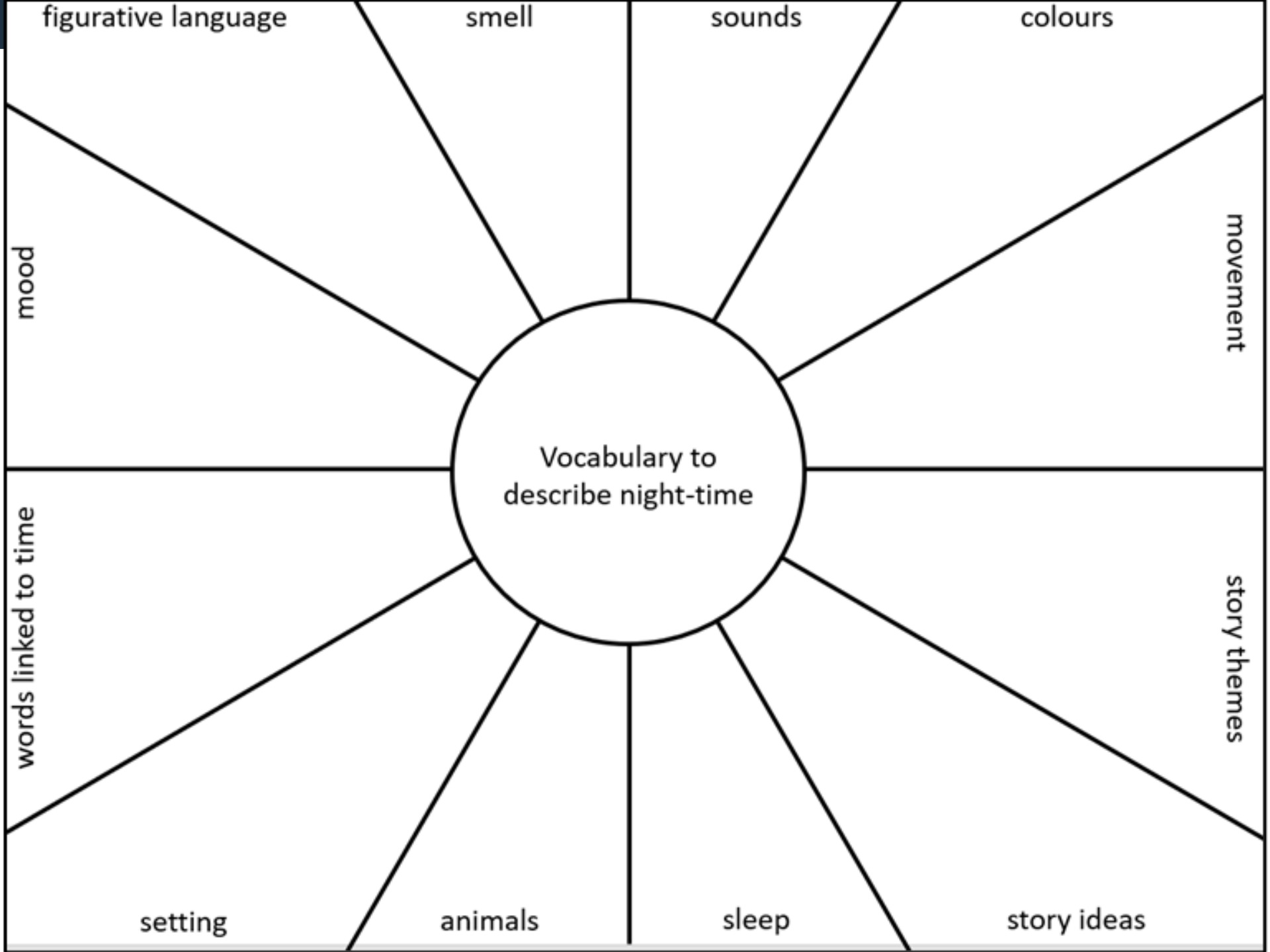
restlessness
and insomnia

beauty and
romance

a cover that
hides things

Night-time word bank

grim	closed	huddled	dreary	peering	blearily	visible	reflected
haunted	dreaming	spectres	extinguished	suffocating	disappears	fading	ghostly
aglow	dusk	sparkling	twilight	luminosity	sparks	flicker	illumination
dim	unexpectedly	unremarkable	curtained	encasing	dissipate	dismal	unnoticed
gloomy	alone	echo	mysterious	romantic	lonesome	fading	quiet
muffled	colourless	shroud	scarf	blanket	incandescent	unsettling	fateful
muted	sombre	murky	misty	vision	phantom	torment	nightmare
opaque	obscure	ominous	sinister	evil	peaceful	lawless	misgiving



Vocabulary to describe night-time

figurative language

smell

sounds

colours

movement

story themes

story ideas

sleep

animals

setting

words linked to time

mood

Unknown vocabulary	What I think it means	Dictionary definition (if there is more than one meaning, choose the appropriate one)	Word in an example sentence
No announcements precede it ...	<i>go before something</i>	<i>come before in order</i>	<i>If your warning had preceded their actions, the accident might have been prevented.</i>
... posts and billboards , no <u>mentions</u> or advertisements ...			
... there is a substantial crowd of spectators gathering ...			

Extract 1 for text annotation – *read aloud, think aloud*

Within hours everyone in town has heard about it. By afternoon the news has spread several towns over. Word of mouth is a more effective method of advertisement than typeset words and exclamation points on paper pamphlets or posters. It is impressive and unusual news, the sudden appearance of a mysterious circus. People marvel at the staggering height of the tallest tents. They stare at the clock that sits just inside the gates that no one can properly describe.

And the black sign painted in white letters that hangs upon the gates, the one that reads:

Opens at Nightfall

Closes at Dawn

Extract 2 for text annotation – *read aloud, think aloud*

“What kind of circus only opens at night?” people ask. No one has a proper answer, yet as dusk approaches there is a substantial crowd of spectators gathering outside the gates.

You are amongst them, of course. Your curiosity got the better of you, as curiosity is wont to do. You stand in the fading light, the scarf around your neck pulled up against the chilly evening breeze, waiting to see for yourself exactly what kind of circus only opens as the sun sets.

The ticket booth clearly visible behind the gates is closed and barred. The tents are still, save for when they ripple ever so slightly in the wind. The only movement within the circus is the clock that ticks by the passing minutes, if such a wonder of sculpture can even be called a clock.

Extract 3 for text annotation – *read aloud, think aloud*

The circus looks abandoned and empty. But you think perhaps you can smell caramel wafting through the evening breeze, beneath the crisp scent of the autumn leaves. A subtle sweetness at the edges of the cold.

The sun disappears completely beyond the horizon, and the remaining luminosity shifts from dusk to twilight. The people around you are growing restless from waiting, a sea of shuffling feet, murmuring about abandoning the endeavour in search of someplace warmer to pass the evening. You yourself are debating departing when it happens.

First, there is a popping sound. It is barely audible over the wind and conversation. A soft noise like a kettle about to boil for tea. Then comes the light.

All over the tents, small lights begin to flicker, as though the entirety of the circus is covered in particularly bright fireflies. The waiting crowd quiets as it watches this display of illumination. Someone near you gasps. A small child claps his hands with glee at the sight.

Mapping out the text

<p>What happens in the paragraph? What references are made to light and dark?</p>	<p>Intended effect on the reader Ideas being hinted at Feeling being created</p>	<p>Interesting vocabulary</p>

Mapping out your own writing

Desired effect?	What happens in the paragraph? References to light and dark	Details Vocabulary choices

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 the English team leader:

Emma Tarrant : emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk

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