

Objectives

- To enjoy reading and understanding the main ideas of a selection of authentic, well-known stories in English.
- To demonstrate understanding of a variety of words and expressions used throughout the story by using them in related activities.
- To practice pronunciation and intonation skills by acting out short interviews.
- To be able to read and understand parts of the story at both the word level and the sentence level of the text.
- To be able to use imagination and creativity to demonstrate deeper understanding of the story.

Word bank

Key vocabulary

Nouns: duty, pride, disguise

Verbs: pursue, deduce, investigate

Adjectives: confused, criminal, brilliant

Key structures

Register: Using formal or old-fashioned language

Making deductions: modal verbs

Tips and ideas

Before reading

- Encourage students to use their lexical knowledge to tackle less known or unknown language by using all the clues available - encourage them to be literary detectives!
- Encourage lower order thinking skills by getting students to identify historical features in the stories - which elements place the tales in their historical period? How have these things affected the story (for example, means of travel or communication)?
- Encourage higher level thinking by getting students to evaluate the way the readers' attention is held throughout the stories. What elements of intrigue, mystery or surprise are used to keep the readers guessing?

During reading

- Quick and frequent concept checking questions.
- Eliciting mini summaries from volunteers - different students each time - after each scene. Give a structure for students to follow: "First..., then..., and in the end...".

- Lower order thinking skills - comprehension. Ask students to summarise what each of the characters has done in the story - can they draw a picture based on the physical description or write a list of characteristics? Mind maps are useful for this kind of cumulative activity.

After reading

- Apply new vocabulary and structures by re-telling each story in small groups.
- Plan specific higher order thinking skills - analysis. Students try to identify the principal characteristics present in the writing of Conan Doyle. Can they see a trend in the way his stories unfolded? Can they recognise the style and literary devices (e.g. using a narrator, using flashbacks, using direct speech, etc.)?



Teacher support activities

Great Games: Whodunnit

This is actually a genre of literature and film that follows a fairly predictable formula - a crime is committed, questions are asked, the culprit is found and confesses all - and the mystery of "who did it" is resolved.

- Set the scene by telling the students you are looking for a criminal, and the best way to decide who is guilty and who is innocent is by questioning the suspects.
- The rules for the questioner(s) are that they cannot ask rude or overly personal questions. The only rule for the suspects is that they cannot answer simply with "Yes" or "No". If they do, they are out of the game - and obviously guilty!
- You can demonstrate by asking for three volunteer suspects and, in front of the class, demonstrate your questioning techniques by asking lots of Wh- questions interspersed with Yes/No questions which surprise them.
- Split your class into groups and designate a detective to each group. The detectives have to see how many guilty people they can find in their group, in say 2 minutes. You can mingle and monitor and ask a couple of questions yourself. Players quickly realise they need an alternative to the vetoed answers and start to use other language - as the game progresses you might want to put "I don't know" on the Black List too.

CLIL LINK: History, Geography

Maps

The characters in Conan Doyle's stories travel a lot around London, England, Europe and the USA.

- Different groups of students choose an area and comb the stories for place names, then locate them on a map and see how much information they can discover about each one (from what they already know, asking friends and family, remembering films, searching on the web, looking in magazines and reference books).
- Encourage students to make a PowerPoint or poster with visual clues but no text except for captions.

- Brainstorm good presentation techniques

– DO look at your audience.

– DON'T read from the board.

– DO refer to your notes.

– DON'T read your notes.

– DO share the task of giving the presentation between all members of the group.

- Groups do their presentations for each other and assess how the presenters did and the quality of the information given.

English Theatre: Interviewing Sir Arthur and Sherlock

There are lots of similarities between the lives of the celebrated Scottish author and his most famous literary creation. Their methods, interests, hobbies and travels are surprisingly similar. Sherlock Holmes also has many alter egos - the character has been portrayed in films, series, cartoons and spin-offs.

As a class, brainstorm a selection of typical interview questions, including follow-up questions, linking devices and summarising techniques. Maybe watch some clips on YouTube of celebrated interviewers (Oprah Winfrey, Jimmy Fallon, Graham Norton, Ellen DeGeneres, Jordi Évole, El Gran Wyoming, etc.)

Draw up a class check-list of what makes a good interview (eye contact, variety of questions, sound quality, surprise factor, well presented and concluded, ...)

Groups of students choose a character to interview and brainstorm a list of questions (between 10 and 15).

Rehearse the interviews - students use the check-list to assess their performances.

Record the interviews - on your phone or iPad - to share with the class.