

# Crime File

Name: Inky Stevens -  
Subject: *The Case of the Caretaker's Keys*  
Form: -----  
by Chris Martin



BLINKTON HIGH SCHOOL



A teaching and student resource  
to accompany *Inky Stevens - The  
Case of the Caretaker's Keys*

by Jamie Foster

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## HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet has been designed to help you and Inky, The Great School Detective, solve The Case of the Caretaker's Keys, but also to assist you in finding clues left behind by writers, making inferences and deductions, and improving your own writing skills.

Do you ever wonder why whenever we're reading a book we all have a similar opinion or feeling about certain characters or places? This is because we are making inferences; we're reading between the lines. As an English student, you are expected to not only express these opinions, but, like Inky you have to be able to prove 'why' you think what you think. You also have to be critical of writers' choices and the effectiveness of the language devices they have chosen – this booklet will encourage you to do that.

Furthermore, you are expected to be able to write like a writer, in both fiction and non-fiction formats, consciously using techniques effectively. This booklet aims to support you in honing all these skills.

One last thing: because not everybody learns at the same pace, some of the activities have been divided up into separate tasks that ultimately lead to the same outcome. When you see the crow symbol  this means that you have a choice as to which task you would like to follow, depending on how comfortable you feel with what is being asked of you: the more crows, the more challenging the task! When given the choice, you should try to be brave like 'Inky' and challenge yourself; but, you can always take step back if you're finding something a little difficult.

Good luck - Inky's counting on you!



## PLOT SYNOPSIS

Here is a summary of each chapter, minus any spoilers or major clues that might give away the ending!

**Prologue:** A mysterious intruder breaks into Blinkton High School after midnight in order to switch over an important document locked within its vault.

**Chapter 1:** The town of Blinkton-on-Sea is introduced, as are Blinkton High School and the Great School Detective himself. Information is given about Inky's troubled past and his mission to help those in need.

**Chapter 2:** School caretaker Fred Varley visits Inky backstage in the school hall to ask for Inky's help. Fred's bunch of school keys has been stolen and he's desperate to recover them before his incompetence is discovered by Blinkton's Headmistress ("the Snake"). Inky asks for more time in order to consider what his response will be.

**Chapter 3:** Inky joins Fred in his Maintenance Room after school where the caretaker explains his predicament in full. Fred says that while working inside the Reflection Room four individuals (Spud Barton, Candy Sugarcane, Mr Wilfred Whitkirk and Crispin Merridew) entered the room individually, after which he noticed that his keys had been taken. As Fred is clearly distressed, Inky offers to try and recover them for him.

**Chapter 4:** Inky enlists the assistance of his classmates, the twins Ross and Rose Berry. At his home, Inky presents 'the Case of the Caretaker's Keys' to his helpers and the trio agree to begin surveillance the following day.

**Chapter 5:** Rose spends her day pursuing Candy around school... in registration (where the glamour-girl is forced to remove her make-up by her Head of Year, Miss Peters), during lesson time, and also after school when she bangs on Fred's Maintenance Room door.

**Chapter 6:** Inky begins his own surveillance of Wilfred Whitkirk only to be told by Ray Day, Blinkton's Head of Science, that the Science Technician is absent that day. Puzzled, Inky decides to pay a visit to the crime scene instead, where, before being disturbed, he finds three pieces of evidence: a cufflink, an electrical component, and an elaborate-looking key.

**Chapter 7:** Ross' timetable hampers his surveillance of Crispin Merridew, yet he is able to monitor him in the Reflection Room at lunchtime and at Drama Club after school. At Miss Birkin's Drama Club, much to Ross' embarrassment, he and Crispin create an improvised play, during which, while pretending to be his father, the young suspect upends a table and then storms off.

**Chapter 8:** Inky confronts Spud, first by having the brute removed from his woodwork lesson, then challenging him to a fight behind the bike sheds at lunchtime. The chapter ends with Inky standing on top of Broker's Archway at the end of the day, monitoring the suspects as they leave for home.

**Chapter 9:** Back at Inky's that evening, he, Ross and Rose recap on what progress has been made and outline a plan of action for the following day.

**Chapter 10:** Wednesday morning sees the onset of the Great Storm. At school, Fred passes a note to Inky's form Tutor 'Perry' Dukes who, in turn, passes it to Inky. On reading it, the detective excuses himself from that morning's assembly and sets off to meet Fred Varley in the Art Block Common Room.

**Chapter 11:** Inky meets up with Fred and finds him highly agitated. Fred reveals that he's been sleeping in school to protect the site and that during the previous evening he'd been attacked by a mysterious figure, who subsequently ran off. Inky tasks Fred with discovering what the attacker was after, while he prepares to tackle Wilfred Whitkirk once more.

**Chapter 12:** Inky finally tracks Whitkirk down after yet another encounter with Ray Day. Whitkirk appears highly unsettled and states that Day's overbearing manner has forced him, not only to withdraw his help with his colleague's drag racing efforts, but also to resign.

**Chapter 13:** In the Maintenance Room, Fred confesses his despair to 'Perry' Dukes. Dukes tries to cheer his friend up by telling him to keep faith in Inky. Fred, however, remains unconvinced.

**Chapter 14:** First, Inky and Whitkirk escape from the Science Office, then, in Miss Spiller's maths lesson, Inky receives a note from Fred telling him that 'a complete chess set' was stolen from the Art Block the previous evening.

**Chapter 15:** At break time, Inky tells Ross and Rose that he's solved the case, but he still lacks proof. In order to acquire this missing evidence, he leads the

twins through school towards its 'vault'. Inky now knows that the key he found earlier will open it up, but needs his classmates to distract the school statistician who guards it in order to sneak inside, undetected.

**Chapter 16:** Ross and Rose bamboozle the statistician 'Wiggy', allowing Inky, first to enter the Statistics Office and then the cavernous vault beyond. The detective swiftly locates the evidence he's after but is alarmed when, all of a sudden, the lights go out.

**Chapter 17:** Inky is able to resume his search of the vault, and while Ross covers for him and Rose convinces Miss Peters to open up her desk drawer, he sources the remaining documents needed to solve 'the Case of the Caretaker's Keys' (plus some extra information pertaining to himself). However, Inky's escape is tricky and he's forced to leave 'Wiggy' locked inside the vault. Outside, he waits in the pouring rain for the hometime bell.

**Chapter 18:** Inky now knows who took Fred's keys and has all the evidence needed to support his theory. He knows both 'why' the keys were taken and 'where they will be found'. With the Great Storm really starting to show its teeth, he leads Ross and Rose back into school to collect them.

**Chapters 19 to 23:** The storm now unleashes its full fury. In his attempt to close the case, Inky finds himself ensnared in a sinister web of intrigue, one in which, if he's to unearth the full truth, he'll be forced to confront a deranged and dangerous enemy!

## INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN

**WRITING?** I was a teacher of Drama (and English) for 22 years. During this time, when not helping students with their own work, I'd always be writing short sketches, assemblies, presentations and even full-scale school plays for the students to present.

### HOW DID YOU GET INTO IT?

My writing took on a greater significance when a murder mystery play that I wrote, *Who Killed the Headmaster?*, was so successful that I decided to sell it to other schools. I soon found myself writing more and more to meet demand.

### SO WHEN DID YOU SWITCH TO WRITING NOVELS?

In 2013, having written more than 20 plays, I decided that I wanted to write something longer (and be considered 'a proper writer'). English teachers always say 'write about what you know' so I thought about what I knew about, and the answer was obvious: school and whodunit stories. Having come to this conclusion, I created Inky Stevens...

### WHAT WAS YOUR AIM WHEN YOU STARTED WRITING?

As an English teacher, I was required to present novels to all my classes, some of which I actually found quite dull. So the challenge I set myself was to create the type of funny, sinister, intriguing books that I knew from experience would inspire students and have them rushing along to class to find out what happened next (and thus give their teachers an easy time of it, too!).

### WHERE DOES THE NAME 'INKY STEVENS' COME FROM?

For my detective, I wanted a name that sounded mysterious and a little creepy. Strangely, 'Inky' was the name of my first pet (a rabbit) and also the nickname for an old school friend (Steven).

### ARE YOUR CHARACTERS BASED ON REAL PEOPLE?

The 'characters' are stereotypes rather than real people, and I know from discussing my work, that people very similar to those that I write about crop up in every school. I bet they do in yours!

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ASPIRING AUTHORS?

Read! Read as much as you can, whenever you can. Learning from others will help you develop your own style.



Chris Martin - Author

## HOW 'INKY' CAME TO BE...

Crime fiction had always been Chris Martin's favourite literary genre, but he knew that he didn't know anywhere near enough about police procedure to write a conventional police drama. 'So,' he thought, 'if I can't write a crime story about the police, what do I know enough to write one about?'

The answer was obvious: education!

'Education has been my life,' he thought. 'I know about school inside out, so I'll combine my skill at writing whodunits with my knowledge of school and hopefully write a line of books that will prove popular with students and teachers alike! I have enough experience to put everything in there; the kids, the teachers, the daily routines, plus all the general mayhem! I'll make it modern, but not too modern. No mobile phones! And I'll also make it creepy, too. Sinister. Gothic!'

Having established this premise, Martin's thoughts immediately turned to the detective figure who would be central to this new line of novels...

'He'll be a schoolkid, naturally! A teenager. Male, like the majority of my fictional heroes. And like them he'll be a misfit. An outcast with razor-sharp intellect and an inbuilt talent for solving crime. He'll be sullen and dark-eyed, dressed almost head to toe in black. A crusader for the truth. A righter of wrongs. Ruthlessly loyal to those who enlist his services, but relentless in his pursuit of those who oppose him.'

Enthused, Martin scrabbled around for a suitable name. 'I need something dark-sounding... Something mysterious...?'

And then, all at once, he had him. Oddly, the name which sprang to mind combined that of his first family pet (a black rabbit) with that of a life-long friend, (Steven). And, before the thought could disappear, he'd found a pen and paper and scrawled the following words...

'Inky Stevens, the Great School Detective'

And Martin's journey as a novelist began...

## PROLOGUE:

***'A tall, dark figure set off to finish what he'd started...'***

The story starts, as all proper detective stories should, shrouded in mystery and darkness.

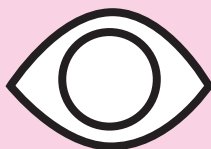
### TASK 1

As you read the Prologue, make a note of what questions are left unanswered by the writer. We've given you one to get you started:

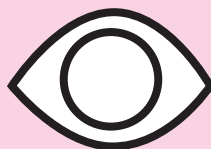
1. Who is the mysterious figure?
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....

### TASK 2

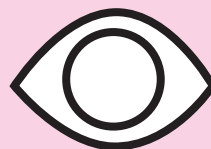
Think about how much the opening grabs your attention. Shade in the 'Critical Eye' that best sums how engaged you feel at this early stage of the story:



VERY



A BIT



NOT YET

### TASK 3

FYI, there are several different types of story openings. Take a look at the very first line:

*A week after Blinkton's Great Storm, a tall, dark figure set off to finish what he'd started; his jaw was set, his features a mask of resolve.*

Reflecting on TASK 1, what type of opening do we have to *The Case of the Caretaker's Keys*? Circle all that apply:

FIRST PERSON NARRATIVE

ENIGMATIC

THIRD PERSON NARRATIVE

SCENE-SETTING

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

CONFLICT/PROBLEM

## CHAPTER ONE – Welcome to Blinkton


***'Stubbornly clinging to the shoreline like some unsightly whelk!'***



Once the jewel in the country's crown, British seaside towns used to sparkle as brightly as any cosmopolitan city. However, the feeling today is that such resorts are a little tired and outdated. Blinkton-on-Sea, the fictional setting for the book, seems to embody this feeling of decay...




### TASK 4:

Read the extract from Chapter One →

Choose **one** of the tasks:

 Highlight all of the negative sounding words in the extract

  Identify 4 things you learn about Blinkton from reading the extract

   Explain the meaning of the simile 'clinging to the shoreline like some unsightly whelk'.

*'At that time, Blinkton-on-Sea was a dreary coastal town. (It still is.) Twinned with the French town Mal-de-Mer, it suffered greatly by comparison. While Mal-de-Mer basked in Mediterranean sunshine, Blinkton barely lifted its head off its pillow for a few dismal weeks each summer. Only one train ventured into Blinkton (just one road too). Other than that, the small coastal town remained isolated, stubbornly clinging to the shoreline like some unsightly whelk or a piece of jetsam snagged on a rock and left to decompose.'*

### TASK 5

As we are reading, we form opinions on the subject of the writing. These are created through the writer's choice of language and the inferences we make. Read the statements in the table and tick or cross to say whether you agree or not. Find 'evidence', a word or line, to prove you're right:

Statement	True or False	Evidence
Blinkton has bad weather		
Blinkton is attractive		
Blinkton is a popular place		

## INTRODUCING 'INKY'

### 'The self-confident raven of folklore.'

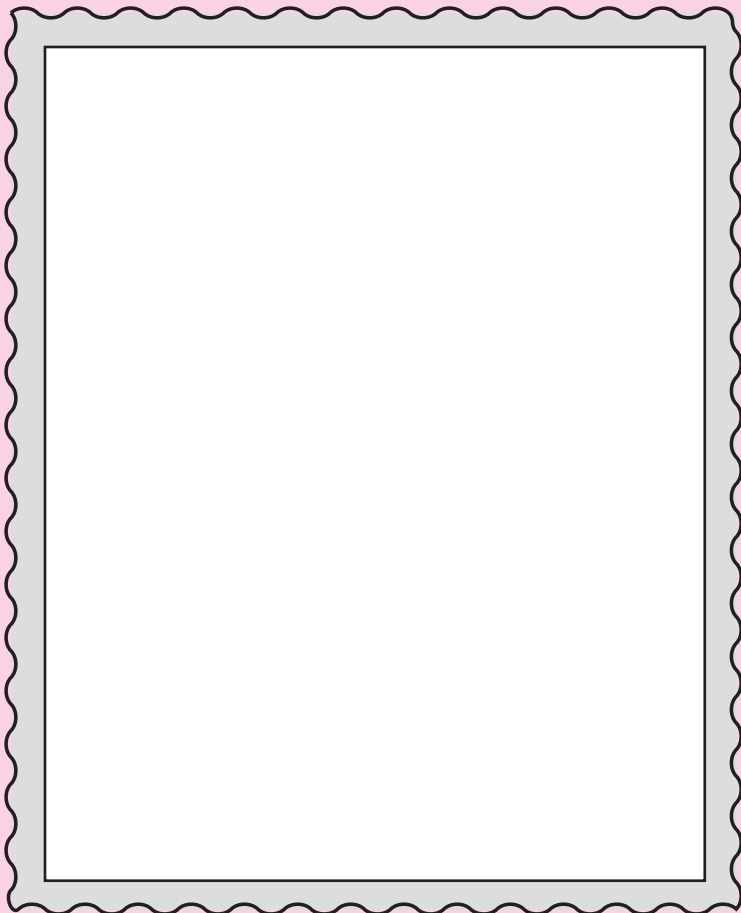
'Main character'; 'hero'; 'protagonist' – call him what you will but this chapter introduces us to Inky Stevens aka The Great School Detective.

#### TASK 6

Read the extract below:

*'In appearance, Inky was tall and thin, with a bearing that could be described as 'imposing': his skin was vampire-pale, almost translucent; his face thin and drawn; his hair was black, cut short with a choppy sea of curls; his eyes were simultaneously dead, yet very much alive. Inky Stevens, the sleek, self-confident raven of folklore; distinctive, yet anonymous; striking, yet invisible.'*

Using the frame provided, sketch an image of what you think Inky looks like, based on the description in the extract. There are further clues to his appearance on page 3 of the book.



#### TASK 7

We learn more about Inky than just what he looks like.

Find evidence in the extract to support the points below:

Point	Evidence from extract
Inky goes unnoticed	
His look is unique	
He is a mysterious person	

## BLINKTON HIGH SCHOOL:

*'It looked down on the town it served with all the charm of an air-raid warning station – or a prison.'*

Blinkton High School's badge/coat of arms depicts a giant lighthouse symbolising the school's coastal location. The beams of light either side of the lighthouse represent 'light shining in the darkness'. The meaning of the image is mirrored by the school's inspirational motto 'Facti Sunt In Ad-spectu' which, from Latin, translates as 'Become the Beacon'.

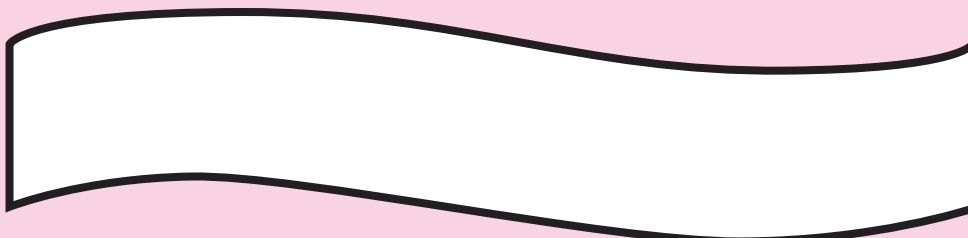
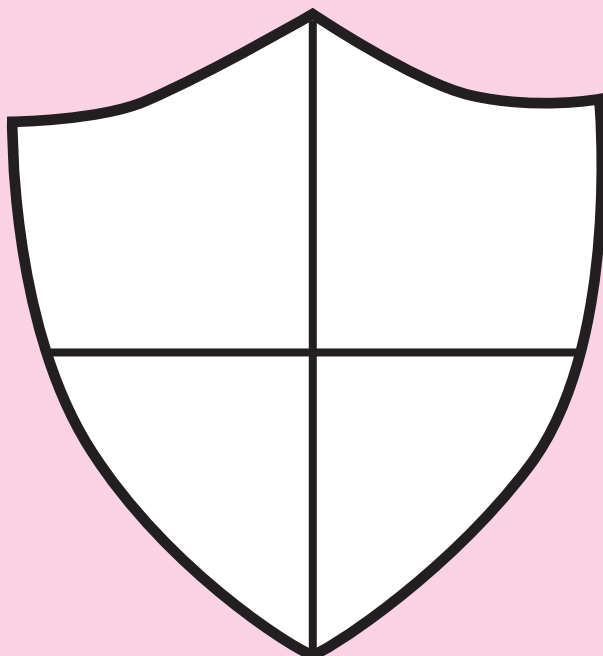
### TASK 8

Think of your own school, its location and key attributes, and design a new school badge that represents your school.

List your school's key elements - what makes it unique?

Pick four key images to insert into the badge that best symbolise your school and its character.

Create a short slogan (in English) to write into the shape below, to match. Try to capture the essence of your school as simply and effectively as you can.



## CHAPTER TWO – The Theft

*"It's me keys – the school keys – I don't 'ave 'em anymore.  
They've been nicked"*

Whether you're a journalist, police investigator, or a Great School Detective, understanding the five Ws can help you get to the bottom of most problems.

In Chapter Two, some of the Ws are answered as the crime is revealed.

### TASK 9

Read Chapter 2 and fill in any details you can:

Who? (is the victim)	
What? (is the crime)	
When? (did it happen)	
Where? (did the crime take place)	
Why? (did the crime happen)	



You can return to this page as more is revealed...

### TASK 10

In this chapter, school caretaker Fred is described using the simile 'like Frankenstein's monster'.

What does this tell us about Fred?

Complete **one** of the tasks below:

🐦 Recall what you know about the monster.

🐦 🐦 Explain how you think Frankenstein's monster came to exist.

🐦 🐦 🐦 Compare similarities between Fred and Frankenstein's monster.



## CHAPTER THREE – The Suspects

*“One of them four had nicked ‘em!”*

In discussion with Inky, Fred reveals the four main suspects.

### TASK 11

Sketch a ‘mugshot’ based on Fred’s description and fill in what you can of the suspect profiles.

Please note, these can be added to later.

#### Suspect 1

Name:

Nicknames:

Distinguishing features:

Possible Motives:

#### Suspect 2

Name:

Nicknames:

Distinguishing features:

Possible Motives:

#### Suspect 3

Name:

Nicknames:

Distinguishing features:

Possible Motives:

#### Suspect 4

Name:

Nicknames:

Distinguishing features:

Possible Motives:

### TASK 11b

Go back to the 5W’s on page [?]\*\*\*\*: Fill in the WHEN and WHERE.

## WHO IS THE PRIME SUSPECT?

OK, we've got four main suspects who could have taken Fred's keys, and although we shouldn't rule anybody out yet, we could identify a prime suspect based on Fred's version of events.

Key Term:  
IMPLY: to indicate or suggest something

### TASK 12

Read what Fred says about each suspect.  
What does his description imply about them?  
Think of two suggestions per suspect i.e. aggressive and ugly

HINT: What do the underlined words make you think of?

SPUD BARTON: "A bit of a brute with a shaven head and a potato face"

This implies 'Spud' is .....

CANDY SUGARCANE: "[...] some confused, orange-faced girl had just decided to have a nap inside the 'Armony Tent"

This implies Candy is .....

MR WHITKIRK: "Under his lab-coat, Whitty wears cufflinks. Braces too! He wears red braces!"

This implies Whitkirk is .....

CRISPIN MERRIDEW: "[...] second-year lad with the wire-framed glasses, shiny satchel and side parting"

This implies Crispin is .....

### TASK 13

So, weighing up the information provided by Fred in Chapter 3, who is your prime suspect and WHY?

The prime suspect is .....because .....  
.....  
The person I suspect least is .....because .....  
.....

## CHAPTER FOUR – Organising the troops

**'he had accepted a new assignment'**

*'Since his arrival at Blinkton, Inky had lived with his Aunt Alice and Uncle Eric in a semi-detached house on Horrobin Lane, part of a new development to the west of Blinkton.'*

Here, we are introduced to more mystery surrounding our enigmatic hero: Why is he living with his Aunt and Uncle? Of course, there could be a whole host of reasons, which we will further investigate later.

### **TASK 14:**

Read the extract describing Inky's bedroom.

You will notice there specific items described to give us clues about Inky's personality and interests. Sketch a floor plan of your own bedroom from above (bird's eye view), being sure to include items / clues that tell us something about you.

### **My bedroom**

### **Inky's bedroom**


*'Everything in it appeared to be a different shade of black: a large metal bed with dark grey, cotton bedding dominated the space, its headboard wrought from strands of iron which wound upwards like galvanised ivy; the curtains, closed to black out the dusk's arrival, were of charcoal-coloured crushed velvet; and pale grey candles set into wall-mounted holders sent flickering shadows dancing across black-painted walls, as wax slowly melted down to form stalactites beneath.'*



## INVESTIGATING INKY:




We don't just get to know what a character is like based on what they look like and what they say. A writer can also give us clues by describing their personal spaces.

### Task 15

Read the extract describing Inky's bedroom, then complete one of the following tasks:

 Make a list of adjectives you would use to describe Inky, based on the description of his bedroom.

  Explain what kind of a person you think Inky is, based on his bedroom, using evidence from the extract.

   Compare yourself to Inky, based on the description of Inky's bedroom and the sketch of your own - in what ways are you similar? How do you think you are different?

As we've just learnt, personal environments and belongings create personalities, but what happens if we change them?

### TASK 16

Here you will see the extract describing Inky's bedroom, but this time, we've removed key language.

Fill in the blanks to change Inky's character.

i.e. Could you make him more cheerful, romantic, or angry?

'Everything in it appeared to be a different shade of .....: a ..... bed with ....., cotton bedding dominated the space, its headboard wrought from strands of ..... which wound upwards like .....; the curtains, closed to black out the dusk's arrival, were of .....-coloured .....; and ..... candles set into wall-mounted holders sent flickering shadows dancing across .....-painted walls, as wax ..... melted down to form ..... beneath.'

Show your description to somebody else and see if they can guess what type of person you were trying to create:

I think you were trying to create a character that ...

## CHAPTER FIVE – Candy Trail

*'Pausing to check her appearance in any reflective surface she passed.'*

Candy Sugarcane is Blinkton's very own 'it' girl, and a prime suspect in The Case of the Caretaker's Keys.

### TASK 17

A long time ago, when Queen Victoria was on the throne, a writer was busy creating celebrated masterpieces such as *Oliver Twist*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Great Expectations*; the man in question was Charles Dickens. Amongst many other techniques, he would capture his readers' imagination with CHARACTERNYMS.

Candy Sugarcane is a good example of a CHARACTERNYM. Take her name as two individual words and list at least 3 connotations for each word e.g. what do you associate with 'candy'?

KEY TERM:  
CHARACTERNYMS

A name that suggests distinctive traits of the character.



### TASK 18:

Look at the extract below and complete the table:

*'Rose hurried after Candy, who was meandering on delicately balanced heels towards the Head of Year's office, pausing to check her appearance in any reflective surface she passed.'*

Impression of Candy	Evidence from extract - word or phrase
Candy is taking her time	
Candy cares about her appearance	
Candy doesn't take school seriously	

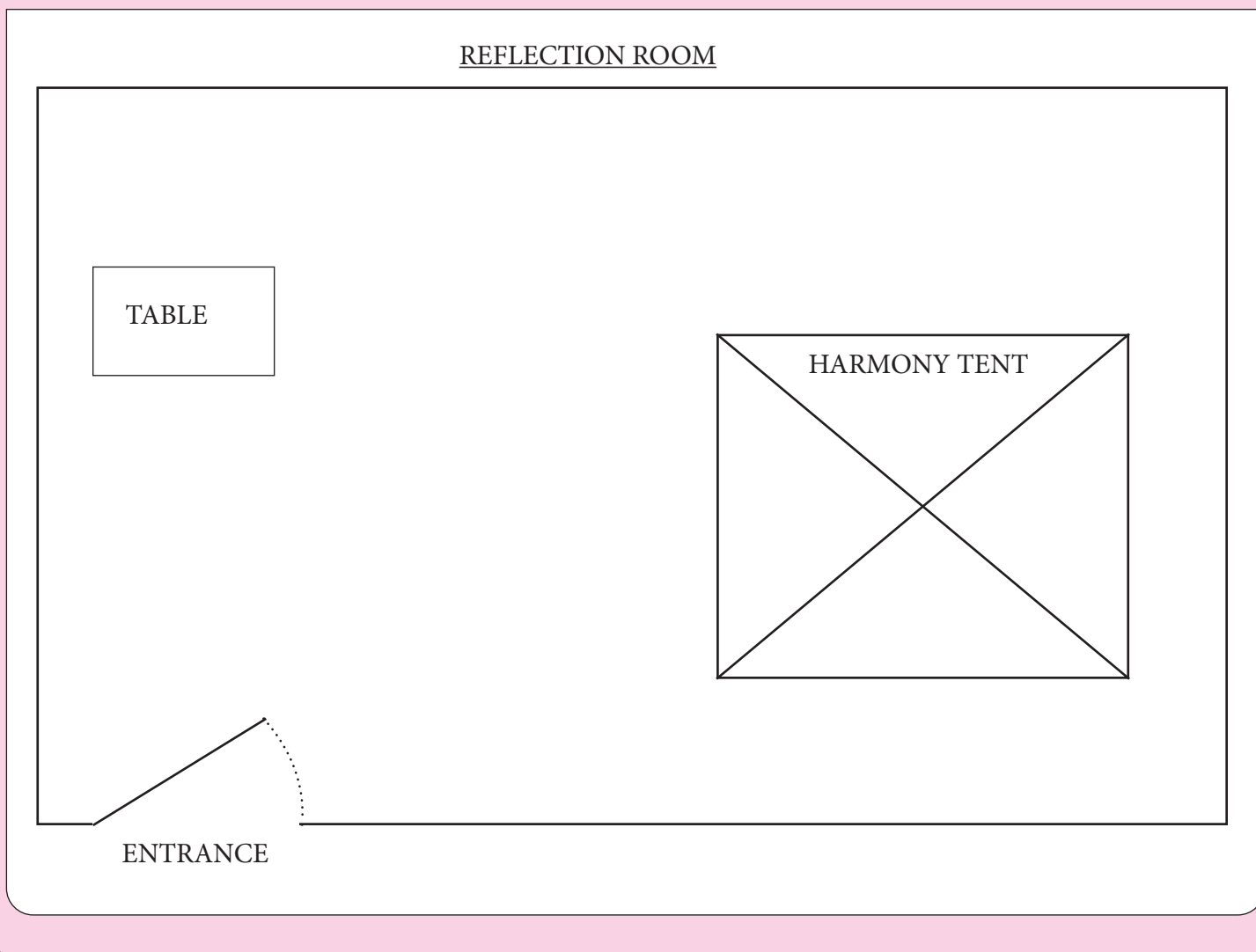
## CHAPTER SIX – The Crime Scene

*'Everything appeared to be in its rightful place.'*

The first place to look when any crime is committed is the crime scene itself. Important clues and possible evidence can be discovered there, but you have to be quick; otherwise things can be tampered with.

### TASK 19

Read the chapter from the page break to the end and make a note of exactly what Inky finds and where he finds them. Sketch and label your findings as accurately as you can onto the floor plan of the Reflection Room below:



### TASK 20

Inky finds a key described as 'elaborate-looking'. What might this suggest about the key?

The adjective 'elaborate' suggests the key is .....

## CHAPTER SEVEN – The Drama Unfolds

*'We'll just have to make it up as we go along.'*

Not everybody at school is the same and it's fair to say that Crispin Merridew is not considered a typical schoolboy; he's sensitive, hard-working and likes Drama! However, just like Candy, he too is a suspect in this crime.

### TASK 21

Look at the 'evidence' below taken from Chapter Seven. What does this suggest about Crispin? Complete the table, using the example to guide you:

Evidence from text	What it might suggest
'the tent's zip finally opened, and Crispin crept out, wiped his spectacles, and ran off.'	This might suggest Crispin has been hiding because he has done something wrong and he is upset by what he's done.
'Crispin skimmed a hand across his fringe, "Well, I'm scared of failing exams," he said.'	
'[...] the lonely misfit who buzzed around school with his head tilted towards the floor.'	
'With a roar, his grip on the table tightened and he flipped his arms upwards.'	
'[...] he wrestled his satchel from Ross' grip and stormed off, raging down the corridor.'	

### TASK 22

Has Crispin's dramatic improvisation of Parents' Evening done anything to convince you that he is guilty or innocent?

Explain your thoughts here: At this moment, I think that Crispin is guilty / innocent because ...


You can go back and add to your Suspect Profile too!



## FACE YOUR FEARS:




Like we've already said, Crispin is perhaps not a stereotypical schoolboy, but he is human and bravely admits that his biggest fear is 'failing exams'. And, you could argue, that whilst investigating Crispin, Ross faces one of his biggest fears: joining the school's drama club!

### TASK 23

Think about what you fear the most and complete one of the tasks below in the box provided:

 List everything that scares you.

  Sketch some / one of the things that scares you.

   Create / design a solution to your biggest fear, e.g. Crispin might design a hat that helps him pass every exam.

### TASK 24

Without directly naming it, describe what you are most scared of, or describe an incident in which you felt afraid - imagine the person reading your work has to guess your fear:

Remember, everyone has something they fear, no matter how powerful or successful they are. Admitting what you're scared of and embracing it, or, dare I say it, overcoming it, can only be positive and help you to grow. Don't fear it, face it!

## CHAPTER EIGHT – The Big Wind-up

### 'Spud Barton versus Inky Stevens; Neanderthal thug versus black-coated weirdo'

Good writers paint pictures with their words; they use a technique called IMAGERY. There are lots of figurative language techniques a writer can use to create images, one of the easiest ones to spot being a SIMILE. In this chapter, Martin brings the scene to life with his use of similes.

#### KEY TERM:

#### SIMILE

A simile compares two things using 'like' or 'as' to make a description more vivid.

### TASK 25

Look at the similes taken from the fight scene below.

*'Like a prize fighter, Spud emerged'*


*'[...]crowd closed in behind him like the ocean behind a liner'*



*'The young detective responded like a matador'*




*'Spud writhed and flailed like a fish plucked from water'*

*'[...] thug simply fell to the floor as though he'd been shot'*

Complete one of the tasks:

 Identify the key words in each simile.

  Sketch the image created in your mind by one similes.

   Explain what each simile suggests about the thing it is being compared to.

### TASK 26

Before the fight, Spud threatens Inky with the line, "You're dead, Stevens. As dead as a ...", but he struggles to find the appropriate words. Give Spud a hand and complete the simile, but think carefully about the image you want to 'paint'.

'As dead as a ...

## READ ALL ABOUT IT!

There's no doubting that Inky and Spud's tussle would have been the talk of Blinkton High School. Well, at least until somebody was caught nicking a flapjack out of the tuck shop!

### TASK 27

Imagine you are a reporter for the school newspaper and the story of the lunchtime fracas is going to be front page news. Using the template and hints below, write an article accurately reporting Inky and Spud's melee.

#### HINTS:

##### 1. MASTHEAD:

Give your paper a title to attract attention.

**2. LOGO:** Give your brand a logo that sums up the product.

##### 3. HEADLINE:

A short, snappy sentence that sums up the article.

**4. IMAGE:** Produce an eye-catching sketch that tells the tale.

**5. CAPTION:** Give the reader more information about the story.

##### 6. LEAD PARAGRAPH:

Summarise the story without the details.

##### 7. BODY OF

**ARTICLE:** Should include five Ws: Who? What? Where? When? Why? Your report should include both facts and opinions. If you use quotes from witnesses, remember to use speech marks!

1	2
3	
6	4
7	5

## CHAPTER NINE – To the Bat Cave

*'The mood inside Inky's room was conspiratorial; the light of the candles adding to the sense of drama.'*

In this chapter, Inky and the twins mull over the evidence they've managed to unearth so far.

### TASK 28

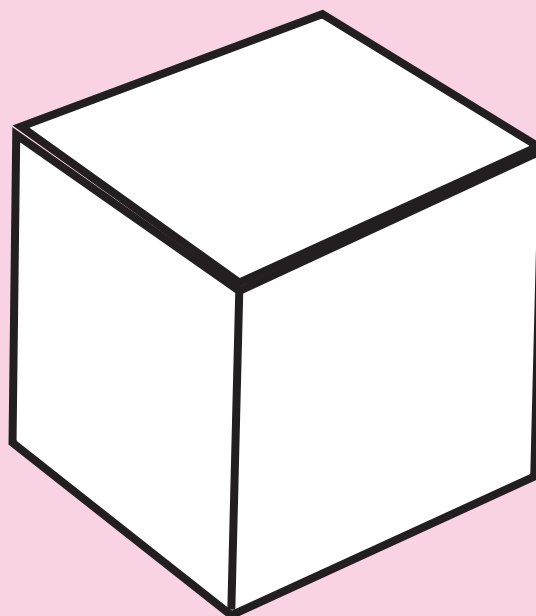
Return to your 'Suspect Profiles' and remove the suspects that Inky decides are innocent of the crime.

### Task 29

Inky decides to share the electronic device he found taped to the underside of the table in the Reflection Room.

Read the extract below, which describes the device and complete **one** of the tasks:

*'Inky handed over the small, black cube, criss-crossed on the topmost surface with a series of silver, **metallic** lines. At opposing ends were two rows of metal **prongs**, sharp and **symmetrical**.'*



Clue: Mysterious Electronic Device

🐦 Define the words that are shown in **bold** in the extract.

🐦 🐦 Complete the sketch of the electronic device by adding the detail described in the extract.

🐦 🐦 🐦 Analyse the connotations of the key words in the extract and speculate as to what the device may be and why it may be important.

## CHAPTER TEN – Noted


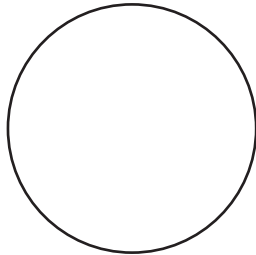

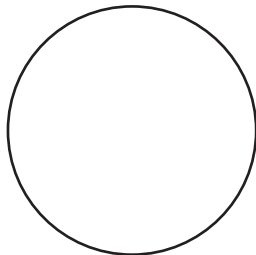

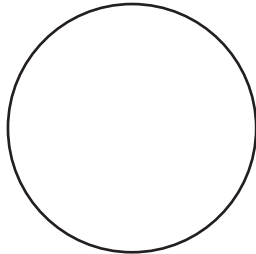
*'[...] gale force winds churned up the sea beyond into a thunderous fury.'*

Writers have many ways of getting the reader to understand what the characters are feeling; one of the most effective being PATHETIC FALLACY.

### KEY TERM:

#### PATHETIC FALLACY

Often used when describing weather to show character's moods

Weather	Mood
	
	
	

### TASK 30


If weather was a mood, what mood would each weather be? Draw a face in the circle next to the picture of the weather to show what human mood you think it represents.



### TASK 31




Here is the opening to the chapter, take note of what the weather is doing:

*'The sky, which had menaced all week, chose Wednesday morning to unleash its fury: squalls of horizontal rain battered against the pebble-dashed brickwork of Blinkton's houses and gale-force winds churned up the sea beyond into a thunderous fury.'*

Complete one of the tasks:

 Identify the type of weather described by the writer.

  Explain what mood is created by the weather here.

   Rewrite the passage, changing the mood to a happier one by changing the weather being described.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN – The Break-in

*'Although Inky's expression remained blank, a light bulb had suddenly switched on inside his head'*

### TASK 32

After the break-in, something is missing from the games cupboard. Given what we know about the suspects, **speculate** as to what might be missing and who might have taken it: ...


### TASK 33



Although the main focus of this chapter is the break-in to the Common Room, Blinkton's vault comes back into the spotlight when Inky reveals the key he found:




*"And this vault contains?" asked Inky, ignoring Fred's question.*

*"All Blinkton School's information: exam results, student files, photographs, newspaper clippings, every bloomin' thing"*

Use the space below to complete **one** of the tasks:

 List what can be found in the vault.

  Rank the contents of the vault in order of their importance to the school – justify your top choice and bottom choices.

   Speculate as to why the thief might want access to the school's vault.

## CHAPTER TWELVE – The Worsening Day

***'It seemed the results of Fred's missing keys were beginning to reverberate throughout the school'***

In this chapter, Blinkton's Science Technician Wilfred Whitkirk is thrust firmly under the magnifying glass by Inky.

Read the following extract from section 3 of the chapter:

*'Inky leaned back against a workbench and recounted some of what he knew: " Last Friday you entered the Reflection Room carrying a clipboard and a roll of tape on an errand for Mr Day. Fred Varley was changing the electric sockets in there at the time. Whilst collecting some record or other, you taped a small electronic device under the table at the far side of the room. The cufflink I've just given you came loose and lodged behind the table leg." He went on, "The device is now in my possession. It had letters T E D inscribed across its surface."*

Here, Inky provides a detailed version of events that lead to Whitkirk being a suspect.

### TASK 34

We need to decide what is key information by **SUMMARISING** Inky's account.

Reduce the account to 4 key bullet points, either in your own words or using direct quotes from the text:

1...

2...

3...

4...

KEY TERM:

SUMMARISE

To select and state only the important details.

### TASK 35

After reading the whole chapter, is Whitkirk still a suspect?

Give reasons for your answer: **Whitkirk is / is not a suspect, because**

...

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN – A Friend Indeed

***“Knowing Inky, he’ll probably turn up at the Snake’s Office and save you in the nick of time, like in those silly detective stories.”***

Although it has been used in the book before, Chapter 13 sees Martin, the writer, switch from using mainly prose to relying predominantly on DIALOGUE.

Writers use DIALOGUE for a number of reasons:

1. To reveal more about the characters.
2. To change the pace of the narrative (story).
3. To move the story on.

KEY TERM:

DIALOGUE

At least two characters talking to each other in a book/play.

In this chapter, the writer chooses to move the action on with a conversation between Inky’s form tutor, Peregrine Dukes, and the victim of the ‘crime’, Fred Varley.

A conversation, between two or more characters, can be an effective way of quickly sharing key parts of the plot with the reader without disturbing the flow of the story.

### TASK 36

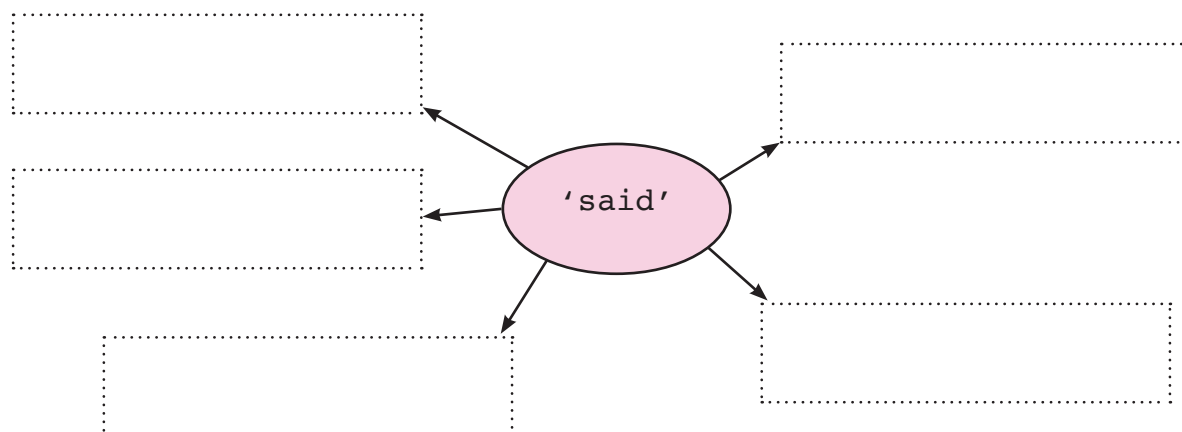
Good writers give the reader clues as to how characters are feeling by using different words to tell us the way in which the characters say something.

Think of 5 SYNONYMS to replace ‘said’ with:

KEY TERM:

SYNONYM

A word that means exactly or nearly the same as another word.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN – Off in a Cloud of Smoke

*'Reluctantly, Day let his weapon drop to the ground, where it disappeared into the swirling mass of fog.'*

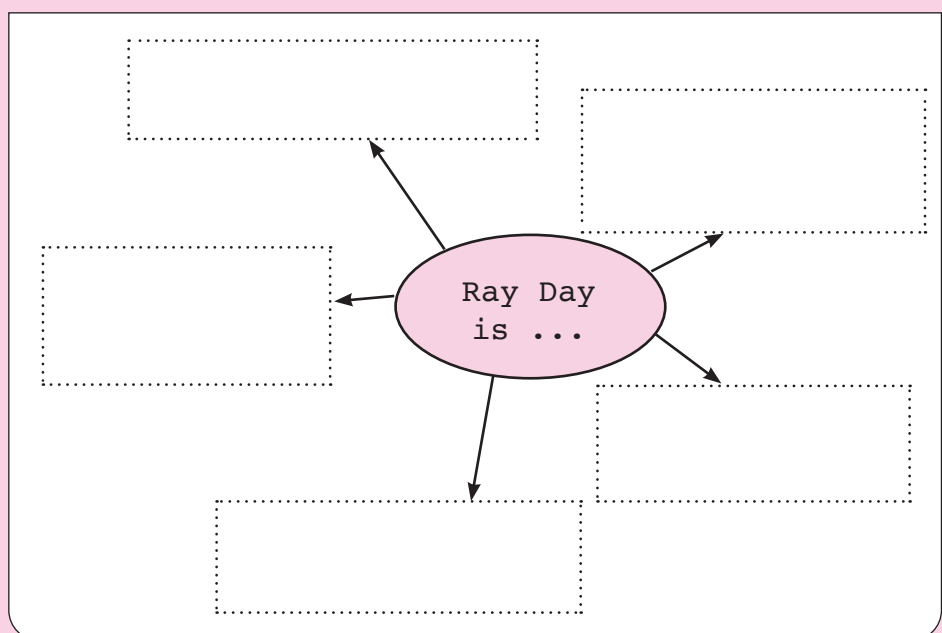
All good heroes need a dastardly villain, a nemesis to make their mission harder to complete. And, previously dismissed as a suspect, in this chapter, Blinkton's Science teacher, Ray Day, steps into the darkness.

Read the extract below:

*'Ray Day filled the doorway of the Science Office trapping both Inky and Whitkirk inside. He slammed the door shut and brought his fist down hard onto a work surface. Chemical bottles scattered and the air filled with a stench of chlorine so thick that it burned the back of Inky's throat. Day pushed Whitkirk aside and cannoned on towards Napoleon Bone-Apart, causing a tray of litmus paper to fall from a high shelf and send a ticker-tape parade fluttering down. A canister of dry ice also tumbled, and a layer of dense, white smoke spread out over the floor, like a living carpet.'*

### TASK 37

First impressions count: When you read this, what impression does it give you of Day? Think of 3–5 adjectives of your own you can use to describe him:



As students of English, you are expected to form opinions and justify why you think. In the previous task, you have given your opinion of Day, now it's time to prove you're right.

### TASK 38

Highlight all of the words in the extract that sound dangerous or aggressive.

**CHALLENGE:** Can you classify the words you have highlighted? e.g. the word 'trapping' is a verb.

## Exam Focus

A typical exam question in English looks like the one below.

### TASK 39

Unpick the language using the prompt questions to help you:

What else does this mean?

Who is this?

What techniques might the writer have used?

What is a simpler way of saying this?

How does the writer use language to present Ray Day as a villain in Chapter 14?

Who is this? What is our opinion of him?

What does this mean?

Are you thinking about the right part of the text?

### TASK 40

So, we know what the question is asking: now we need to think about answering it as best we can.

Gather your evidence by completing the table below:

Evidence	Word class	Analysis – what does it suggest?
"trapping"	Verb	Suggests Day is hunting Inky and Whitkirk and has the upper hand.
"slammed"		
"smoke"		

### TASK 41

Here is a basic sample answer to the question:

Use of language in original question

In Chapter 14, Martin uses powerful verbs to present Ray Day as a villainous character. This is shown in the quote "trapping both Inky and Whitkirk inside". The use of the verb 'trapping' suggests Day has captured his prey, showing him as a threat to the heroes.

Using English terminology to show your knowledge of the subject

Including a quote to support point

Analysis of key words from evidence / quote

Based on this example, write your own evidence.


## CHAPTER FIFTEEN – Backstage Activity



*'I think I've established who took Fred's keys'*

All superheroes have their own secret lair; a space they hide out and plot how they're going to save the world. Batman has his Bat Cave, The Avengers have their tower and the X-Men have the X-Mansion - Inky Stevens has the backstage area of Blinkton High School's assembly hall.

### TASK 42

Complete one of the tasks below:

 List adjectives you could use to describe Inky's backstage office - be creative!

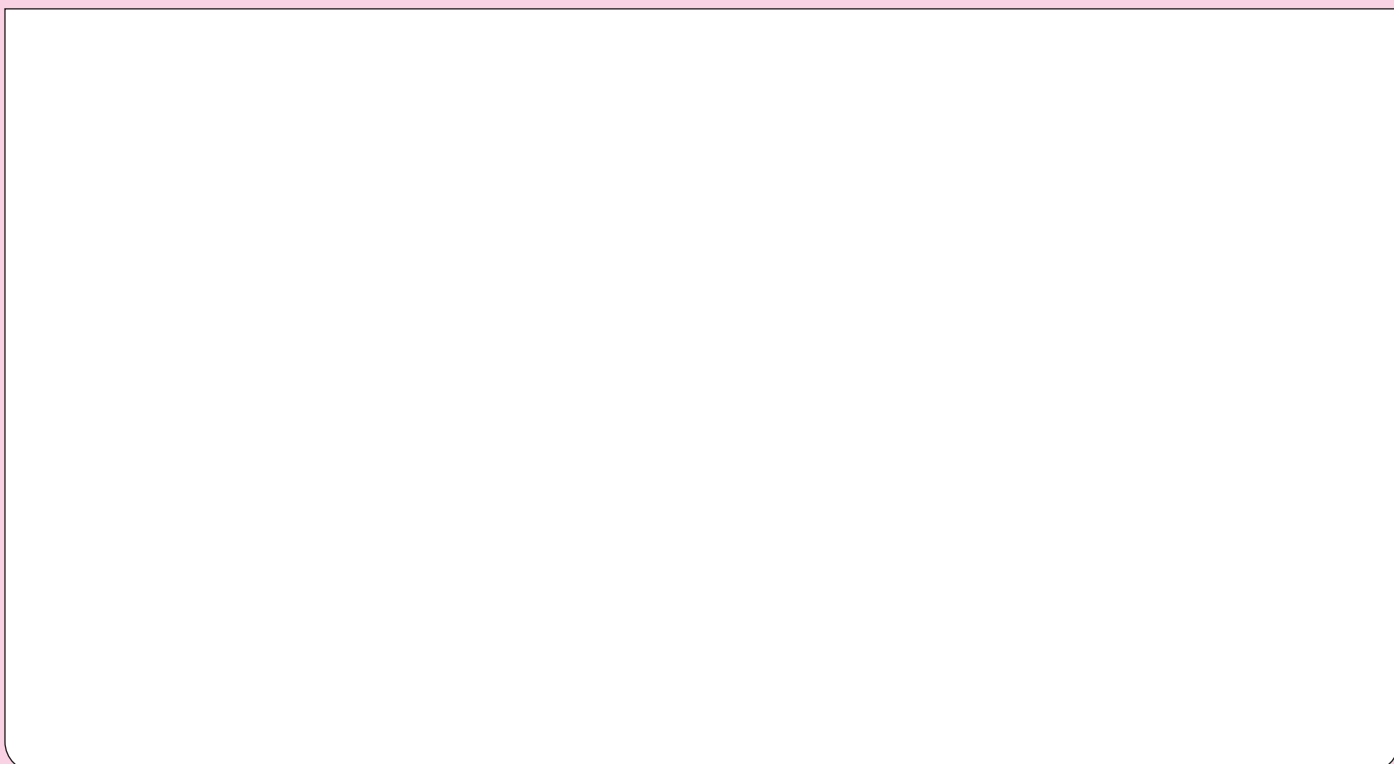
  Describe what you think Inky's backstage office looks like - try and make your description reflect Inky's character.

   Explain what Inky's backstage office might reveal about Inky's personality.

### TASK 43

Imagine you are a hero school detective: where would you want to sit and solve your mysteries?

Design your own secret lair in the box below. Label the items that give us a clue about the personality traits of your detective superhero persona:



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN – The Vault

*'Built from thick stone, it was Spartan and grim'*

In his quest to solve the mystery of the missing keys, Inky, using the 'ornate key' we've heard so much about, sneaks his way into Blinkton High School's sacred vault; a storage space for every document ever produced by, and for, the school.

Making a reader see what you see is part of the skill of being a good writer; creating interesting settings is another.


### TASK 44



Read the extract below describing the school's vault:




*'The space was cavernous: a vast library of information; row upon row of identical shelves reached upwards from a central aisle to both the right and left and extended to the ceiling. Placed onto these were hundreds of wooden crates, all brimming with folders - identical, save for the labelling. And every folder, in turn, was stuffed full of documents.'*

How does the writer help you to visualise the room?

Complete one of the tasks:

 Highlight the words / phrases that make the room sound big.

  Explain the effect of the first long sentence: why has the writer include a long sentence in this description? What might it reflect / resemble?

   Describe a room in your house / school, using some of the writer's techniques here for effect.

At the end of the chapter, Inky is convinced he's cracked the crime, but, based on the story so far, who do you think is guilty of taking the caretaker's keys?

### TASK 45

Complete the sentences below:

I think the culprit of the crime is .....

I think this because .....

Their motive is .....

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – Here, There and Everywhere

***'All he could see were the Statistician's bandy legs, creased trousers and brown hush puppies'***

Mystery novels are laced with moments of tension and *The Case of the Caretaker's Keys* is no different: **Inky's fight with Spud, Ray Day holding Inky and Whitkirk hostage, Inky sneaking past 'Wiggy' into the school's vault** – to name but a few. But, what is it about these moments that make us tense?

### TASK 46

Look at the list of tense moments highlighted above – what do they all have in common? Explain why these moments are tense for the reader:

In this extract from Chapter 17, Inky, our crime buster, is once again under threat as he searches for the truth:







*'Inky slowly crawled towards the edge of the row he'd found himself hiding in and watched with horror as Stanley tottered in his direction. All he could see were the Statistician's bandy legs, creased trousers and brown Hush Puppies. As Stanley neared, the detective could plainly hear the croaky rattle at the back of his throat and the scuff of his shoes on the dry, stone floor.*

*Scuff, scuff, scuff ...*

*Inky readied himself for confrontation, one knee balanced on the floor like a sprinter at the start of a race. He wasn't sure quite what form this confrontation would take, deferring that decision to the second he fell under the old man's gaze, but miraculously that moment never came [...]'*

### TASK 47

Complete one of the tasks based on the extract above:

-  Highlight words / phrases that make you feel tense.
-   Explain which part/s of the extract make you feel tense.
-    Compare how you feel at the beginning of the extract to the end of it – does the tension change? Why?

## PLOTTING TENSION

In the last activity you recognised what was making you feel tense as Stanley approached Inky's hiding place. But, a good English student will be able to understand how a text is structured and why things are where they are.

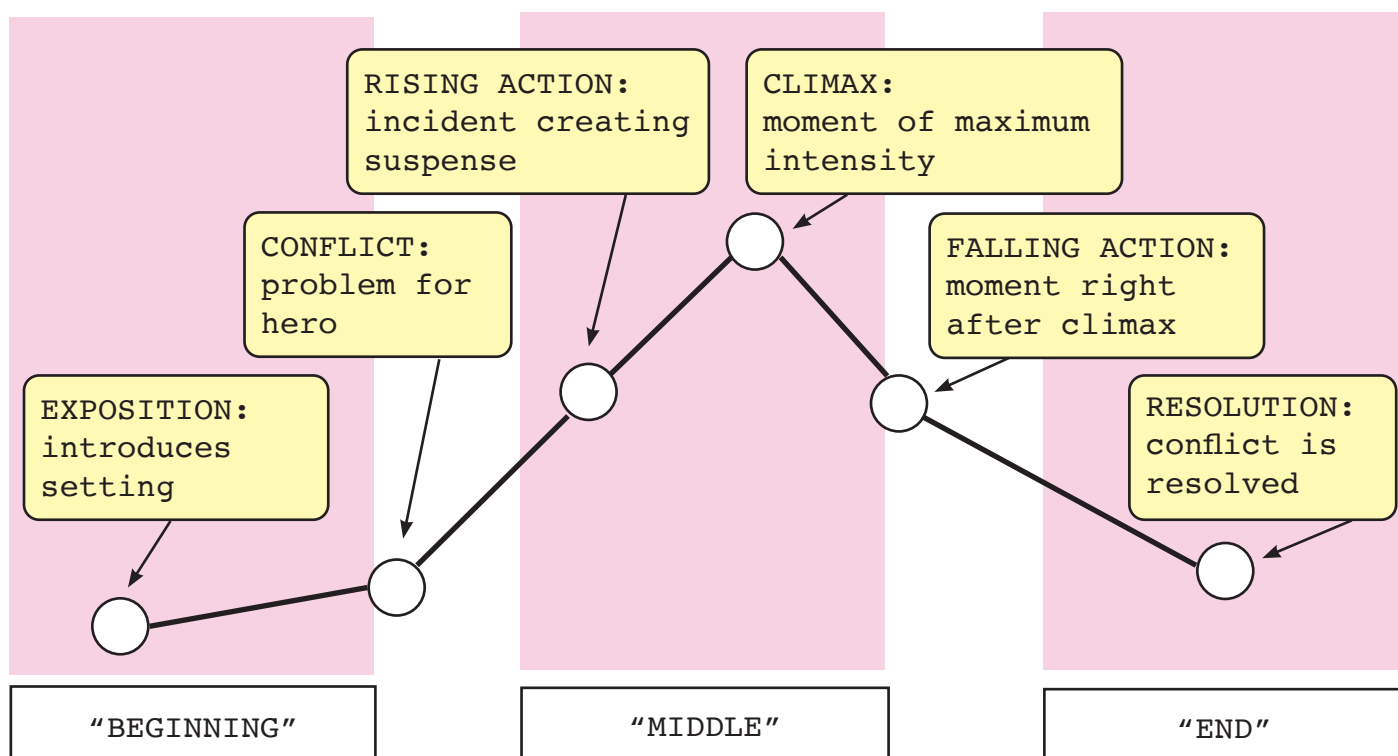
Most narratives follow a basic structure and have a BEGINNING, MIDDLE and END - this is called **the Narrative Structure**, would you believe?

That structure is broken down further to 6 elements (see graph and definitions below). However, this structure can also apply to extracts from the narrative, just like the one on the previous page.

KEY TERM:

TENSION

Part in a story that creates worry, anxiety, and fear.



### TASK 48

Complete the following tasks in order:

- 1.Reduce the extract to 6 key moments, based on the structural elements above and number them chronologically 1-6.
- 2.Plot the 6 key moments in the boxes on the graph above.
- 3.Justify the moment you selected as the climax - why was it the most 'exciting' part for you?

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – Reading Club

*'Great squalls picked up crumpled cans and flung them about the yard like shrapnel'*

With Spud, Candy Sugarcane and Whitkirk being ruled out as suspects earlier in the mission, Inky and the Berry twins discuss the involvement of grade-A-student Crispin Merridew.

### TASK 49

Read up to the first page break (\*\*\*) in Chapter 18 and complete the following paragraph:

In Chapter 18, Ross and Rose Berry believe that ..... took the caretaker's keys. They think his motive for taking them is ...

### RED HERRINGS

Just as in real life mysteries, writers often try and throw us off the scent by feeding us deliberately distracting clues. This is to make the eventual solving of the mystery all the more satisfying.

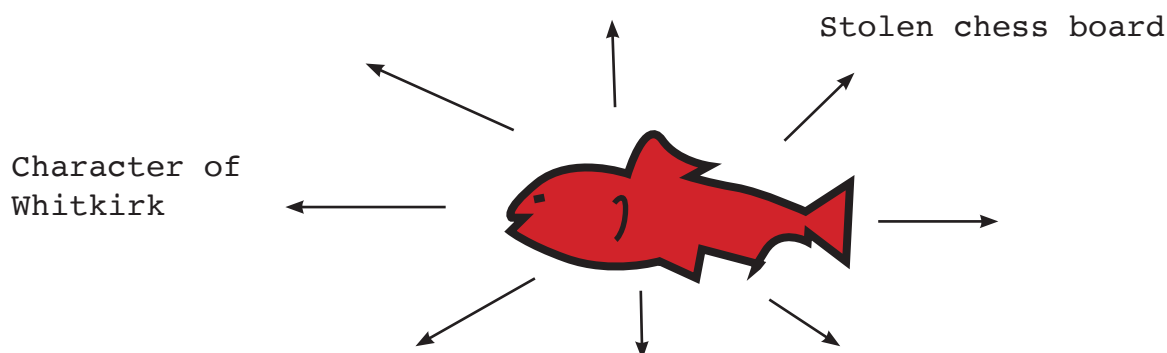
KEY TERM:

RED HERRING

A clue or piece of information that is meant to mislead.

### TASK 50

Once you've read the rest of Chapter 18, complete the diagram by recalling as many red herrings as you can think of:



## Chapter NINETEEN – The Darkening

***'Outside, a bolt of lightning cracked overhead throwing Inky and the cherry tree on the corner into sharp silhouette'***

Homonyms are words that are pronounced alike but are different in spelling and meaning.

Read the following passage from the end of Chapter 19, looking out for words which you feel might be homonyms (spelled incorrectly, in the context):

*'The Grate School Detective maid his weigh threw deserted streets down two the harbour, impervious to the tempest swirling all around him. At the see wall, he stud alone on its promontory and breathed inn deeply, tasting the salt on his lips, drinking inn the many flavours of the storm. Sprays of saltwater lashed his face causing his skin two tingle. The see, witch spread itself out inn front of him, was a vast cooking pot witch bubbled and boiled – a cauldron of roiling blackness. Sparks of lightening detonated on the horizon won after another, briefly bleaching the undersides of the clouds, before fading back two black.'*

### AMBITIOUS VOCABULARY:

**IMPERVIOUS** – doesn't allow water to pass through

**TEMPEST** – another word for storm

**PROMONTORY** – high piece of land jutting into the sea

**ROILING** – make liquid muddy



### TASK 51

Complete these tasks in order:

1. Highlight all of the homonyms in the extract: there are 17 in total, including four that have been used more than once.

2. Correct the spelling of the 17 homonyms in the extract to suit the context.



## CHAPTER TWENTY – Thunder Clap

*'Blinkton School rose against the evening sky like a tombstone'*

Remember the work we did on Chapter 10, where we looked at PATHETIC FALLACY? Well, Chapter 20 starts with it as well.

### TASK 52

Without looking back, define PATHETIC FALLACY - what is it?

Pathetic fallacy is when writers ...

In this chapter, the writer uses it to ...

Let's have a closer look at the opening to the chapter:

*'Blinkton School rose against the evening sky like a tombstone. With the moon held captive behind tumbling clouds, Inky's outline was barely visible against its imposing bulk. He stood motionless, watching the rain as it lashed against brick, steel and glass. A camera flash of lightning momentarily bleached the brickwork before sliding back into shiny, rain-soaked blackness. The resulting crash of thunder built from a tinny rumble into a full-throated roar in seconds. The detective took a step forwards, pushed open the unlocked door and disappeared inside.'*


**SIMILE:** creates an image of death, suggesting Inky might be in danger.



### ACOASTMAP




A - adjectives  
C - colour  
O - onomatopoeia  
A - adverbs  
S - simile  
T - triplets  
M - metaphor  
A - alliteration  
P - personification

### TASK 53

An easy way to remember the creative writing techniques is by the acronym **ACOASTMAP**

 Annotate the extract by labelling and highlighting all of the ACOASTMAP techniques you can find in there.

  Explain the effect of the technique used by the writer? An example has been done for you.

   Write a description of today's weather using as many ACOASTMAP techniques as you can.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE – Pressure Mounting

*'[...] the huge slab of metal behind Inky started to shudder, its vibrations causing the rope around him to grip even tighter. Betty had awoken.'*

As any story nears its climax, the writer has to do all he or she can to turn the tension up to 11! We've already discussed how the structure of a narrative can develop the emotions the reader is feeling, but how else can writers evoke tension?

KEY TERM:

CLIMAX


The point of the narrative that is most dramatic.



This extract is taken from the height of the drama in Chapter 21, as Inky, who is tied to the school's boiler, is in real danger:




*'Inky paused, struggling to control the pain now searing across his back, but before Arley could respond, the room suddenly shook with the force of an earthquake. Plaster crumbled to dust. Lightning-bolt cracks tore along the walls, ceiling and floor. Pipework ripped. Rivets exploded. Vincent Arley seized hold of the doorframe and clung to it, terrified.'*

### TASK 54

Read the extract above and complete **one** of the tasks below:

 Identify how you are feeling for Inky in this situation.

  Explain why you think you feel something for Inky in this situation.

   Compare how you feel towards Inky versus Arley in this situation. Justify your feelings.

**TASK 55**

Some of the techniques writers use to generate tension can be found in the table below. Looking back at the climactic extract from Chapter 21, complete the table using the example that has been done for you as a guide.

NOTE: Ignore the 'Ranking' column for now...

Ranking	Tension Technique	Example from extract	Effect on reader?
	Character conflict	"the room suddenly shook with the force of an earthquake"	I am concerned for Inky's safety and feel anxious that he won't make it out of the situation alive.
	Pace - short sentences		
	Heightened stakes		
	Make it real		
	Imagery - similes		

**TASK 56**

Fill in the 'ranking' column with numbers 1-5; 1 being the most effective - 5 being the least, based on which you think makes you feel most anxious about the situation.

**TASK 57**

Try to replicate this style of writing (fast-paced, tense, emotional) in a piece of creative writing of your own. It should be no longer than the extract and must not be over-complicated by trying to create a meaningful story. All we're interested in is the excitement/tension of the moment.

Choose from one of the following titles for your piece:

- The Cliff Edge!
- And Then the Brakes Failed!
- Animal on the Loose!
- Earthquake!
- Man/Woman Overboard!
- Ooops!
- And Then the Grave Opened Up!
- Suddenly, All the Lights Went Out!



## Chapter TWENTY-TWO – Fallout

*'[...] before she'd even read the end of the second paragraph, she was scrambling to find the telephone'*

With the culprit safely concealed, Inky does something you probably haven't done for a while and writes a letter to the head teacher explaining the situation and what he has learned from his investigations.

In this extract, he is trying to persuade 'Miss S' that one of the teachers doesn't deserve to be at Blinkton anymore:

*'On a less urgent note, I feel that it is my duty to inform you that our Head of Science, Mr Ray Day, lacks any sense of morality. He is a braggart, a cheat and a bully. Mr Day's treatment of Mr Whitkirk has been nothing short of disgraceful, and the complaints our Science Technician brought to your attention yesterday were genuine and deserve re-evaluation. Your decision to dismiss Mr Whitkirk was ill-founded, based as it was on scurrilous lies circulated by Mr Day himself.'*

### AMBITIOUS VOCABULARY

**MORALITY** – any principles concerning right and wrong

**BRAGGART** – someone who likes to boast about achievements

**ILL-FOUNDED** – not based on reliable evidence or facts

**SCURRILOUS** – spreading claims about someone to damage their reputation

### TASK 58

Complete the tasks in order:

1. Highlight all of the ambitious vocabulary in the extract and define any that you don't already know - some have been done for you.
2. Answer these questions in FULL SENTENCES:
  - a) Why does Inky use his best vocabulary?
  - b) How would his use of vocabulary change if he was writing to the Berry twins or to his Aunt and Uncle? Why?
3. Using Inky's letter layout as a template, write a letter to your head teacher persuading them that homework should be banned - try and use the same techniques as Inky.


## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE — Home Sweet Home



\*\*\*\*\* *Case Closed* \*\*\*\*\*




The final chapter starts with some positive PATHETIC FALLACY:  
 'By the time Inky reached home, the sun was beginning to tinge the horizon purple.'

### TASK 59

Complete one of the following tasks:

 Identify the use of PATHETIC FALLACY in the extract above.

  Explain the effect of the PATHETIC FALLACY used in the extract above - use the space below.

   Use positive PATHETIC FALLACY to describe how you feel when you're in good mood - use the space below.

In his final act, Inky secures his future with his aunt and uncle by writing another letter; this time on behalf of the Council, which placed him under the care of Mr and Mrs Garner in the first place. In the letter, Inky highlights his own 'solitary nature' that has probably come as a result of the 'traumatic circumstances' that saw him removed from his mother's care.

Sadly, this happens more than you think it does or should: everyone has a past and it is at moments in life like this, and how we deal with them, that shape who we are today and the people we will grow up to become.

So, next time you notice someone spending a lot of time on their own or who dresses a bit differently to you or likes different things, be more like Inky and 'embrace diversity and champion the uniqueness of every individual'.

## YOUR FINAL MISSION

**SPOILER ALERT:** Now that the cat is out of the bag, and the culprit of the caretaker's missing key has been taken care of, we're going to take a closer look at the troublesome trickster.

Let's have a look at the extracts below and see how the wrongdoer changed as the mystery unravelled:

Extract 1, from Chapter 2:

*'Fred let out a long sigh. Flooding in the boys' toilets was something he could deal with. The old man clipped his radio back onto his belt and shuffled off in the direction of the stage curtains, hands held out in front like Frankenstein's Monster. As he retraced his steps through the gloom, his right knee collided with the corner of an old locker unit. "Argh, bloomin' 'eck! Me other knee!" he cried.'*

Extract 2, from Chapter 21:

*'Arley laughed so forcefully that he had to lean up against the pipework to steady himself. All traces of the meek, browbeaten caretaker had gone. He regained his composure and locked eyes with his captive, "It's time for some entertainment, Stevens. And don't get any silly ideas about attracting attention; there's no one to hear you. Besides," he held up his bunch of keys like an angler showing off a prized catch, "the keys to this little nook are now in my possession."'*

### TASK 60

Read each extract again. What impression do you get about the character of Fred Varley / Vincent Arley in each one?

List 3 adjectives of your own you would use to describe them based on each extract:

EXTRACT 1

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

EXTRACT 1

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

**TASK 61**

The final task for you to complete will be an extended comparison of Fred's character, from beginning to end. This task will help you to find the evidence to build that comparison.

Complete the tables below, finding the strongest piece of evidence from the extracts to support your point:

**EXTRACT 1**

Impression of Fred	Evidence from text
Fred is aging	
Fred is clumsy	
Fred is of low status	

**EXTRACT 2**

Impression of Vincent	Evidence from text
Vincent enjoys being a villain	
Vincent is sinister	
Vincent is deceptive	

**TASK 62**

Your very final task is to answer this question:

**Compare how the character of Fred / Vincent is presented from the beginning to the end of the novel.**

Using the impressions, evidence from tasks 60 & 61 and the sentence starters below, write an extended answer:

**Possible Sentence Starters:**

In Chapter 2, Fred is presented as...

The writer uses ... to present Fred as...

The use of the word / phrase "... " shows Fred to be...

Additionally / Alternatively, the writer creates the impression Fred is ... through the use of the word / phrase "... "

However, in Chapter 21, the writer shows Fred / Vincent has become... seen through the writer's use of... when he says...

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM AND/OR ADDITIONAL TASKS

### POST-READING ACTIVITY:

*'Back then, the education delivered to Britain's youngsters was not necessarily better than it is today, but it was a lot simpler: teachers were expected to teach and pupils were expected to learn; pupils tried to create mayhem in the classroom and teachers tried to stop them.'*

Precisely when 'the Caretaker's Keys' is set is never actually mentioned in the book. However, the author has deliberately given the piece an 'old fashioned' flavour to tap in to the spirit of a 'traditional whodunit story,' one which relies on the skill of the detective rather than on flashy gimmicks and gadgets. Chris Martin, the writer, stated, 'I deliberately set the book in an age before mobile phones, one very similar to my own school days'. The general feeling is that the book is set in the 1970s or early 1980s.

From your own knowledge...

1. Discuss as a class how you think your modern day school is different to Inky's several years ago.
2. Write down a list of ten ways that you feel your school is different to Blinkton High School.
3. Compare your school to Blinkton - What would you keep? What would you swap?

### 'INKY' THE MOVIE

Imagine that 'the Caretaker's Keys' was to be made into a film and that you have been appointed as the casting director. Cast the film using the names of anyone you know who you think would be suitable to play each of the named characters. You might choose to use famous people (actors/sports stars/politicians/musicians) and/or mix them up with people you know from your own school, or friends and family, but be prepared to justify your choices.



### Classroom Activity based on CHAPTER ONE

The writer introduces Blinkton-on-Sea as quite a dreary place, cut off and isolated, the type of location where dark deeds can occur yet can still remain hidden from the rest of the world:

*'At that time, Blinkton-on-Sea was a dreary coastal town. (It still is.) Twinned with the French town Mal-de-Mer, it suffered greatly by comparison. While Mal-de-Mer basked in Mediterranean sunshine, Blinkton barely lifted its head off its pillow for a few dismal weeks each summer. Only one train line ventured into Blinkton; just one road too. Other than that, the small coastal town remained isolated. Stubbornly clinging to the shoreline like some unsightly whelk or a piece of jetsam snagged on a rock and left to decompose.'*

Using only the information from the passage, imagine that you are working for the tourist board in Blinkton. Create a short article for a travel brochure which (without being untruthful) twists the negative elements in the passage into something positive-sounding; something which would appeal to a tourist who was considering making a visit.

## Classroom Activity based on CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Discuss the concept of a school report:

What does a school report hope to achieve? How is it laid out structurally?

What style of language does it employ, what vocabulary and to what effect?

Read out the following passage from Chapter Fourteen:

*'Mathematics had taken on a whole new importance at Blinkton School. The Snake desperately wanted to get her talons on the inter-school PJ Ward Prize for Mathematics, and nothing would deflect her from this aim. Of course, this had put undue pressure on the Maths Department – pressure which had been passed down via the Head of Mathematics Marjorie Spiller ('Killer Spiller') to the students themselves. That Wednesday morning, Spiller patrolled the maths class silently, wearing flat, black shoes, tan-coloured tights, a tweed skirt and a beige cardigan wrapped tightly around her sinewy frame. She had already established a mood of hushed discipline and was not about to tolerate any disturbance.'*

Discuss 'Killer' Spiller's personality. How is she likely to express herself on paper? And as she's a maths teacher, what specialist terminology is she likely to use?

Brainstorm a list of all the students from 'Caretaker's Keys'. Select one of them and, as Miss Spiller, write what you think she would say about them in their Maths Report. Discuss how Miss Spiller's comment is likely to vary greatly depending upon their choice of student. For example, a report written about William 'Spud' Barton is likely to be very different from one written about Crispin Merridew.

## Classroom Activity based on CHAPTER SIXTEEN

This lesson is designed to explore how non-verbal actions contribute to understanding within the text. It is the writer's job to create a visual picture in order to help the reader to understand what's really going on. Often, the language a character adopts is used as a smokescreen to disguise their real intentions. In a play, this meaning (the subtext) would be communicated through the body language of the actors, their positioning in relation to one another, and the way that they say their lines. On the page, however, it's the job of the writer to describe what is really going on, using words to guide the reader towards understanding. In this passage from Chapter Sixteen, Inky uses Ross and Rose to distract Mr 'Wiggy' Stanley (the Statistics Officer) with a meaningless task so that he can sneak behind him into the school's vault, unseen.

This section from the book has been written as a playscript so that only the dialogue and basic stage directions remain...

You could:

- \* Read it out as a class with selected students being allocated the lines.
- \*\* Split up into groups of four (or thereabouts), select a character each, and read the play out within yourselves. (A/Some rendition/s will follow.)
- \*\*\* Split up into groups of four (or thereabouts), and prepare a short play version of the passage by acting out the lines given. (A/Some performance/s will follow.)

After this, the passage is reread/re-acted by one selected group, but this time the teacher will interrupt the performance by reading out the narrative detail (written in bold) as it appears in the book. When he/she is reading, the action will pause momentarily. The ensuing discussion will centre around how the writer gives clues to the reader within the text about what is really going on within the exchange.

## Outside the Statistics Office - Playscript version

(Inky stands with Ross and Rose knocks upon the door of 'Wiggy' Stanley's Statistics Office.)

**Ross:** What are you going to say when Wiggy opens up?

**Inky:** Nothing.

**Ross:** Nothing?

**Inky:** Yes, because you're going to do the talking.

(The door opens.)

**Stanley:** Yes?

**Ross:** Erm ...

**Stanley:** What is it?

**Rose:** Erm ... We're conducting a geography survey for Miss Entwistle, and we need as many respondents as possible.

**Stanley:** What? I'm sorry, but I'm very busy—

**Rose:** It would only take a couple of minutes.

**Stanley:** Try the Staff Room. I'm sure someone there will help you. I'm tied up right now.

**Rose:** How often do you visit the Funshine Arcade?

**Stanley:** I beg your pardon?

**Rose:** The Funshine Arcade on the seafront. How often would you say that you visit? Every day, every week, every month or once a year? Or none of the above? And, on the way home, are you likely to indulge in a portion of fish and chips from The Codfather, or pizza from Don Marco's or kebabs from Speedy's or a Mexican from Tequila Mockingbird? Or all of the above?

**Stanley:** None of the above. I'm sorry, but I really don't have time—

**Ross:** We have to collect data.

**Rose:** Yes, we need to acquire accurate statistical information about Blinkton-on-Sea, then analyse it and produce a graph, pie-chart or bar-chart.

**Ross:** Or even a scatter-diagram!

**Rose:** *(Taking out an exercise book)* So, would you mind awfully spending a couple of minutes providing us with some data?

**Stanley:** *(Suddenly interested)* Why didn't you say so? Statistics are my domain, my raison d'être. There's nothing about data collection I don't know. I'll tell you what, I'll provide you with all the information you need, and then we can discuss the best way for you to present it.

*(With Stanley distracted, Inky slips behind him and into the Statistics Office.)*

## Outside the Statistics Office

Outside, Inky pulled up his collar against the driving rain and waited patiently before trying a second time. Ross hovered at his shoulder, already soaked. "What are you going to say when Wiggy opens up?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Yes, because you're going to do the talking."

And as the handle began to turn, Inky stepped aside and nudged Ross forwards. Stanley opened the door a fraction and peered out. All that was visible was one bespectacled eye, "Yes?" he croaked.

Ross was startled by how large Stanley's eye appeared through his spectacles – all bloodshot and blinking, "Erm ..." he said.

"What is it?" snapped Stanley.

"Erm ... We're conducting a geography survey for Miss Entwistle, and we need as many respondents as possible."

"What? I'm sorry, but I'm very busy—"

"It would only take a couple of minutes," Rose added.

"Try the Staff Room. I'm sure someone there will help you," said Stanley's eye.

"I'm tied up right now."

"How often do you visit the Funshine Arcade?" said Rose in an official voice.

"I beg your pardon?"

Rose repeated, "The Funshine Arcade on the seafront. How often would you say that you visit? Every day, every week, every month or once a year? Or none of the above?"

"And," she continued, "on the way home, are you likely to indulge in a portion of fish and chips from The Codfather, or pizza from Don Marco's or kebabs from Speedy's or a Mexican from Tequila Mockingbird? Or all of the above?"

"None of the above," said Stanley, "I'm sorry, but I really don't have time—"

"We have to collect data," said Ross, sliding his foot into the crack in the door.

"Yes," Rose pleaded, "we need to acquire accurate statistical information about Blinkton-on-Sea, then analyse it and produce a graph, pie-chart or bar-chart."

"Or even a scatter-diagram!" Ross added.

"So," said Rose, taking out an exercise book and sliding a pen into the corner of her mouth, "would you mind awfully spending a couple of minutes providing us with some data?"

Rose could sense rather than see Stanley thawing at the mention of his favourite word. After a brief pause, his office door opened and he stepped out.

"Why didn't you say so?" he exclaimed. "Statistics are my domain, my raison d'être. There's nothing about data collection I don't know. I'll tell you what, I'll provide you with all the information you need, and then we can discuss the best way for you to present it."

Stanley was immediately submerged in a world in which he felt comfortable, and having been taken in, he was easily prompted to answer all kinds of meaningless questions. Hairpiece shaking, he gestured passionately, oblivious to the rain sliding down his plastic follicles and soaking his gown.

Meanwhile, Inky slipped unnoticed behind the animated Statistician and into the sombre coolness of the Statistics Office beyond.

## Inky Stevens- Fill in the Blanks:

\* Using the words in the box below, correctly add the missing words into the blank spaces provided on your sheet.

\*\* Using the words in the box below, copy out the following passage correctly adding the missing words into the spaces as you go along.

Inky Stevens is a schoolboy detective created by author \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (who shares his name with the lead singer of the pop band  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ). Chris was a teacher for \_\_\_\_\_ years, ten of which  
 he spent in \_\_\_\_\_ , East Yorkshire, a seaside town that inspired  
 the name of the town in his series of \_\_\_\_\_  
 novels.

The book's setting, \_\_\_\_\_ , is an isolated  
 town located somewhere along the coastline of \_\_\_\_\_ .  
 The town has only one secondary school, Blinkton High, and its most  
 notable student is \_\_\_\_\_ who arrived halfway through the  
 \_\_\_\_\_ year. Inky is now in Year \_\_\_\_\_ and his form tutor is  
 History teacher, \_\_\_\_\_ . Past complications between Inky  
 and his mother mean that the schoolboy detective now lives with his Aunt  
 \_\_\_\_\_ and Uncle \_\_\_\_\_ Garner at number \_\_\_\_\_ Horrobin  
 Lane. In appearance, Inky is tall and slim with a \_\_\_\_\_ complexion.  
 He wears a studded belt and a long black coat made of \_\_\_\_\_ .  
 In Inky's first outing, 'the Case of the Caretaker's \_\_\_\_\_' it's the  
 school caretaker \_\_\_\_\_ who asks Inky to help him. The  
 old man's lost his precious \_\_\_\_\_ of school keys and needs help  
 to find them before Blinkton School's fearsome Headmistress, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ , discovers his incompetence. Inky places the figure of a  
 small black \_\_\_\_\_ above the door of his form room. This is the  
 teenage detective's secret signal to class-mates, the twins \_\_\_\_\_  
 and \_\_\_\_\_ Berry that their investigation is about to begin...

Great Britain \*\* the Snake \*\* Great School Detective \*\* crow  
 Inky Stevens \*\* thirteen \*\* Keys \*\* Rose \*\* twenty-two  
 third \*\* Alice \*\* leather \*\* Fred Varley \*\* Peregrine Dukes  
 Bridlington \*\* four \*\* Ross \*\* bunch  
 Coldplay \*\* pale \*\* Chris Martin \*\* Eric \*\* Blinkton On Sea

## Inky Stevens- Fill in the Blanks (Answers)

Inky Stevens is a schoolboy detective created by author Chris Martin (who shares his name with the lead singer of the pop band Coldplay). Chris was a teacher for twenty-two years, ten of which he spent in Bridlington, East Yorkshire, a seaside town that inspired the name of the town in his series of Great School Detective novels.

The book's setting, Blinkton On Sea, is an isolated town located somewhere along the coastline of Great Britain. The town has only one secondary school, Blinkton High, and its most notable student is Inky Stevens who arrived halfway through the third year. Inky is now in Year Four and his form tutor is History teacher, Peregrine Dukes. Past complications between Inky and his mother mean that the schoolboy detective now lives with his Aunt Alice and Uncle Eric Garner at number thirteen Horrobin Lane. In appearance, Inky is tall and slim with a pale complexion. He wears a studded belt and a long black coat made of leather.

In Inky's first outing, 'the Case of the Caretaker's Keys' it's the school caretaker Fred Varley who asks Inky to help him. The old man's lost his precious bunch of school keys and needs help to find them before Blinkton School's fearsome Headmistress, the Snake, discovers his incompetence. Inky places the figure of a small black crow above the door of his form room. This is the teenage detective's secret signal to class-mates, the twins Ross and Rose Berry that their investigation is about to begin...

Great Britain \*\* the Snake \*\* Great School Detective \*\* crow  
 Inky Stevens \*\* thirteen \*\* Keys \*\* Rose \*\* twenty-two  
 third \*\* Alice \*\* leather \*\* Fred Varley \*\*Peregrine Dukes  
 Bridlington \*\* four \*\* Ross \*\* bunch  
 Coldplay \*\* pale \*\* Chris Martin \*\* Eric \*\* Blinkton On Sea

# 'Caretaker's Keys' Fun Crossword



A crossword puzzle grid with 20 numbered starting points. The grid consists of white squares for letters and black squares for empty space. The numbers are placed in the top-left corner of each starting square.

- 1: 5-letter horizontal word starting at row 1, column 3.
- 2: 3-letter vertical word starting at row 1, column 4.
- 3: 2-letter vertical word starting at row 2, column 1.
- 4: 5-letter horizontal word starting at row 2, column 4.
- 5: 7-letter horizontal word starting at row 3, column 1.
- 6: 12-letter horizontal word starting at row 3, column 6.
- 7: 3-letter vertical word starting at row 3, column 6.
- 8: 8-letter horizontal word starting at row 4, column 1.
- 9: 5-letter horizontal word starting at row 4, column 1.
- 10: 8-letter horizontal word starting at row 4, column 3.
- 11: 5-letter horizontal word starting at row 5, column 1.
- 12: 8-letter horizontal word starting at row 5, column 3.
- 13: 3-letter vertical word starting at row 5, column 6.
- 14: 3-letter vertical word starting at row 5, column 8.
- 15: 2-letter vertical word starting at row 6, column 5.
- 16: 2-letter horizontal word starting at row 6, column 6.
- 17: 2-letter horizontal word starting at row 6, column 5.
- 18: 5-letter horizontal word starting at row 7, column 3.
- 19: 2-letter horizontal word starting at row 7, column 6.
- 20: 5-letter horizontal word starting at row 8, column 6.

## 'Caretaker's Keys' Fun Crossword

### Across:

1. Which colour is most associated with Inky? (5)
5. Which famous general is the science department's skeleton named after? (8)
7. What type of structure is on the school badge? (10)
8. Where do Spud and Inky confront one another? The \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ (4,5)
9. What's Ross and Rose's surname? (5)
10. Which member of staff has a hairy wart? (3,4)
11. Which of the suspects has a first name that means 'sweets' in American? (5)
12. Which publishing house produces the Great School Detective series? \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Books. (4,4)
17. What TV programme is Eric Garner's favourite? (3,4)
18. What is Mr Stanley's nickname? (5)
19. Rose pretends to have been stung by which insect? (3)
20. Which creature provides the nickname for Blinkton's Headmistress? The \_\_\_\_\_ (5)

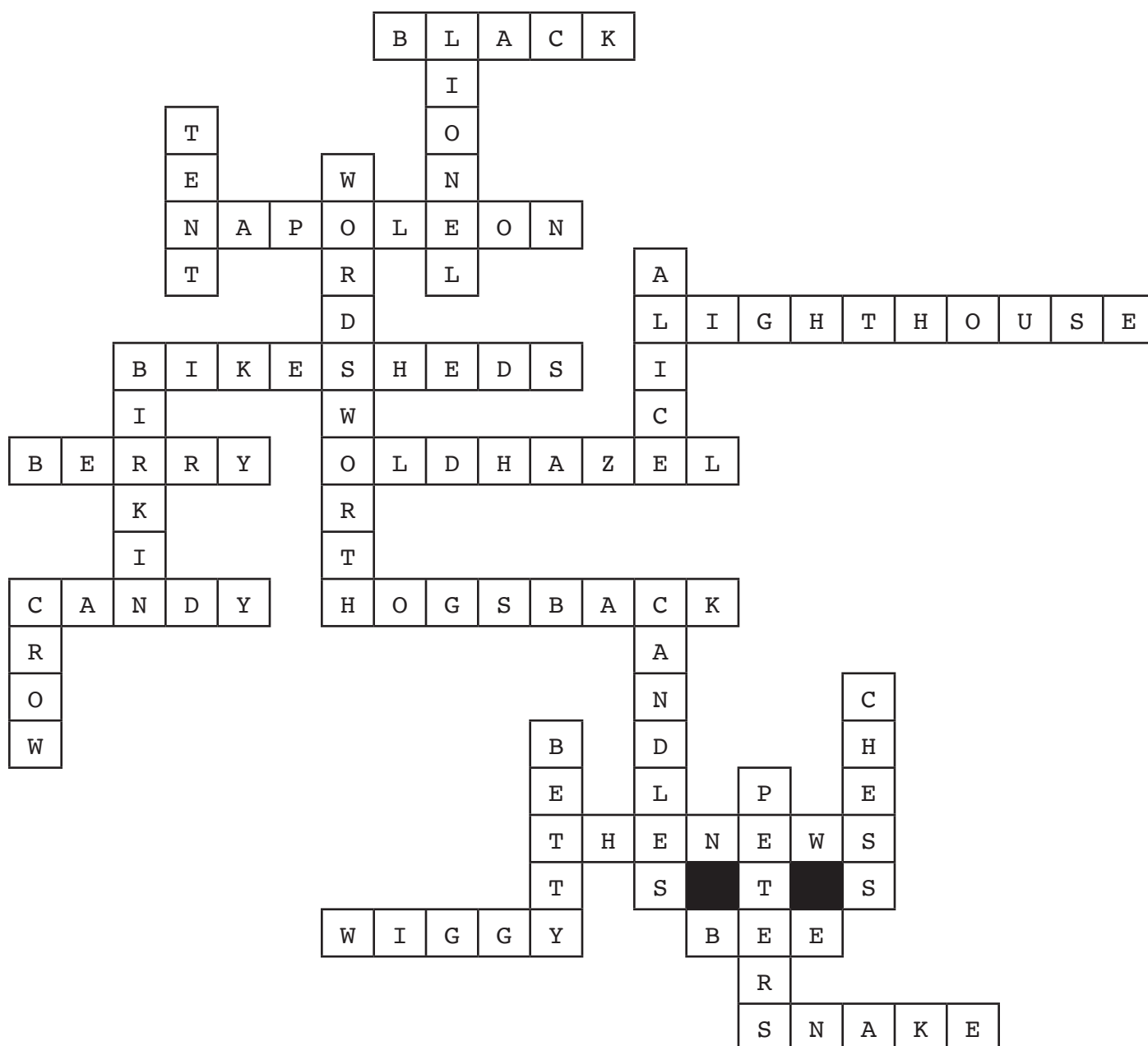
### Down:

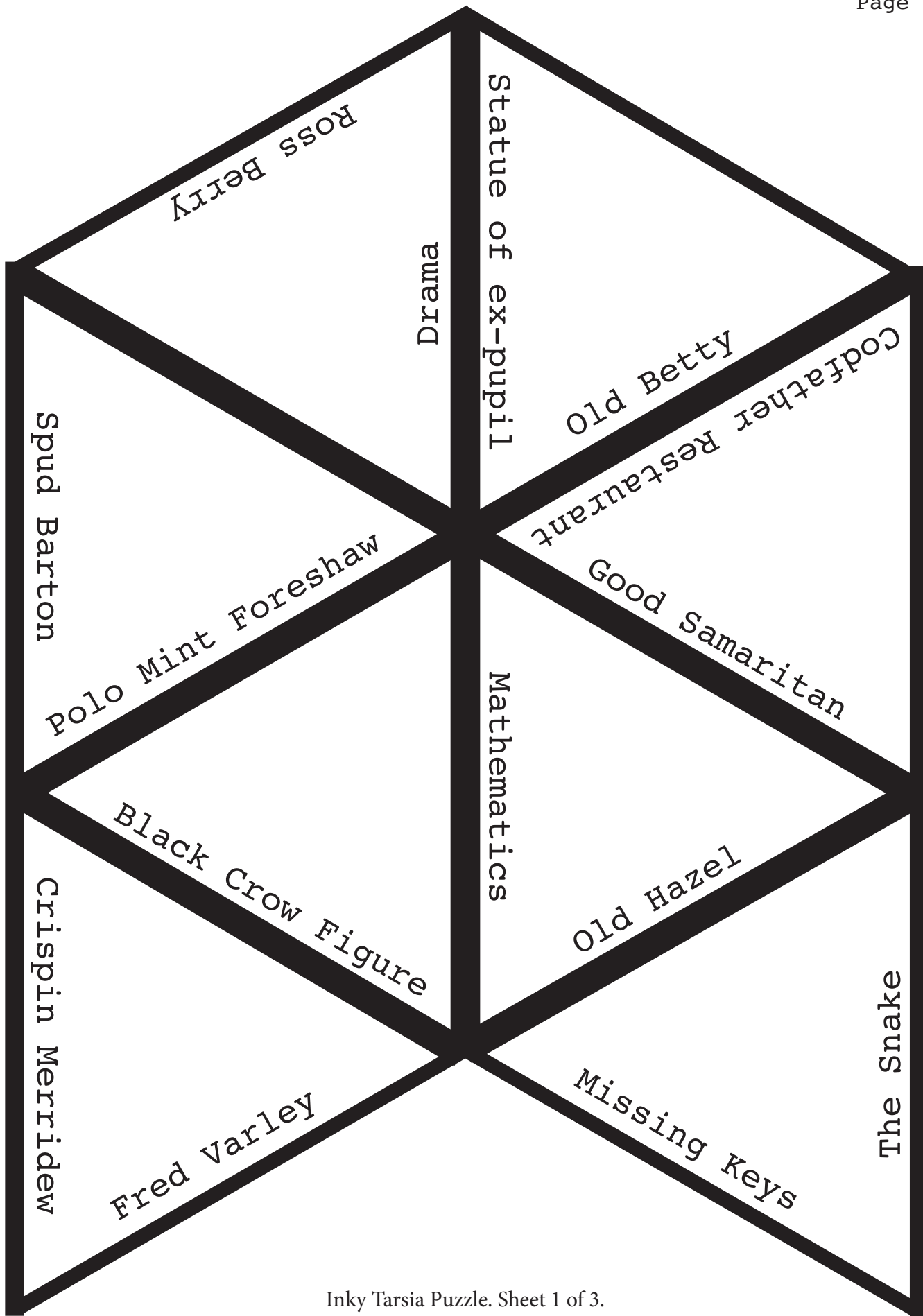
2. A statue of which famous past pupil is situated outside the HOY's Office? \_\_\_\_\_ Roebuck (6)
3. Which structure dominates the Reflection Room? The Harmony \_\_\_\_\_ (4)
4. The street that the school is on is named after which poet? (10)
6. What is Inky's Auntie called? \_\_\_\_\_ Garner. (5)
8. What's the name of the teacher who runs Drama Club? Miss \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
11. A small figure of which bird does Inky use as a signal to Ross and Rose? (4)
13. Inky lights his bedroom using which objects? (7)
14. What board game does Crispin enjoy playing? (5)
15. What is the nickname of the school's heating system (its boiler)? Old \_\_\_\_\_ (5)
16. What's the name of Inky's Head of Year? Miss \_\_\_\_\_ (6)

Use your knowledge of the book to fill in the correct answers into the grid provided.



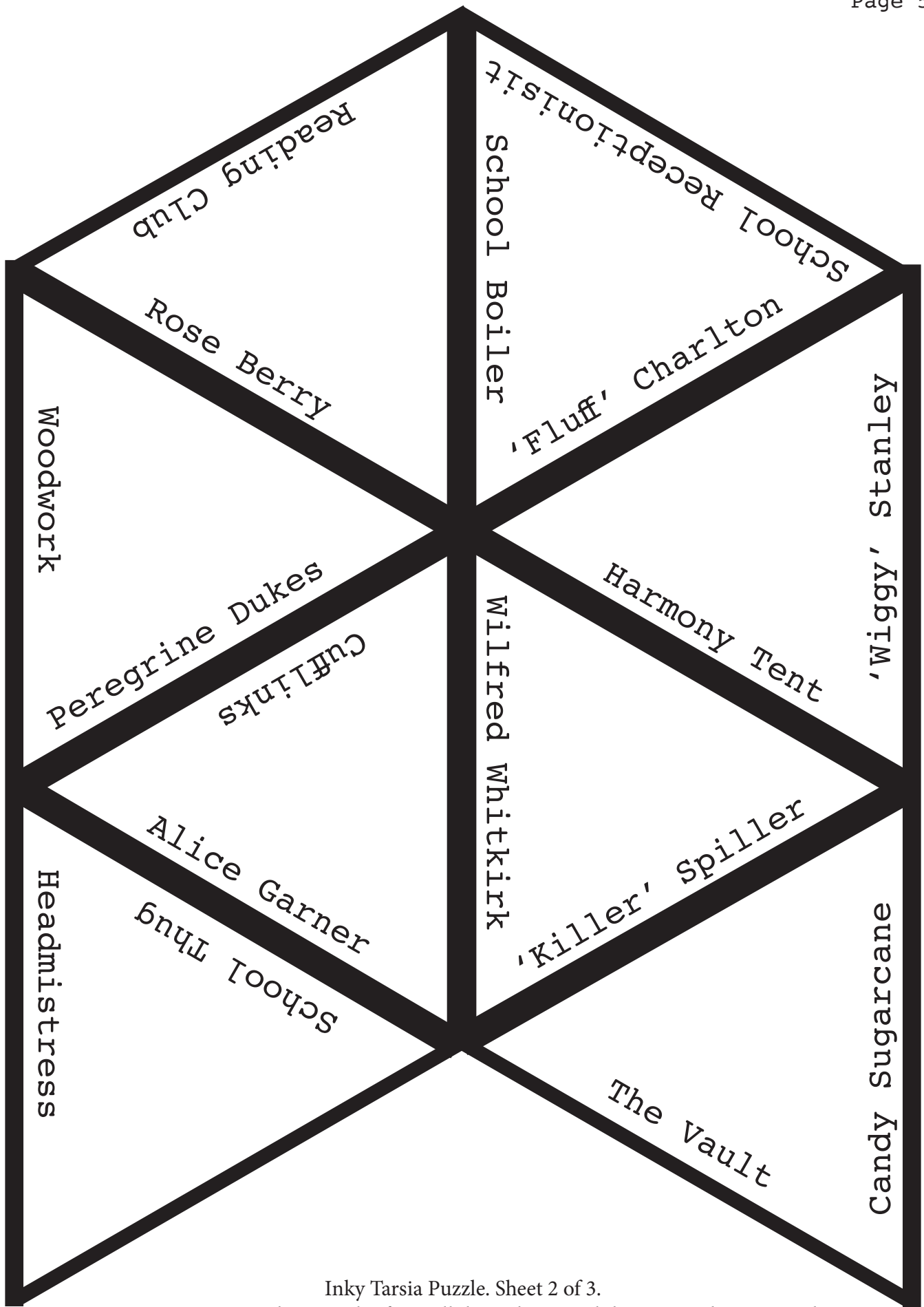
# 'Caretaker's Keys' Fun Crossword – Answers





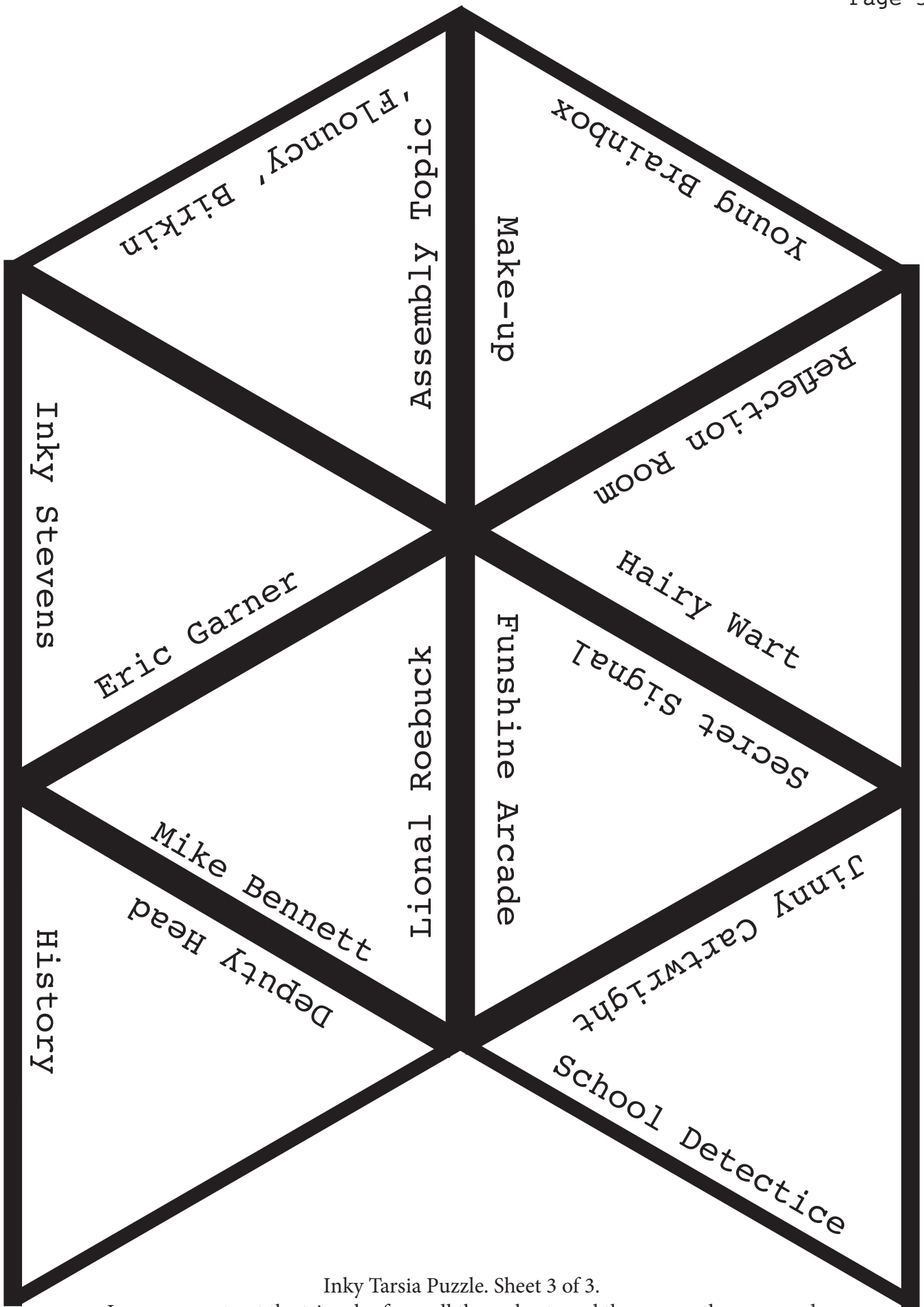
Inky Tarsia Puzzle. Sheet 1 of 3.

In groups, cut out the triangles from all three sheets and then move them around so that each word/phrase is placed alongside the edge containing its partner (from a different triangle). Each word has just one other one that matches it (according to information found in the book). Once all the pairs are correctly aligned a new, much bigger, shape will start to appear.



Inky Tarsia Puzzle. Sheet 2 of 3.

In groups, cut out the triangles from all three sheets and then move them around so that each word/phrase is placed alongside the edge containing its partner (from a different triangle). Each word has just one other one that matches it (according to information found in the book). Once all the pairs are correctly aligned a new, much bigger, shape will start to appear.



Inky Tarsia Puzzle. Sheet 3 of 3.

In groups, cut out the triangles from all three sheets and then move them around so that each word/phrase is placed alongside the edge containing its partner (from a different triangle). Each word has just one other one that matches it (according to information found in the book). Once all the pairs are correctly aligned a new, much bigger, shape will start to appear.

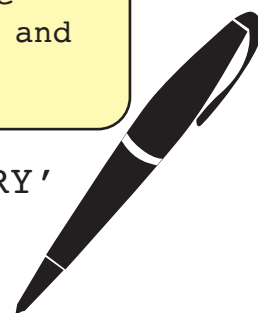


## Blinkton School Characters Word Search

R	P	T	W	H	A	Z	E	L	M	G	W	T	S	P
E	X	W	A	I	G	P	O	M	D	E	A	C	G	P
N	J	G	H	V	L	E	A	I	D	Q	W	E	T	D
R	O	K	S	L	N	F	H	I	K	C	D	D	Q	S
A	P	T	E	I	P	I	R	O	E	B	U	C	K	T
G	Y	R	R	E	B	R	F	E	D	F	B	R	R	E
W	N	C	O	A	E	J	G	F	D	U	N	Y	V	V
L	K	C	F	M	B	G	O	C	U	Y	K	A	V	E
T	H	G	I	R	W	T	R	A	C	M	R	E	W	N
S	R	E	T	E	P	E	K	N	O	L	C	I	S	S
D	F	V	U	H	L	K	F	D	E	Z	G	M	T	A
U	K	M	H	L	V	V	N	Y	M	G	R	I	H	N
N	W	L	I	X	B	K	Y	R	Y	V	U	D	A	N
A	Z	K	F	Y	W	K	O	A	R	P	H	Q	D	G
M	U	U	K	B	H	X	H	C	R	I	K	B	X	S

Work out the full character names, and then find them in the letter grid above. Answers are written forwards, backwards and diagonally!

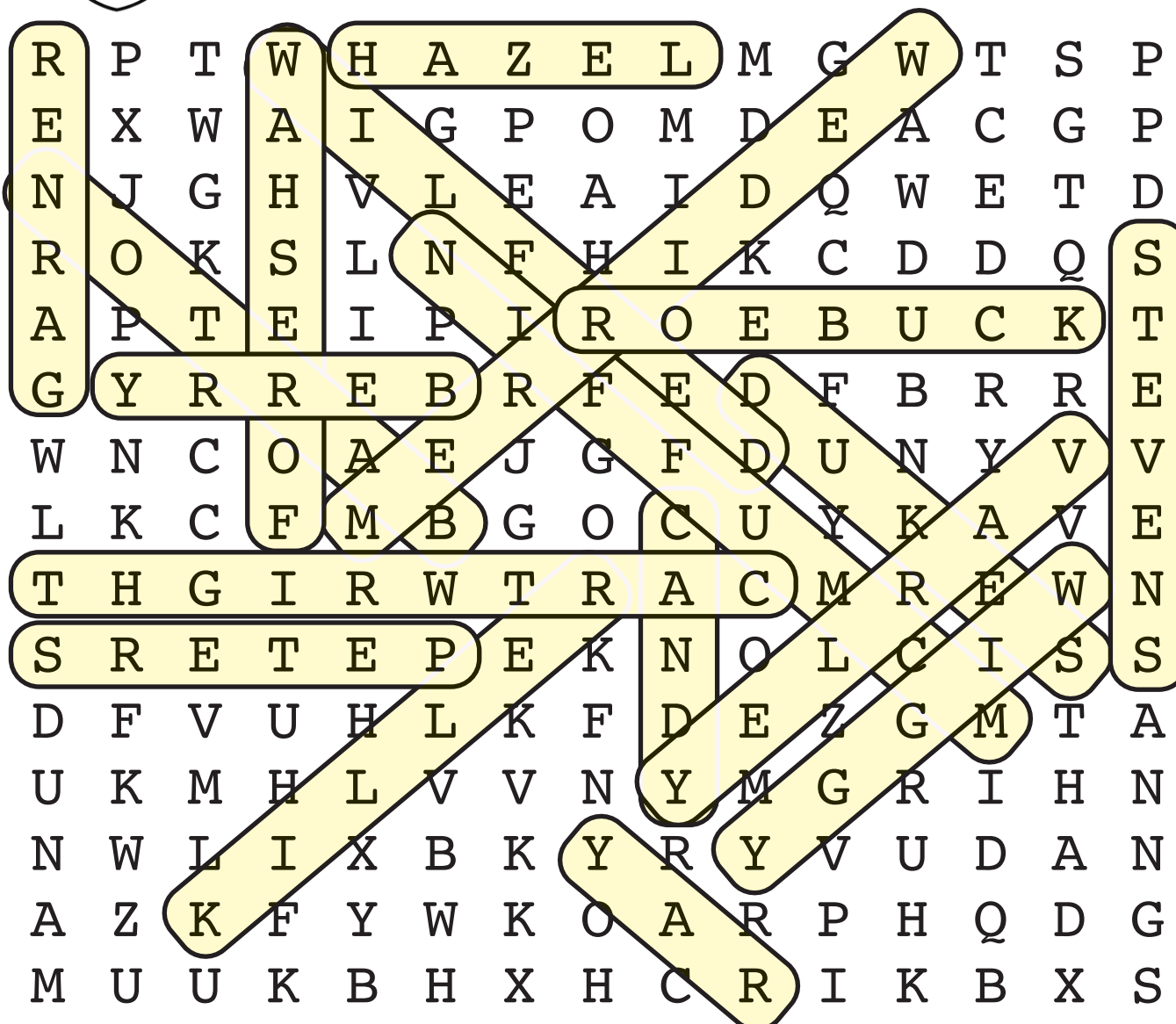
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. INKY .....</li> <li>2. ROSS AND ROSE .....</li> <li>3. MISS MARJORIE '.....'<br/>SPILLER</li> <li>4. MR MAXWELL '.....'<br/>STANLEY</li> <li>5. ERIC AND ALICE .....</li> <li>6. WILLIAM 'SPUD' .....</li> <li>7. .... SUGARCANE</li> <li>8. CRISPIN .....</li> <li>9. MR ..... WHITKIRK</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. MR PEREGRINE 'PERRY'<br/>.....</li> <li>11. MR ..... DAY</li> <li>12. MISS TRUDY .....</li> <li>13. FRED .....</li> <li>14. OLD .....</li> <li>15. LIONEL .....</li> <li>16. MISS GINNY .....</li> <li>17. MR 'POLO MINT' .....</li> <li>18. KRISTY GEE AND BRIDIE<br/>.....</li> </ol> |
|---|--|





## Blinkton School Characters

### Word Search (Answers)



1. INKY **STEVENS**
2. ROSS AND ROSE **BERRY**
3. MISS MARJORIE '**KILLER**'  
SPILLER
4. MR MAXWELL '**WIGGY**'  
STANLEY
5. ERIC AND ALICE **GARNER**
6. WILLIAM 'SPUD' **BARTON**
7. **CANDY** SUGARCANE
8. CRISPIN **MERRIDEW**
9. MR **WILFRED** WHITKIRK
10. MR PEREGRINE 'PERRY'  
**DUKES**
11. MR **RAY** DAY
12. MISS TRUDY **PETERS**
13. FRED **VARLEY**
14. OLD **HAZEL**
15. LIONEL **ROEBUCK**
16. MISS GINNY **CARTWRIGHT**
17. MR 'POLO MINT' **FORESHAW**
18. KRISTY GEE AND BRIDIE  
**MCMUFFIN**



## **Classroom Activity based on Chapter TWENTY-ONE**

1. Discuss as a class all the different types of punctuation marks that there are, and, individually, acknowledge what they add to a piece of writing.
2. Passing from one class member to the next, read out the following passage changing over to the next reader every time a punctuation mark is reached.

*'Inky heard the fury in Arley's movements, as he hurriedly set the shotgun against the disintegrating pipework and leapt down the steps into the Boiler Room, where he started to paw among the steam on the floor. Panicked, desperate and frightened, his fingertips finally alighted on the discarded keys. He quickly scooped them up and clicked them around its stainless-steel ring, several at a time, fingers trembling. Finally, purple with rage, he sat back on his haunches, threw his head back, and yelled into the roar of the steam: "STEEVENSSS!" Arley hurled the keys to the ground and booted them away in frustration, then waded through pools of oily water to the far side of the room. Frantic, he reached up and grabbed hold of the lever and yanked it downwards. In the same movement, he stooped to reopen the circular valves. "AARRGGGHHH!" he shrieked, as hot metal dials stung the palms of his hands.'*

Discuss how reading the section in this way adds to an overall understanding of the atmosphere/emotion within it. Identify all the different types of punctuation marks used and analyse how their repeated use enhances the general pace, impact and atmosphere.

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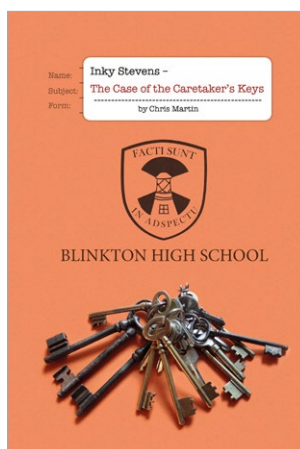
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For more information regarding the tasks or the levels of differentiation please email:  
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For more information regarding Inky and his future escapades (and sign up to Inky's newsletter?) please visit:

[www.chrismartinwriter.com](http://www.chrismartinwriter.com)

Facebook: Inky Stevens the Great School Detective

