

3. BUILDING THE BRIDGE BETWEEN READING AND WRITING

Now it is your turn to be an author, just like Joseph Delaney. You are going to write one non-fiction paragraph where you describe an imaginary creature. But before you do this, you need to decide what the rules are for creating an effective paragraph. What have you learned from reading and discussing the Wormes extract with your partner? For example, we know that there are more noun phrases used in this extract. This is because these add detail. Therefore you should also use noun phrases in your paragraph. Agree on some other ideas and make sure you use these in your writing. You can then read each other's work to check!



4. INFLUENCES

Joseph Delaney says that:

'Imagination, real experiences, dreams, folktales, coincidences, locations and editors are all things which help to shape books – my books in particular. For example, I was an apprentice and for years carried a tradesman's bag of tools, but as I followed the tradesman around the factory, we weren't dealing with ghosts and boggarts, we were repairing machinery!'

When you are writing, what influences you? Where do you get your ideas from?

As you are reading *THE SPOOK'S APPRENTICE*, think about which bits of the story come from Delaney's imagination and which bits could have come from real experiences. Or maybe they are a mixture of the two. Reread the last four paragraphs of Chapter 1, from 'MAM HAD SAID WE WERE LIKE EACH OTHER' to the end. Is this a real or imagined experience for Delaney? Or is it a mixture of the two?

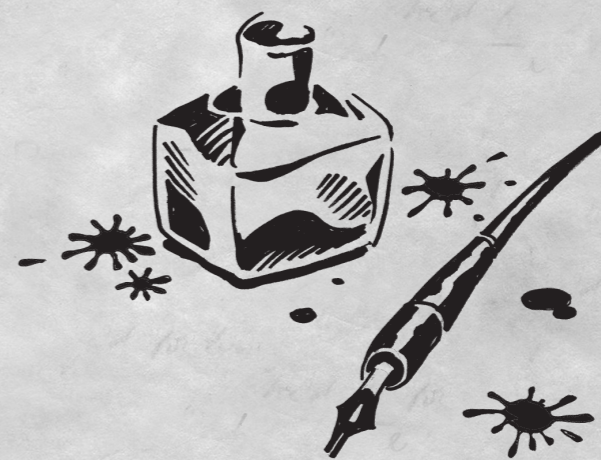


Written by Helen Bulbeck, Secondary English Consultant, Wordroom
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THE WARDSTONE CHRONICLES

PUPIL'S NOTES

THE SPOOK'S APPRENTICE is the first novel in *The Wardstone Chronicles* series. It was written by Joseph Delaney, who bases his ideas on real experiences, dreams and his imagination, amongst other things. The activities here are based on the first chapter of *THE SPOOK'S APPRENTICE*, called 'A Seventh Son'. These activities will be the starting point for exploring how this story reflects some of the things that have influenced the author. We'll do this by seeing how the chapter is structured, how it is written and what we learn about the characters.



PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Here are some key words and phrases from the first chapter. Link as many of these as you can (use different highlighters and lines) so that you create a mind map. What do you think this story will be about? Try to think of the main ideas behind what you have just read.

The light was already beginning to fail	a seventh son	scary job	wicked beasties		
ghouls	thirteen	long black cloak	chiselled from stone	rope	
boggarts	hood	grim expression	grey	left handed	first light
priest	hangman	black	a long staff	I saw things in the dark	candle
tallow	hint of sadness	I was finished with farming	bad luck		
old county superstition	embers of the fire	pale skin	you have the gift	harm	
you can't come home	I could hardly breathe	tears	I'll be lonely	cowardice	
drove a deep pain	free from fear	enemy	strangling and choking		

READING STRATEGIES

When we read fiction, we read it very differently from non-fiction. Have a look at the two lists below. Which of these strategies have you used in the first activity?

When we read non-fiction texts, we:

skim-read for an overview
scan for particular information
select where we want to enter a text
interpret diagrams, pictures, presentation techniques
ignore some information
may not read everything in order
identify how ideas are developed or sequenced
identify the purpose of a text
recognize bias and objectivity.

When we read fiction texts, we:

see images
hear a voice
predict what will happen
speculate
ask questions
pass comments
feel
empathize
rationalize what is happening
reread
reinterpret
interpret patterns
relate to our own experience
pass judgements
relate to previous reading experience
establish a relationship with the narrator.

ACTIVITY

Here are two extracts; both are fiction but one is more 'functional' than the other. In pairs discuss what is meant by 'functional'. One is taken from Chapter 1 and one is an extract taken from Tom Ward's notebook, where he keeps notes about the things he has learned.

As you read the extracts, make a note of which reading strategies you use. Then decide which extract is more 'functional'. How do you know? Bullet-point your ideas.

EXTRACT 1

Even Jack never liked working close to that boundary fence, and the dogs wouldn't go more than a few feet into the wood. As for me, because I can sense things that others can't, I couldn't even work in the north pasture. You see, from there I could hear them. I could hear the ropes creaking and the branches groaning under their weight. I could hear the dead, strangling and choking on the other side of the hill.

EXTRACT 2

WORMES* – dangerous creatures that range in size from that of a small dog to something as big as a shire horse. Some have legs. Most have tails. All are vicious and bad-tempered. They have long jaws with a mouth full of fangs that can bite off a head or an arm in the twinkling of an eye. They sometimes kill by squeezing a victim to death.

*The word 'worme' is spelled with an 'e' to mark it out as different from the common earth worm.

Now read Chapter 1. Were your predictions about the story correct?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

1. LOOKING AT THE CHAPTER AS A WHOLE

The first chapter in any story is very important. Think about all the things 'A Seventh Son' has to do. It has to:

establish the setting
get the plot rolling
introduce the characters
hook the reader
establish a voice (the narrator)
get us thinking about the themes and ideas which are to be explored in the novel.

Select one of these bullet points and discuss with a partner how the author achieves it. Make sure you find evidence from the chapter to support your ideas. Now share your ideas with another pair.

2. LOOKING AT NARRATIVE STYLE

One of the ways in which we can tell if writing is functional or fiction is through sentence structure. Reread the two extracts you have already studied. Then discuss the following with your partner:

- Count how many sentences there are in each extract. Which extract has more sentences? Why might this be?
- What can you tell each other about the different types of sentences used? Think about simple, compound and complex sentences. For example, are there more simple sentences in one of the extracts? If so, why might this be?
- Highlight the number of noun phrases in the two extracts. What does this tell you about the way in which noun phrases are used?
- Can you hear a voice in one of the extracts? Underline the moment when you, the reader, are spoken to. What impact does this have on you?
- Can you find any examples of repetition? Highlight them. Why is this used? What is the effect?
- Find the footnote. What does this do? Why do you think the author has included this?

