

KS3

DETECTIVE FICTION



Name: _____

Teacher: _____

DETECTIVE FICTION

In Victorian times, populations in urban centres rose dramatically as the Industrial Revolution reached a climax, especially in factory and manufacturing industries – creating an expanding working class. The influx of workers from the rural areas of Britain put a large strain on the infrastructure in cities such as London and Manchester, and working class neighbourhoods became overcrowded and unsanitary. This rise in population, and failing crops in rural areas, contributed to a rise in poverty and crime.

In London at this time, there was no established police force. Bow Street Runners could be hired to investigate crimes; however, their prices were very high and so only used by the upper classes. In response to the rise in crime, and rising panic among the general public, the Metropolitan Police Force were established. Unlike the police force we know today, these officers were prone to corruption. Their salary was paid on commission and based on the number of cases they solved. Therefore, police officers were unlikely to spend many hours on a case, and more likely to jump to conclusions, or dismiss petty crimes for those that came with a reward.

Frustrations over the inefficacy of the police fuelled the popularity of fictional detectives – such as Sherlock Holmes - who distanced themselves from the official police force and sought justice before anything else.

Features of a Detective Novel:




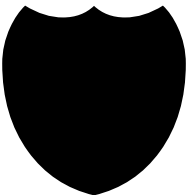

- Concerned primarily with finding out the truth
- Narrative uses reverse chronology – starts after crime has been committed and traces events back to the lead up to the crime
- A crime is committed or reported early in the narrative – this may be the first of multiple to be uncovered.
- There are a variety of suspects with different motives
- A central character formally or informally acts as a detective.
- The detective collects evidence about the crime and its victim
- The detective interviews suspects and witnesses
- The detective solves the mystery and uncovers the real criminal
- The villain explains the full narrative, confirming the detective's solution and explaining their motive
- The criminal is arrested or punished
- Red herring = a clue or piece of information that is misleading or distracting, because it doesn't lead to the truth
- Bumbling local police force/constabulary
- A reconstruction of the crime
- The 'least likely' suspect
- A final twist in the plot
- Reasoning and logical explanations for what could be seen as supernatural elements.
- A final chase or trap set to catch out the villain
- Villain is usually known to the victim (crime is an 'inside job')
- Night and dark settings – sometimes remote (i.e. Manor houses), sometimes in growing urban centres (i.e. London)

SYMBOLS KEY:

 = Complete in your exercise book. Remember to answer questions using full sentences.

 WHAT|HOW|WHY = (PETAL) paragraph that answers the given question.

Characters

<p>The Detective</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> They are often brilliant in one way or another – very intelligent or observant or with an excellent memory. <input type="checkbox"/> They are often an outsider – someone who does not always fit in or have a wide social circle. <input type="checkbox"/> They often feel that justice, fairness, and integrity are important rules to live by and strive for (even if this involves great personal cost). <input type="checkbox"/> Often have something unusual or eccentric about them – a mannerism for example. <input type="checkbox"/> They often break the rules and don't always do as they should. <input type="checkbox"/> They can be obsessive about the cases they are trying to solve <input type="checkbox"/> They do not trust many people and naturally question what is going on around them.
<p>The Assistant</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally acts as the narrator of the story. <input type="checkbox"/> They are usually very impressed by the detective's superior abilities and will frequently remind the reader of them (and their admiration) <input type="checkbox"/> A companion for the detective to act as a layman between the reader and the detective, they will often ask the detective a lot of questions to clarify information and decipher their reasoning. <input type="checkbox"/> Often they lack the same desire for justice as the detective, and are much more concerned with following laws and social norms. <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes they are an expert in a field that proves useful for the detective of the current investigation – some detectives keep the same assistant (i.e. Sherlock Holmes has Dr Watson), other Detectives will change assistant in each story or setting. <input type="checkbox"/> In modern Detective Fiction, the assistant is often a police officer (or connected to law-enforcement/ the legal profession in some way)
<p>The Client</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Someone who needs assistance in gaining justice <input type="checkbox"/> Often the client comes to the detective after having been to and been turned away by the police, or arrive following a recommendation from a past client <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally someone who is vulnerable and portrayed as innocent, such as a young woman -- Often a Damsel in Distress – but could equally be a child, orphan, widow or pauper <input type="checkbox"/> Typically introduced with an air of mystery and desperation which is reassured by the Detective and/or the assistant <input type="checkbox"/> In modern detective fiction, this character is more often the victim.
<p>The Police force</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionally, the police force is displayed as incompetent and, at times, comical. They are unable to solve the mystery without the assistance of the Detective. <input type="checkbox"/> The police are often reluctant to accept the Detective's help, and can be antagonistic towards them. <input type="checkbox"/> At the end of the story, the police liaison often acknowledges the Detective's skill in solving the case and bringing about justice. <input type="checkbox"/> The police are often limited in their ability to gain justice by time or their own procedures – elements the Detective is not bound by.
<p>The Villain</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Villain commits the crime being investigated by the detective; often this is a much larger crime than the one initially investigated that is uncovered in the Detective's quest for justice. <input type="checkbox"/> The Villain is sometimes relatable, yet morally ambiguous. <input type="checkbox"/> The story will end with a confession by the villain which gives a full statement of the case – and will confirm the Detective's hypothesis. <input type="checkbox"/> In early DF, motives of the villain often fall into the categories of the seven deadly sins to act as a moral lesson for the reader. <input type="checkbox"/> The Villain often embodies the fears of contemporary society and in classic DF relies on stereotypes and early forensic 'methods' such as atavism.

This extract comes from the detective novel 'Cuckoo's Calling' by Robert Galbraith (J.K. Rowling), this is the opening where the crime that is investigated is described: the death of a young celebrity, apparently of suicide.

1 The buzz in the street was like the humming of flies. Photographers stood massed behind barriers
2 patrolled by police, their long-snouted cameras poised, their breath rising like steam. Snow fell
3 steadily on to hats and shoulders; gloved fingers wiped lenses clear. From time to time there came
4 outbreaks of desultory clicking, as the watchers filled the waiting time by snapping the white
5 canvas tent in the middle of the road, the entrance to the tall red-brick apartment block behind it,
6 and the balcony on the top floor from which the body had fallen.

7 Behind the tightly packed paparazzi stood white vans with enormous satellite dishes on the roofs,
8 and journalists talking, some in foreign languages, while soundmen in headphones hovered.
9 Between recordings, the reporters stamped their feet and warmed their hands on hot beakers of
10 coffee from the teeming café a few streets away. To fill the time, the woolly-hatted cameramen
11 filmed the backs of the photographers, the balcony, the tent concealing the body, then
12 repositioned themselves for wide shots that encompassed the chaos that had exploded inside the
13 sedate and snowy Mayfair street, with its lines of glossy black doors framed by white stone
14 porticos and flanked by topiary shrubs. The entrance to number 18 was bounded with tape. Police
15 officials, some of them white-clothed forensic experts, could be glimpsed in the hallway beyond.

16 The television stations had already had the news for several hours. Members of the public were
17 crowding at either end of the road, held at bay by more police; some had come, on purpose, to
18 look, others had paused on their way to work. Many held mobile telephones aloft to take pictures
19 before moving on. One young man, not knowing which was the crucial balcony, photographed
20 each of them in turn, even though the middle one was packed with a row of shrubs, three neat,
21 leafy orbs, which barely left room for a human being.

22 A group of young girls had brought flowers, and were filmed handing them to the police, who as
23 yet had not decided on a place for them, but laid them self-consciously in the back of the police
24 van, aware of camera lenses following their every move.

25 The correspondents sent by twenty-four-hour news channels kept up a steady stream of comment
26 and speculation around the few sensational facts they knew.

27 "...no sign yet that they are moving the body, which has led some to speculate..."

28 "...no word on whether she was alone when she fell..."

29 "...teams have entered the building and will be conducting a thorough search."

30 A chilly light filled the interior of the tent. Two men were crouching beside the body, ready to move
31 it, at last, into a body bag. Her head had bled a little into the snow. The face was crushed and
32 swollen, one eye reduced to a pucker, the other showing as a sliver of dull white between
33 distended lids. When the sequined top she wore glittered in slight changes of light, it gave a
34 disquieting impression of movement, as though she breathed again, or was tensing muscles,
35 ready to rise. The snow fell with soft fingertip plunks on the canvas overhead.

Paparazzi = photographers that follow celebrities around taking pictures that they can sell to media outlets for a lot of money; often these pictures are unflattering or of private moments.

Sedate = calm, serious

Orbs = round spheres

Decide if the following statements are True or False	T	F	#
The weather is bright and warm.			
The celebrity is well-known across the world.			
The body was found in her Mayfair apartment			
Her fans are mostly old women			
The news channels make up details when they don't have enough facts			
The celebrity isn't really dead.			

In the # column, write the line number that gives the information for each statement.

Detective Fiction often spends a lot of time describing the setting and giving facts to help the reader play along to solve the crime. Have a look at this extract as a whole and summarise the main idea or description in each paragraph in a single word (or less than a sentence).

Lines	Idea/description
1-6	Photographers
7-10a	
10b-15	
16-21	
22-24	
25-29	
30-35	

📖 It takes until the final paragraph of the extract to introduce the victim, what is Gilbraith trying to tell us about the victim in the paragraphs leading up to their description?

📖 Often detective fiction stories will hide details that will return to the story later. Which instance(s) in this extract do you think will reappear?

Adjectives add important information to descriptions. Sometimes, adjectives are placed in front of nouns. These are called **modifying adjectives**; for example, *the woolly-hatted cameramen (10); the crucial balcony (19); a steady stream (25).*

📖 With a highlighter, find all of the pre-modifying adjectives in this extract, then select 5 that you find most descriptive and annotate them in your book.

📖 **Copy the opening sentence into your book and complete the tasks below:**

The buzz in the street was like the humming of flies.

- What sense does this sentence engage with?
 - Underline** the word(s) that show this.
 - What figurative language technique is being used in these words?
- 'Buzz' and 'hum' are also onomatopoeic descriptors for bees, why do you think Gilbraith wants us to think of flies instead?
- Read the rest of the paragraph. This noise is connected with the photographers (and later on, cameramen, journalists and the gathering public). How does Gilbraith want us to feel about the photographers and media outlets?
 - What other nouns and descriptors does Gilbraith use to reference the photographers? What do they suggest about the photographers?
 - What might this portrayal of the photographers suggest about their role in the celebrity's life?

📖 **WHAT|HOW|WHY** 📖

How does Gilbraith portray the photographers at the scene of the young celebrity's death?

The weather is snowy and cold. How does Gilbraith reinforce this throughout the extract?
Collate all of the details that reflect the weather.

SLOW WRITING: Describe the school cafeteria at lunch.

1. The buzz in the street was like the humming of flies.
2. Photographers stood massed behind barriers patrolled by police, their long-snouted cameras poised, their breath rising like steam.
3. Snow fell steadily on to hats and shoulders; gloved fingers wiped lenses clear.
4. From time to time there came outbreaks of desultory clicking, as the watchers filled the waiting time by snapping the white canvas tent in the middle of the road, the entrance to the tall red-brick apartment block behind it, and the balcony on the top floor from which the body had fallen.

Line 1: Must use a simile and onomatopoeia.

Line 2: Noun location description, appositive detail, appositive detail.

Line 3: Setting/weather interacting with noun; minor clause with action in reaction to setting.

Line 4: temporal adverb, as noun action [-ing verb], list of granular details.



Design and draw a crime scene for your detective story.

Try to slip in some clues to be discovered by your detective.



Meet the Detective - Sherlock Holmes

This extract comes from the detective novella 'The Sign of Four' by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. This is from the opening of Conan Doyle's second Sherlock Holmes story, and Sherlock Holmes is complaining about not having a case (yet). It is narrated by Dr John Watson – Sherlock Holmes' assistant - who, in this extract, is worried about Sherlock taking drugs when he does not have a case to work on.

1 "Why should you, for a mere passing pleasure, risk the loss of those
2 great powers with which you have been endowed? Remember that I
3 speak not only as one comrade to another, but as a medical man to
4 one for whose constitution he is to some extent answerable."

5 He did not seem offended. On the contrary, he put his finger-
6 tips together and leaned his elbows on the arms of his chair, like one
7 who has a relish for conversation.

8 "My mind," he said, "rebels at stagnation. Give me problems,
9 give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram or the most
10 intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can
11 dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of
12 existence. I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen
13 my own particular profession, - or rather created it, for I am the only
14 one in the world."

15 "The only unofficial detective?" I said, raising my eyebrows.

16 "The only unofficial consulting detective," he answered. "I am
17 the last and highest court of appeal in detection."

constitution – health, both physical and psychological

relish – liking or enjoyment

stagnation – the state of having stopped flowing; a foulness or staleness; the quality of feeling sluggish

abstruse – hard to understand

cryptogram – a puzzle, often a written message in code or cypher.

Answer these questions in your exercise book:

1. How would you describe Sherlock Holmes in this extract?
 - a. How does Holmes behave?
 - b. How does Holmes talk?
 - c. What evidence did you use from the extract to support this opinion?
2. How does Watson feel about his friend?
 - a. What evidence did you use from the extract to support this opinion?
3. How might Conan Doyle want us to feel about Sherlock Holmes as a detective?

Complete these sentences:

- Sherlock Holmes is presented as highly intelligent **because**
- Sherlock Holmes is presented as highly intelligent, **but**
- Sherlock Holmes is presented as highly intelligent **so**

Using the boxes below annotate the extract.

(1) Conan Doyle shows Holmes making a gesture of superiority, making a steeple of his fingers.

(2) The short sentence emphasises Holmes' unemotional response to Watson's challenge about his drug habit.

(3) Conan Doyle separates the first part of Holmes' sentence and draws the reader's attention to the importance of Holmes' superior mind.

(4) The repetition of 'I am' shows Holmes' self-belief and arrogance. The superlatives 'last' and 'highest' imply that he is self-assured and utterly convinced of his own abilities.

(5) His egotism is emphasised by this confident statement.

(6) There is some arrogance in Holmes' claim that he has created his own profession

(7) The repetition of 'Give me' emphasises Holmes' desire for challenging work

(8) Watson's response suggests some surprise or doubt at Holmes' claim.

📖 WHAT|HOW|WHY 📖

How does Conan Doyle present the character of Sherlock Holmes in this extract?

Student A

Holmes is presented as being confident in this extract which is from when we first meet him. He tells Watson that he is the best detective in the world. He says that he likes having problems to solve which shows us that he is clever and has an agile mind. He talks about creating a job for himself which is impressive to Watson. The words 'last' and 'highest' at the end show that he is arrogant about his abilities as a private detective.



Student B

In this extract from the opening chapter, Holmes is presented as being confident in his abilities as a 'private consulting detective'. Conan Doyle uses dialogue to show Holmes' arrogant character. He tells Watson that his mind 'rebels at stagnation' implying that he believes himself to be unusual in his inability to remain unchallenged. He goes on to a repeated list of imperatives 'Give me...', which emphasise how important challenge and stimulus are to him. The use of superlatives in the final line show how highly Holmes thinks of himself. The words 'last' and 'highest' at the end show that he is egotistical about his abilities as a private detective. This is designed to impress Watson, and has the same effect on the reader. This arrogance is shown to be justified by the way Holmes easily solves the mystery later in the novel.



Meet the Assistant

This extract comes from Chapter 3 of 'The ABC Murders' by Agatha Christie. In this extract the detective figure, Hercule Poirot, discusses a new case with the narrator, Mr Arthur Hastings. Poirot has just received a mysterious letter from A.B.C., but the police cannot see any relevancy in the letter, which warns of an incident in Andover on the 21st of the month.

1 Poirot looked at me sadly.

2 'You have made there a very pretty resume of nearly all the detective stories
3 that have ever been written.'

4 'Well,' I said. 'What would you order?'

5 Poirot closed his eyes and leaned back in his chair. His voice came purringly
6 from between his lips.

7 'A very simple crime. A crime with no complications. A crime of quiet domestic
8 life... very unimpassioned – very intime.'

9 'How can a crime be intime?'

10 'Supposing,' murmured Poirot, 'that four people sit down to play bridge and
11 one, the odd man out, sits in a chair by the fire. At the end of the evening the man
12 by the fire is found dead. One of the four, while he is dummy, has gone over and
13 killed him, and intent on the play of the hand, the other three have not noticed. Ah,
14 there would be a crime for you! Which of the four was it?'

15 'Well,' I said. 'I can't see any excitement in that!'

16 Poirot threw me a glance of reproof.

17 'No, because there are no curiously twisted daggers, no blackmail, no emerald
18 that is the stolen eye of a god, no untraceable Eastern poisons. You have the
19 melodramatic soul, Hastings. You would like, not one murder, but a series of
20 murders.'

21 'I admit,' I said, 'that a second murder in a book often cheers things up. If the
22 murder happens in the first chapter and you have to follow up everybody's alibi until
23 the last page but one – well, it does get a bit tedious.'

24 The telephone rang and Poirot rose to answer.

25 'Allo,' he said. 'Allo. Yes, it is Hercule Poirot Speaking.' He listened for a minute
26 of two then I saw his face change.

27 His own side of the conversation was short and disjointed. 'Mais oui...'

28 'Yes, of course...'

29 'But yes, we will come...'

30 'Naturally...'

31 'It may be as you say...'

32 'Yes, I will bring it. A tout à l'heure then.' He replaced the receiver and came
33 across the room to me.

34 'That was Japp speaking, Hastings.'

35 'Yes?'

36 'He had just got back to the Yard. There was a message from Andover.'

37 'Andover?' I cried excitedly.

38 Poirot said slowly: 'An old woman of the name of Ascher who keeps a little
39 tobacco and newspaper shop has been found murdered.' I think I felt ever so
40 slightly damped. My interest, quickened by the sound of Andover, suffered a faint
41 check. I had expected something fantastic – out of the way! The murder of an old
42 woman who kept a little tobacco shop seemed, somehow, sordid and uninteresting.

43 Poirot continued in the same grave voice: 'The Andover police believe they can
44 put their hand on the man who did it -' I felt a second throb of disappointment. 'It
45 seems the woman was on bad terms with her husband. He drinks and is by way of
46 being rather a nasty customer. He's threatened to take her life more than once.

47 'Nevertheless,' continued Poirot, 'in view of what has happened, the police
48 there would like to have another look at the anonymous letter I received. I have
49 said that you and I will go down to Andover at once.'

50 My spirits revived a little. After all, sordid as this crime seems to be, it was a
51 crime, and it was a long time since I had had any association with crime and
52 criminals. I hardly listened to the next words Poirot had said. But they were to come
53 back to me with significance later.

54 'This is the beginning,' said Hercule Poirot.

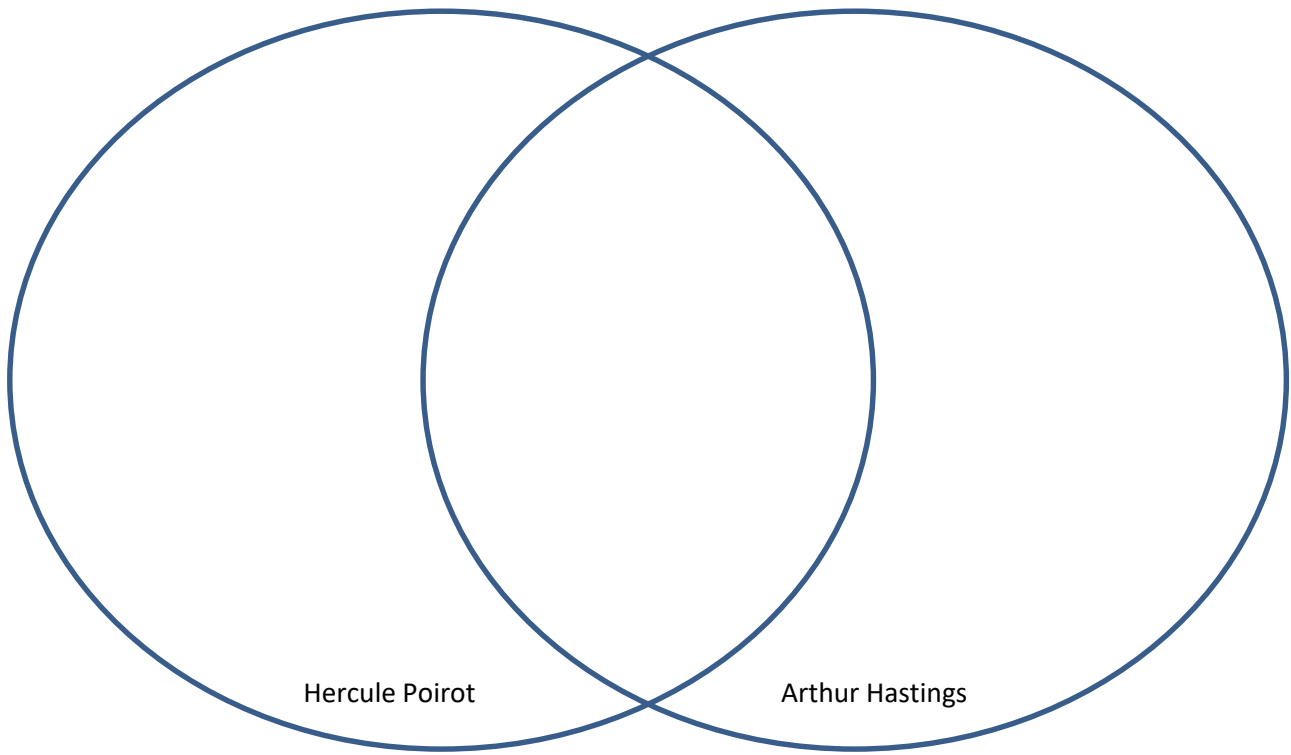
Complete the following questions in your book.

- 📖 What adjectives or phrases might you use to describe Hastings's personality?
- 📖 How does Poirot view Hastings?
- 📖 How does Hastings view Poirot?
- 📖 Does Hastings fit any of the descriptors given in the character descriptors on page 3?

Sometimes when we are reading a text, we have to look beneath the surface of what is said to understand the full extent of events or characters. This is called drawing **inferences** based on the evidence we are given by the writer. Have a look at the lines given, and suggest what we can infer from them.

Line(s)	Inferences
2,3	
17-20	
41,42	
50,51	

After drawing inferences about Hastings, have another look at your responses to the questions above.



How are Poirot and Hastings presented in this extract? Consider their characterisation and how they respond to crimes being committed.

Dialogue is a key part of any detective story. In order for our dialogue to be most effective, we must ensure to use the proper punctuation.

Read the extract below and, using 3 colours, highlight the dialogue for:

- **Inspector Chopra,**
- **the woman,**
- **Rangwalla.**

What is the matter, madam? asked Chopra, severely. Why don't you ask *him*? She pointed at Rangwalla, who swivelled his eyes away from the woman's accusing finger and towards Chopra. Look! howled the woman to her crowd of followers. He hasn't even *told* the inspector sahib! If I came here in a big white Mercedes they would be jumping around me like pye-dogs! But for a poor woman and her poor son, there is no justice! Enough! barked Chopra. He was pleased to see that everyone, even the woman, fell silent. Rangwalla, explain to me what is going on. What will he explain? exploded the woman. / will explain! My son, my precious boy has been killed! His body has been lying in your police station since last night. Until now, not even one officer has come to my house to take a report. Whole night I have waited crying for my dead son. Rangwalla, is this true? It is true that we have a body, sir. Where is it? In the back, sir. Madam, I must ask you to wait here. Rangwalla come with me.

Vaseem Khan, The unexpected inheritance of Inspector Chopra

Punctuating dialogue

- Double (“) or single (‘) doesn’t matter – so long as all spoken words go inside!

“Enough!” barked Chopra. He was pleased to see that everyone, even the woman, fell silent.

“Rangwella, explain to me what is going on.”

- The details of who said the words (and how), can go at the start, middle or end of a sentence. Be sure to mark off these details with commas (if it does not need an ! or ?).
- A new speaker should start on a new line. If the participants in the conversation are already established, you don’t always have to rename the speaker – the reader can infer it from the context.

“Enough!” barked Chopra. He was pleased to see that everyone, even the woman, fell silent.

“Rangwella, explain to me what is going on.”

“What will he explain?” exploded the woman. “ / will explain!...”

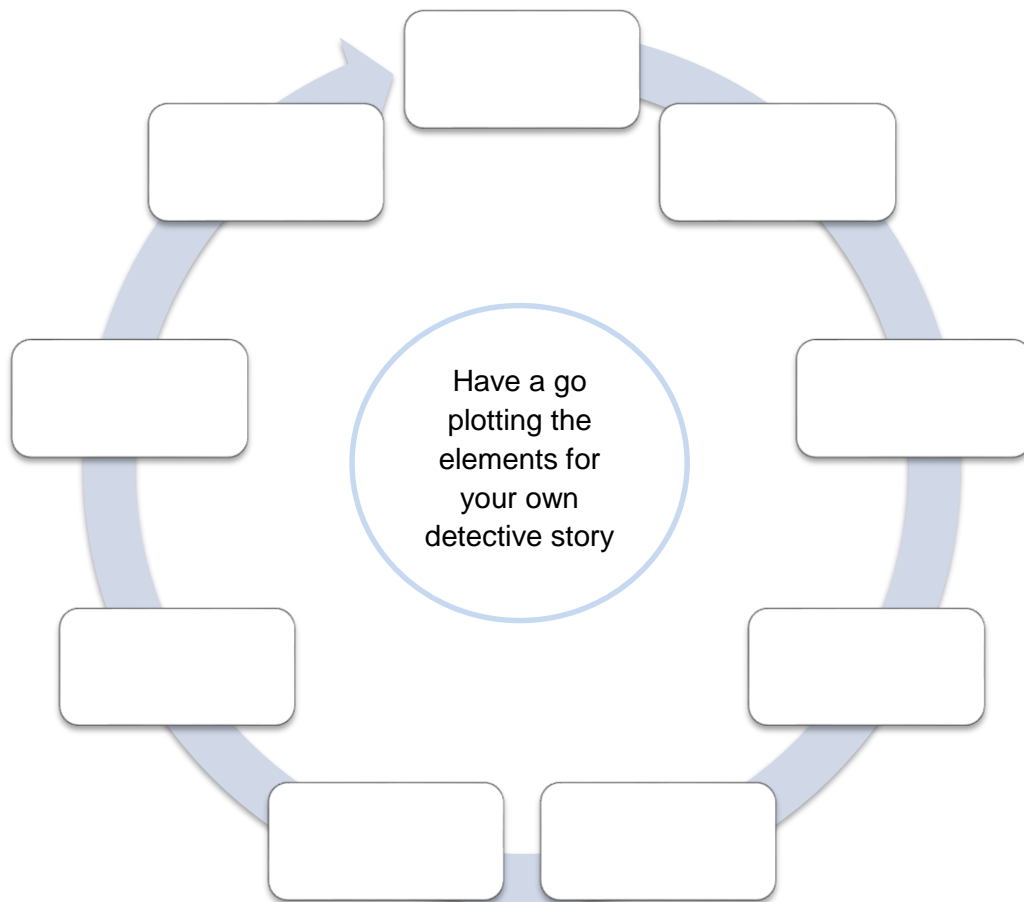
- Finally, make sure you have put the appropriate punctuation at the end of each complete sentence, and that it is **inside** the speech marks.

“What will he explain?” exploded the woman.

Look again at the extract, correct the punctuation.

Indicate a new line with //

What is the matter, madam? asked Chopra, severely. Why don’t you ask *him*? She pointed at Rangwalla, who swivelled his eyes away from the woman’s accusing finger and towards Chopra. Look! howled the woman to her crowd of followers. He hasn’t even *told* the inspector sahib! If I came here in a big white Mercedes they would be jumping around me like pye-dogs! But for a poor woman and her poor son, there is no justice! Enough! barked Chopra. He was pleased to see that everyone, even the woman, fell silent. Rangwella, explain to me what is going on. What will he explain? exploded the woman. / will explain! My son, my precious boy has been killed! His body has been lying in your police station since last night. Until now, not even one officer has come to my house to take a report. Whole night I have waited crying for my dead son. Rangwalla, is this true? It is true that we have a body, sir. Where is it? In the back, sir. Madam, I must ask you to wait here. Rangwalla come with me.



This is the opening of Agatha Christie's novel: 'A Murder is Announced'. Christie has chosen to open with a description of the crime.

1 'It's beginning,' cried Mrs Hamon in an ecstasy. Dora Bunner's voice cried out
2 plaintively, 'oh, I don't like it!' Other voices said, 'how terribly, terribly frightening!' 'It
3 gives me the creeps.' Archie, where are you?' 'What do I have to do?' 'Oh dear – did
4 I step on your foot? I'm sorry.'

5 Then there was a crash, the door swung open. A powerful flashlight played
6 rapidly around the room. A man's hoarse nasal voice, reminiscent to all of pleasant
7 afternoons at the cinema, directed the company crisply to: 'Stick 'em up!' 'Stick 'em
8 up, I tell you!' the voice barked. Delightedly, hands were raised willingly above
9 heads. 'Isn't it wonderful?' breathed a female voice. 'I'm so thrilled'. And then,
10 unexpectedly, a revolver spoke, it was twice. The ping of two bullets shattered the
11 complacency of the room. Suddenly the game was no longer a game.

12 Someone screamed... The figure in the doorway whirled suddenly round, it
13 seemed to hesitate, a third shot rang out, it crumpled and then it crashed to the
14 ground. The flashlight dropped and went out.

15 There was darkness once again. And gently, with a little Victorian protesting
16 moan, the drawing room door, as was its habit when not properly open, swung gently
17 to and latched with a click.

- 📖 How does Christie use contrast to raise tension in the opening of this story?
- 📖 Find 3 instances of personification. What is its function in presenting the crime?
- 📖 Underline all of the examples of onomatopoeia, how does this help position the reader?
- 📖 Read lines 1-4. These lines break the 'rules' of punctuating dialogue. What is the effect on the reader?

Detective fiction often limits descriptions to allow for the reader to discover clues along with the detective and try solving the case. One way to do this is to use generic nouns rather than precise descriptions, and other is to give incomplete descriptors – often by using darkness and flashes of light.

📖 WRITING 📖

Using the extract as a model, write a paragraph outlining a theft from the social area.

Include: limited perspectives, general nouns and descriptors, short sentences, senses that give glimpses of events rather than whole pictures.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

Sir Arthur CONAN DOYLE

1 On glancing over my notes of the seventy odd cases in which I have during the
2 last eight years studied the methods of my friend Sherlock Holmes, I find many
3 tragic, some comic, a large number merely strange, but none commonplace; for,
4 working as he did rather for the love of his art than for the acquirement of wealth, he
5 refused to associate himself with any investigation which did not tend towards the
6 unusual, and even the fantastic. Of all these varied cases, however, I cannot recall
7 any which presented more singular features than that which was associated with the
8 well-known Surrey family of the Roylotts of Stoke Moran. The events in question
9 occurred in the early days of my association with Holmes, when we were sharing
10 rooms as bachelors in Baker Street. It is possible that I might have placed them upon
11 record before, but a promise of secrecy was made at the time, from which I have only
12 been freed during the last month by the untimely death of the lady to whom the
13 pledge was given. It is perhaps as well that the facts should now come to light, for I
14 have reasons to know that there are widespread rumours as to the death of Dr.
15 Grimesby Roylott which tend to make the matter even more terrible than the truth.

16 It was early in April in the year '83 that I woke one morning to find Sherlock
17 Holmes standing, fully dressed, by the side of my bed. He was a late riser, as a rule,
18 and as the clock on the mantelpiece showed me that it was only a quarter-past seven,
19 I blinked up at him in some surprise, and perhaps just a little resentment, for I was
20 myself regular in my habits.

21 "Very sorry to knock you up¹, Watson," said he, "but it's the common lot this
22 morning. Mrs. Hudson has been knocked up, she retorted upon me, and I on you."

23 "What is it, then – a fire?"

24 "No; a client. It seems that a young lady has arrived in a considerable state of
25 excitement, who insists upon seeing me. She is waiting now in the sitting-room.
26 Now, when young ladies wander about the metropolis at this hour of the morning,
27 and knock sleepy people up out of their beds, I presume that it is something very
28 pressing which they have to communicate. Should it prove to be an interesting case,
29 you would, I am sure, wish to follow it from the outset. I thought, at any rate, that I
30 should call you and give you the chance."

31 "My dear fellow, I would not miss it for anything."

32 I had no keener pleasure than in following Holmes in his professional
33 investigations, and in admiring the rapid deductions, as swift as intuitions, and yet
34 always founded on a logical basis with which he unravelled the problems which
35 were submitted to him. I rapidly threw on my clothes and was ready in a few
36 minutes to accompany my friend down to the sitting-room. A lady dressed in black
37 and heavily veiled, who had been sitting in the window, rose as we entered.

¹ To knock someone up – to wake someone up by knocking on a door or window. A person who was paid to knock someone up was called a knocker-upper.

38 "Good-morning, madam," said Holmes cheerily. "My name is Sherlock Holmes.
39 This is my intimate friend and associate, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak as
40 freely as before myself. Ha! I am glad to see that Mrs. Hudson has had the good
41 sense to light the fire. Pray draw up to it, and I shall order you a cup of hot coffee,
42 for I observe that you are shivering."

43 "It is not cold which makes me shiver," said the woman in a low voice, changing
44 her seat as requested.

45 "What, then?"

46 "It is fear, Mr. Holmes. It is terror." She raised her veil as she spoke, and we could
47 see that she was indeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and grey,
48 with restless frightened eyes, like those of some hunted animal. Her features and
49 figure were those of a woman of thirty, but her hair was shot with premature grey,
50 and her expression was weary and haggard. Sherlock Holmes ran her over with one
51 of his quick, all-comprehensive glances.

52 "You must not fear," said he soothingly, bending forward and patting her
53 forearm. "We shall soon set matters right, I have no doubt. You have come in by
54 train this morning, I see."

55 "You know me, then?"

56 "No, but I observe the second half of a return ticket in the palm of your left glove.
57 You must have started early, and yet you had a good drive in a dog-cart, along
58 heavy roads, before you reached the station."

59 The lady gave a violent start and stared in bewilderment at my companion.

60 "There is no mystery, my dear madam," said he, smiling. "The left arm of your
61 jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The marks are perfectly
62 fresh. There is no vehicle save a dog-cart which throws up mud in that way, and
63 then only when you sit on the left-hand side of the driver."

64 "Whatever your reasons may be, you are perfectly correct," said she. "I started
65 from home before six, reached Leatherhead at twenty past, and came in by the first
66 train to Waterloo. Sir, I can stand this strain no longer; I shall go mad if it continues. I
67 have no one to turn to—none, save only one, who cares for me, and he, poor fellow,
68 can be of little aid. I have heard of you, Mr. Holmes; I have heard of you from Mrs.
69 Farintosh, whom you helped in the hour of her sore need. It was from her that I had
70 your address. Oh, sir, do you not think that you could help me, too, and at least
71 throw a little light through the dense darkness which surrounds me? At present it is
72 out of my power to reward you for your services, but in a month or six weeks I shall
73 be married, with the control of my own income, and then at least you shall not find
74 me ungrateful."

75 Holmes turned to his desk and, unlocking it, drew out a small case-book, which he
76 consulted.

77 "Farintosh," said he. "Ah yes, I recall the case; it was concerned with an opal tiara.
78 I think it was before your time, Watson. I can only say, madam, that I shall be happy
79 to devote the saareme care to your case as I did to that of your friend. As to reward,
80 my profession is its own reward; but you are at liberty to defray whatever expenses I

81 may be put to, at the time which suits you best. And now I beg that you will lay
82 before us everything that may help us in forming an opinion upon the matter.”

83 “Alas!” replied our visitor, “the very horror of my situation lies in the fact that my
84 fears are so vague, and my suspicions depend so entirely upon small points, which
85 might seem trivial to another, that even he to whom of all others I have a right to
86 look for help and advice looks upon all that I tell him about it as the fancies of a
87 nervous woman. He does not say so, but I can read it from his soothing answers and
88 averted eyes. But I have heard, Mr. Holmes, that you can see deeply into the
89 manifold wickedness of the human heart. You may advise me how to walk amid the
90 dangers which encompass me.”

91 “I am all attention, madam.”

Have another look at the character descriptors for the Detective and Assistant. Which traits are reflected in this section of the story? Annotate the lines that reflect these.

Meet the client

This is the first image we get of the client in this story:

A lady dressed in black and heavily veiled, who had been sitting in the window, rose as we entered.

📖 What clues might we gain from this description about the client?

📖 How does Conan Doyle establish the client as a ‘Damsel in Distress’?

“It is fear, Mr. Holmes. It is terror.” She raised her veil as she spoke, and we could see that she was indeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and grey, with restless frightened eyes, like those of some hunted animal. Her features and figure were those of a woman of thirty, but her hair was shot with premature grey, and her expression was weary and haggard. Sherlock Holmes ran her over with one of his quick, all-comprehensive glances.

📖 How is the lady’s fear reflected in her words:

...“the very horror of my situation lies in the fact that my fears are so vague, and my suspicions depend so entirely upon small points, which might seem trivial to another, that even he to whom of all others I have a right to look for help and advice looks upon all that I tell him about it as the fancies of a nervous woman.”...

📖 What does she mean when she says “ he to whom of all others I have a right to look for help and advice”?

📖 Why does she feel that no one will help her?

📖 **WHAT|HOW|WHY** 📖

How does Conan Doyle present the woman in this extract?

92 "My name is Helen Stoner, and I am living with my stepfather, who is the last
93 survivor of one of the oldest Saxon families in England, the Royslotts of Stoke Moran,
94 on the western border of Surrey."

95 Holmes nodded his head. "The name is familiar to me," said he.

96 "The family was at one time among the richest in England, and the estates
97 extended over the borders into Berkshire in the north, and Hampshire in the west. In
98 the last century, however, four successive heirs were of a dissolute and wasteful
99 disposition, and the family ruin was eventually completed by a gambler in the days
100 of the Regency. Nothing was left save a few acres of ground, and the two-hundred-
101 year-old house, which is itself crushed under a heavy mortgage. The last squire
102 dragged out his existence there, living the horrible life of an aristocratic pauper; but
103 his only son, my stepfather, seeing that he must adapt himself to the new conditions,
104 obtained an advance from a relative, which enabled him to take a medical degree
105 and went out to Calcutta, where, by his professional skill and his force of character,
106 he established a large practice. In a fit of anger, however, caused by some robberies
107 which had been perpetrated in the house, he beat his native butler to death and
108 narrowly escaped a capital sentence. As it was, he suffered a long term of
109 imprisonment and afterwards returned to England a morose and disappointed man.

110 "When Dr. Royslott was in India he married my mother, Mrs. Stoner, the young
111 widow of Major-General Stoner, of the Bengal Artillery. My sister Julia and I were
112 twins, and we were only two years old at the time of my mother's re-marriage. She
113 had a considerable sum of money—not less than £ 1000 a year—and this she
114 bequeathed to Dr. Royslott entirely while we resided with him, with a provision that
115 a certain annual sum should be allowed to each of us in the event of our marriage.
116 Shortly after our return to England my mother died—she was killed eight years ago
117 in a railway accident near Crewe. Dr. Royslott then abandoned his attempts to
118 establish himself in practice in London and took us to live with him in the old
119 ancestral house at Stoke Moran. The money which my mother had left was enough
120 for all our wants, and there seemed to be no obstacle to our happiness.

121 "But a terrible change came over our stepfather about this time. Instead of making
122 friends and exchanging visits with our neighbours, who had at first been overjoyed
123 to see a Royslott of Stoke Moran back in the old family seat, he shut himself up in his
124 house and seldom came out save to indulge in ferocious quarrels with whoever
125 might cross his path. Violence of temper approaching to mania has been hereditary
126 in the men of the family, and in my stepfather's case it had, I believe, been
127 intensified by his long residence in the tropics. A series of disgraceful brawls took
128 place, two of which ended in the police-court, until at last he became the terror of the
129 village, and the folks would fly at his approach, for he is a man of immense strength,
130 and absolutely uncontrollable in his anger.

131 "Last week he hurled the local blacksmith over a parapet into a stream, and it was
132 only by paying over all the money which I could gather together that I was able to
133 avert another public exposure. He had no friends at all save the wandering gipsies,
134 and he would give these vagabonds leave to encamp upon the few acres of bramble-
135 covered land which represent the family estate, and would accept in return the
136 hospitality of their tents, wandering away with them sometimes for weeks on end.

137 He has a passion also for Indian animals, which are sent over to him by a
138 correspondent, and he has at this moment a cheetah and a baboon, which wander
139 freely over his grounds and are feared by the villagers almost as much as their
140 master.

141 "You can imagine from what I say that my poor sister Julia and I had no great
142 pleasure in our lives. No servant would stay with us, and for a long time we did all
143 the work of the house. She was but thirty at the time of her death, and yet her hair
144 had already begun to whiten, even as mine has."

145 "Your sister is dead, then?"

146 "She died just two years ago, and it is of her death that I wish to speak to you. You
147 can understand that, living the life which I have described, we were little likely to
148 see anyone of our own age and position. We had, however, an aunt, my mother's
149 maiden sister, Miss Honoria Westphail, who lives near Harrow, and we were
150 occasionally allowed to pay short visits at this lady's house. Julia went there at
151 Christmas two years ago, and met there a half-pay major of marines, to whom she
152 became engaged. My stepfather learned of the engagement when my sister returned
153 and offered no objection to the marriage; but within a fortnight of the day which had
154 been fixed for the wedding, the terrible event occurred which has deprived me of my
155 only companion."

156 Sherlock Holmes had been leaning back in his chair with his eyes closed and his
157 head sunk in a cushion, but he half opened his lids now and glanced across at his
158 visitor.

159 "Pray be precise as to details," said he.

160 "It is easy for me to be so, for every event of that dreadful time is seared into my
161 memory. The manor-house is, as I have already said, very old, and only one wing is
162 now inhabited. The bedrooms in this wing are on the ground floor, the sitting-rooms
163 being in the central block of the buildings. Of these bedrooms the first is Dr.
164 Roylott's, the second my sister's, and the third my own. There is no communication
165 between them, but they all open out into the same corridor. Do I make myself
166 plain?"

167 "Perfectly so."

168 "The windows of the three rooms open out upon the lawn. That fatal night Dr.
169 Roylott had gone to his room early, though we knew that he had not retired to rest,
170 for my sister was troubled by the smell of the strong Indian cigars which it was his
171 custom to smoke. She left her room, therefore, and came into mine, where she sat for
172 some time, chatting about her approaching wedding. At eleven o'clock she rose to
173 leave me, but she paused at the door and looked back.

174 "'Tell me, Helen,' said she, 'have you ever heard anyone whistle in the dead of the
175 night?'

176 "'Never,' said I.

177 "'I suppose that you could not possibly whistle, yourself, in your sleep?'

178 "'Certainly not. But why?'

179 "'Because during the last few nights I have always, about three in the morning,
180 heard a low, clear whistle. I am a light sleeper, and it has awakened me. I cannot tell

181 where it came from – perhaps from the next room, perhaps from the lawn. I thought
182 that I would just ask you whether you had heard it.’

183 “‘No, I have not. It must be those wretched gipsies in the plantation.’

184 “‘Very likely. And yet if it were on the lawn, I wonder that you did not hear it
185 also.’

186 “‘Ah, but I sleep more heavily than you.’

187 “‘Well, it is of no great consequence, at any rate.’ She smiled back at me, closed my
188 door, and a few moments later I heard her key turn in the lock.”

189 “Indeed,” said Holmes. “Was it your custom always to lock yourselves in at
190 night?”

191 “Always.”

192 “And why?”

193 “I think that I mentioned to you that the Doctor kept a cheetah and a baboon. We
194 had no feeling of security unless our doors were locked.”

195 “Quite so. Pray proceed with your statement.”

196 “I could not sleep that night. A vague feeling of impending misfortune impressed
197 me. My sister and I, you will recollect, were twins, and you know how subtle are the
198 links which bind two souls which are so closely allied. It was a wild night. The wind
199 was howling outside, and the rain was beating and splashing against the windows.
200 Suddenly, amid all the hubbub of the gale, there burst forth the wild scream of a
201 terrified woman. I knew that it was my sister’s voice. I sprang from my bed,
202 wrapped a shawl round me, and rushed into the corridor. As I opened my door I
203 seemed to hear a low whistle, such as my sister described, and a few moments later a
204 clanging sound, as if a mass of metal had fallen. As I ran down the passage, my
205 sister’s door was unlocked, and revolved slowly upon its hinges. I stared at it horror-
206 stricken, not knowing what was about to issue from it. By the light of the corridor-
207 lamp I saw my sister appear at the opening, her face blanched with terror, her hands
208 groping for help, her whole figure swaying to and fro like that of a drunkard. I ran to
209 her and threw my arms round her, but at that moment her knees seemed to give way
210 and she fell to the ground. She writhed as one who is in terrible pain, and her limbs
211 were dreadfully convulsed. At first I thought that she had not recognised me, but as
212 I bent over her she suddenly shrieked out in a voice which I shall never forget, ‘Oh,
213 my God! Helen! It was the band! The speckled band!’ There was something else
214 which she would fain have said, and she stabbed with her finger into the air in the
215 direction of the Doctor’s room, but a fresh convulsion seized her and choked her
216 words. I rushed out, calling loudly for my stepfather, and I met him hastening from
217 his room in his dressing-gown. When he reached my sister’s side she was
218 unconscious, and though he poured brandy down her throat and sent for medical
219 aid from the village, all efforts were in vain, for she slowly sank and died without
220 having recovered her consciousness. Such was the dreadful end of my beloved
221 sister.”

222 “One moment,” said Holmes, “are you sure about this whistle and metallic sound?
223 Could you swear to it?”

224 "That was what the county coroner asked me at the inquiry. It is my strong
225 impression that I heard it, and yet, among the crash of the gale and the creaking of
226 an old house, I may possibly have been deceived."

227 "Was your sister dressed?"

228 "No, she was in her night-dress. In her right hand was found the charred stump of
229 a match, and in her left a match-box."

230 "Showing that she had struck a light and looked about her when the alarm took
231 place. That is important. And what conclusions did the coroner come to?"

232 "He investigated the case with great care, for Dr. Roylott's conduct had long been
233 notorious in the county, but he was unable to find any satisfactory cause of death.
234 My evidence showed that the door had been fastened upon the inner side, and the
235 windows were blocked by old-fashioned shutters with broad iron bars, which were
236 secured every night. The walls were carefully sounded, and were shown to be quite
237 solid all round, and the flooring was also thoroughly examined, with the same
238 result. The chimney is wide, but is barred up by four large staples. It is certain,
239 therefore, that my sister was quite alone when she met her end. Besides, there were
240 no marks of any violence upon her."

241 "How about poison?"

242 "The doctors examined her for it, but without success."

243 "What do you think that this unfortunate lady died of, then?"

244 "It is my belief that she died of pure fear and nervous shock, though what it was
245 that frightened her I cannot imagine."

246 "Were there gipsies in the plantation at the time?"

247 "Yes, there are nearly always some there."

248 "Ah, and what did you gather from this allusion to a band – a speckled band?"

249 "Sometimes I have thought that it was merely the wild talk of delirium, sometimes
250 that it may have referred to some band of people, perhaps to these very gipsies in
251 the plantation. I do not know whether the spotted handkerchiefs which so many of
252 them wear over their heads might have suggested the strange adjective which she
253 used."

254 Holmes shook his head like a man who is far from being satisfied.

255 "These are very deep waters," said he; "pray go on with your narrative."

256 "Two years have passed since then, and my life has been until lately lonelier than
257 ever. A month ago, however, a dear friend, whom I have known for many years, has
258 done me the honour to ask my hand in marriage. His name is Armitage – Percy
259 Armitage – the second son of Mr. Armitage, of Crane Water, near Reading. My
260 stepfather has offered no opposition to the match, and we are to be married in the
261 course of the spring. Two days ago some repairs were started in the west wing of the
262 building, and my bedroom wall has been pierced, so that I have had to move into the
263 chamber in which my sister died, and to sleep in the very bed in which she slept.
264 Imagine, then, my thrill of terror when last night, as I lay awake, thinking over her
265 terrible fate, I suddenly heard in the silence of the night the low whistle which had
266 been the herald of her own death. I sprang up and lit the lamp, but nothing was to be

267 seen in the room. I was too shaken to go to bed again, however, so I dressed, and as
268 soon as it was daylight I slipped down, got a dog-cart at the Crown Inn, which is
269 opposite, and drove to Leatherhead, from whence I have come on this morning with
270 the one object of seeing you and asking your advice."

271 "You have done wisely," said my friend. "But have you told me all?"

272 "Yes, all."

273 "Miss Roylott, you have not. You are screening your stepfather."

274 "Why, what do you mean?"

275 For answer Holmes pushed back the frill of black lace which fringed the hand that
276 lay upon our visitor's knee. Five little livid spots, the marks of four fingers and a
277 thumb, were printed upon the white wrist.

278 "You have been cruelly used," said Holmes.

279 The lady coloured deeply and covered over her injured wrist. "He is a hard man,"
280 she said, "and perhaps he hardly knows his own strength."

281 There was a long silence, during which Holmes leaned his chin upon his hands
282 and stared into the crackling fire.

283 "This is a very deep business," he said at last. "There are a thousand details which
284 I should desire to know before I decide upon our course of action. Yet we have not a
285 moment to lose. If we were to come to Stoke Moran to-day, would it be possible for
286 us to see over these rooms without the knowledge of your stepfather?"

287 "As it happens, he spoke of coming into town to-day upon some most important
288 business. It is probable that he will be away all day, and that there would be nothing
289 to disturb you. We have a housekeeper now, but she is old and foolish, and I could
290 easily get her out of the way."

291 "Excellent. You are not averse to this trip, Watson?"

292 "By no means."





293 "Then we shall both come. What are you going to do yourself?"

294 "I have one or two things which I would wish to do now that I am in town. But I
295 shall return by the twelve o'clock train, so as to be there in time for your coming."

296 "And you may expect us early in the afternoon. I have myself some small business
297 matters to attend to. Will you not wait and breakfast?"

298 "No, I must go. My heart is lightened already since I have confided my trouble to
299 you. I shall look forward to seeing you again this afternoon." She dropped her thick
300 black veil over her face and glided from the room.

Time to be the detective

-  Create a case file in your book.
-  Collect the facts of the case: who, what, when, where, how
-  Create a list of witnesses and suspects for interview
-  Create a list of questions for further investigation

301 "And what do you think of it all, Watson?" asked Sherlock Holmes, leaning back
302 in his chair.

303 "It seems to me to be a most dark and sinister business."

304 "Dark enough and sinister enough."

305 "Yet if the lady is correct in saying that the flooring and walls are sound, and that
306 the door, window, and chimney are impassable, then her sister must have been
307 undoubtedly alone when she met her mysterious end."

308 "What becomes, then, of these nocturnal whistles, and what of the very peculiar
309 words of the dying woman?"

310 "I cannot think."

311 "When you combine the ideas of whistles at night, the presence of a band of
312 gipsies who are on intimate terms with this old doctor, the fact that we have every
313 reason to believe that the doctor has an interest in preventing his stepdaughter's
314 marriage, the dying allusion to a band, and, finally, the fact that Miss Helen Stoner
315 heard a metallic clang, which might have been caused by one of those metal bars
316 that secured the shutters falling back into its place, I think that there is good ground
317 to think that the mystery may be cleared along those lines."

318 "But what, then, did the gipsies do?"

319 "I cannot imagine."

320 "I see many objections to any such theory."

321 "And so do I. It is precisely for that reason that we are going to Stoke Moran this
322 day. I want to see whether the objections are fatal, or if they may be explained away.
323 But what in the name of the devil!"

324 The ejaculation ²had been drawn from my companion by the fact that our door
325 had been suddenly dashed open, and that a huge man had framed himself in the
326 aperture. His costume was a peculiar mixture of the professional and of the
327 agricultural, having a black top-hat, a long frock-coat, and a pair of high gaiters, with
328 a hunting-crop swinging in his hand. So tall was he that his hat actually brushed the
329 cross bar of the doorway, and his breadth seemed to span it across from side to side.
330 A large face, seared with a thousand wrinkles, burned yellow with the sun, and
331 marked with every evil passion, was turned from one to the other of us, while his
332 deep-set, bile-shot eyes, and his high, thin, fleshless nose, gave him somewhat the
333 resemblance to a fierce old bird of prey.

334 "Which of you is Holmes?" asked this apparition.

335 "My name, sir; but you have the advantage of me," said my companion quietly.

336 "I am Dr. Grimesby Roylott, of Stoke Moran."

337 "Indeed, Doctor," said Holmes blandly. "Pray take a seat."

338 "I will do nothing of the kind. My stepdaughter has been here. I have traced her.
339 What has she been saying to you?"

340 "It is a little cold for the time of the year," said Holmes.

341 "What has she been saying to you?" screamed the old man furiously.

² Exclamation of surprise or shock

342 "But I have heard that the crocuses promise well," continued my companion
343 imperturbably.

344 "Ha! You put me off, do you?" said our new visitor, taking a step forward and
345 shaking his hunting-crop. "I know you, you scoundrel! I have heard of you before.
346 You are Holmes, the meddler."

347 My friend smiled.

348 "Holmes, the busybody!"

349 His smile broadened.

350 "Holmes, the Scotland Yard Jack-in-office!"


351 Holmes chuckled heartily. "Your conversation is most entertaining," said he.
352 "When you go out close the door, for there is a decided draught."


353 "I will go when I have had my say. Don't you dare to meddle with my affairs. I
354 know that Miss Stoner has been here. I traced her! I am a dangerous man to fall foul
355 of! See here." He stepped swiftly forward, seized the poker, and bent it into a curve
356 with his huge brown hands.

357 "See that you keep yourself out of my grip," he snarled, and hurling the twisted
358 poker into the fireplace he strode out of the room.


359 "He seems a very amiable person," said Holmes, laughing. "I am not quite so
360 bulky, but if he had remained I might have shown him that my grip was not much
361 more feeble than his own." As he spoke he picked up the steel poker and, with a
362 sudden effort, straightened it out again.


363 "Fancy his having the insolence to confound me with the official detective force!
364 This incident gives zest to our investigation, however, and I only trust that our little
365 friend will not suffer from her imprudence in allowing this brute to trace her. And
366 now, Watson, we shall order breakfast, and afterwards I shall walk down to Doctors'
367 Commons, where I hope to get some data which may help us in this matter."


 What is Sherlock Holmes's theory having heard Miss Stoner's story? Does his response match the police response?


 Dr Grimesby Roylott calls Sherlock Holmes "Holmes, the meddler...the busybody...the Scotland Yard Jack in-office" what do these names suggest about Sherlock? How do these names position us to feel about Dr Roylott?


Time to be the detective

 Add relevant details to your case notes for Dr Grimesby Roylott. Do you think he should be listed as a witness or a suspect? Why?

 Draw a police sketch for Dr Roylott and annotate it with details from the text.

 How does Conan Doyle want us to feel about Dr Roylott?

 How is this shown in the text?

 How does this reflect the typical features of Detective Fiction?

368 It was nearly one o'clock when Sherlock Holmes returned from his excursion. He
369 held in his hand a sheet of blue paper, scrawled over with notes and figures.

370 "I have seen the will of the deceased wife," said he. "To determine its exact
371 meaning I have been obliged to work out the present prices of the investments with
372 which it is concerned. The total income, which at the time of the wife's death was
373 little short of £ 1,100, is now, through the fall in agricultural prices, not more than
374 £750. Each daughter can claim an income of £ 250, in case of marriage. It is evident,
375 therefore, that if both girls had married, this beauty would have had a mere pittance,
376 while even one of them would cripple him to a very serious extent. My morning's
377 work has not been wasted, since it has proved that he has the very strongest motives
378 for standing in the way of anything of the sort. And now, Watson, this is too serious
379 for dawdling, especially as the old man is aware that we are interesting ourselves in
380 his affairs; so if you are ready, we shall call a cab and drive to Waterloo. I should be
381 very much obliged if you would slip your revolver into your pocket. An Eley's No. 2
382 is an excellent argument with gentlemen who can twist steel pokers into knots. That
383 and a tooth-brush are, I think, all that we need."

384 At Waterloo we were fortunate in catching a train for Leatherhead, where we
385 hired a trap at the station inn and drove for four or five miles through the lovely
386 Surrey lanes. It was a perfect day, with a bright sun and a few fleecy clouds in the
387 heavens. The trees and wayside hedges were just throwing out their first green
388 shoots, and the air was full of the pleasant smell of the moist earth. To me at least
389 there was a strange contrast between the sweet promise of the spring and this
390 sinister quest upon which we were engaged. My companion sat in the front of the
391 trap, his arms folded, his hat pulled down over his eyes, and his chin sunk upon his
392 breast, buried in the deepest thought. Suddenly, however, he started, tapped me on
393 the shoulder, and pointed over the meadows.

394 "Look there!" said he.

395 A heavily timbered park stretched up in a gentle slope, thickening into a grove at
396 the highest point. From amid the branches there jutted out the grey gables and high
397 roof-tree of a very old mansion.

398 "Stoke Moran?" said he.

399 "Yes, sir, that be the house of Dr. Grimesby Roylott," remarked the driver.

400 "There is some building going on there," said Holmes; "that is where we are
401 going."

402 "There's the village," said the driver, pointing to a cluster of roofs some distance
403 to the left; "but if you want to get to the house, you'll find it shorter to get over this
404 stile, and so by the footpath over the fields. There it is, where the lady is walking."

405 "And the lady, I fancy, is Miss Stoner," observed Holmes, shading his eyes. "Yes, I
406 think we had better do as you suggest."

407 We got off, paid our fare, and the trap rattled back on its way to Leatherhead.

408 "I thought it as well," said Holmes as we climbed the stile, "that this fellow should
409 think we had come here as architects, or on some definite business. It may stop his
410 gossip. Good-afternoon, Miss Stoner. You see that we have been as good as our
411 word."

412 Our client of the morning had hurried forward to meet us with a face which spoke
413 her joy. "I have been waiting so eagerly for you," she cried, shaking hands with us
414 warmly. "All has turned out splendidly. Dr. Roylott has gone to town, and it is
415 unlikely that he will be back before evening."

416 "We have had the pleasure of making the Doctor's acquaintance," said Holmes,
417 and in a few words he sketched out what had occurred. Miss Stoner turned white to
418 the lips as she listened.

419 "Good heavens!" she cried, "he has followed me, then."

420 "So it appears."

421 "He is so cunning that I never know when I am safe from him. What will he say
422 when he returns?"

423 "He must guard himself, for he may find that there is someone more cunning than
424 himself upon his track. You must lock yourself up from him to-night. If he is violent,
425 we shall take you away to your aunt's at Harrow. Now, we must make the best use
426 of our time, so kindly take us at once to the rooms which we are to examine."

- 📖 What does Sherlock discover on his 'excursion' to Doctors' Commons?
- 📖 Who has Sherlock identified as the villain?
- 📖 What does he suggest is his motive for frightening Miss Stoner?
- 📖 Does Sherlock Holmes expect violence during their visit to Stoke Moran? How do you know?
- 📖 Read lines 402-411. How does this description fit in with the expected setting for a detective novel?

👤 Time to be the detective 👤

- 📖 Add relevant details to your case notes for Dr Grimesby Roylott.
- 📖 How does Conan Doyle want us to feel about Dr Roylott?
 - Has our perception of him changed in any way?
 - Does his character align with any of the expected characters traits outlines at the beginning of this booklet?

📖 WHAT|HOW|WHY 📖

How does Conan Doyle present Dr Grimesby Roylott?

427 The building was of grey, lichen-blotched stone, with a high central portion and
428 two curving wings, like the claws of a crab, thrown out on each side. In one of these
429 wings the windows were broken and blocked with wooden boards, while the roof
430 was partly caved in, a picture of ruin. The central portion was in little better repair,
431 but the right-hand block was comparatively modern, and the blinds in the windows,
432 with the blue smoke curling up from the chimneys, showed that this was where the
433 family resided. Some scaffolding had been erected against the end wall, and the
434 stone-work had been broken into, but there were no signs of any workmen at the
435 moment of our visit. Holmes walked slowly up and down the ill-trimmed lawn and
436 examined with deep attention the outsides of the windows.

437 "This, I take it, belongs to the room in which you used to sleep, the centre one to
438 your sister's, and the one next to the main building to Dr. Roylott's chamber?"

439 "Exactly so. But I am now sleeping in the middle one."

440 "Pending the alterations, as I understand. By the way, there does not seem to be
441 any very pressing need for repairs at that end wall."

442 "There were none. I believe that it was an excuse to move me from my room."

443 "Ah! that is suggestive. Now, on the other side of this narrow wing runs the
444 corridor from which these three rooms open. There are windows in it, of course?"

445 "Yes, but very small ones. Too narrow for anyone to pass through."

446 "As you both locked your doors at night, your rooms were unapproachable from
447 that side. Now, would you have the kindness to go into your room and bar your
448 shutters?"

449 Miss Stoner did so, and Holmes, after a careful examination through the open
450 window, endeavoured in every way to force the shutter open, but without success.
451 There was no slit through which a knife could be passed to raise the bar. Then with
452 his lens he tested the hinges, but they were of solid iron, built firmly into the massive
453 masonry. "Hum!" said he, scratching his chin in some perplexity, "my theory
454 certainly presents some difficulties. No one could pass these shutters if they were
455 bolted. Well, we shall see if the inside throws any light upon the matter."

456 A small side door led into the whitewashed corridor from which the three
457 bedrooms opened. Holmes refused to examine the third chamber, so we passed at
458 once to the second, that in which Miss Stoner was now sleeping, and in which her
459 sister had met with her fate. It was a homely little room, with a low ceiling and a
460 gaping fireplace, after the fashion of old country-houses. A brown chest of drawers
461 stood in one corner, a narrow white-counterpaned bed in another, and a dressing-
462 table on the left-hand side of the window. These articles, with two small wicker-
463 work chairs, made up all the furniture in the room save for a square of Wilton carpet
464 in the centre. The boards round and the panelling of the walls were of brown, worm-
465 eaten oak, so old and discoloured that it may have dated from the original building
466 of the house. Holmes drew one of the chairs into a corner and sat silent, while his
467 eyes travelled round and round and up and down, taking in every detail of the
468 apartment.

469 "Where does that bell communicate with?" he asked at last pointing to a thick bell-
470 rope which hung down beside the bed, the tassel actually lying upon the pillow.

471 "It goes to the housekeeper's room."
472 "It looks newer than the other things?"
473 "Yes, it was only put there a couple of years ago."
474 "Your sister asked for it, I suppose?"
475 "No, I never heard of her using it. We used always to get what we wanted for
476 ourselves."
477 "Indeed, it seemed unnecessary to put so nice a bell-pull there. You will excuse me
478 for a few minutes while I satisfy myself as to this floor." He threw himself down
479 upon his face with his lens in his hand and crawled swiftly backward and forward,
480 examining minutely the cracks between the boards. Then he did the same with the
481 wood-work with which the chamber was panelled. Finally he walked over to the bed
482 and spent some time in staring at it and in running his eye up and down the wall.
483 Finally he took the bell-rope in his hand and gave it a brisk tug.
484 "Why, it's a dummy," said he.
485 "Won't it ring?"
486 "No, it is not even attached to a wire. This is very interesting. You can see now
487 that it is fastened to a hook just above where the little opening for the ventilator is."
488 "How very absurd! I never noticed that before."
489 "Very strange!" muttered Holmes, pulling at the rope. "There are one or two very
490 singular points about this room. For example, what a fool a builder must be to open
491 a ventilator into another room, when, with the same trouble, he might have
492 communicated with the outside air!"
493 "That is also quite modern," said the lady.
494 "Done about the same time as the bell-rope?" remarked Holmes.
495 "Yes, there were several little changes carried out about that time."
496 "They seem to have been of a most interesting character – dummy bell-ropes, and
497 ventilators which do not ventilate. With your permission, Miss Stoner, we shall now
498 carry our researches into the inner apartment."
499 Dr. Grimesby Roylott's chamber was larger than that of his step-daughter, but was
500 as plainly furnished. A camp-bed, a small wooden shelf full of books, mostly of a
501 technical character, an armchair beside the bed, a plain wooden chair against the
502 wall, a round table, and a large iron safe were the principal things which met the
503 eye. Holmes walked slowly round and examined each and all of them with the
504 keenest interest.
505 "What's in here?" he asked, tapping the safe.
506 "My stepfather's business papers."
507 "Oh! you have seen inside, then?"
508 "Only once, some years ago. I remember that it was full of papers."
509 "There isn't a cat in it, for example?"
510 "No. What a strange idea!"
511 "Well, look at this!" He took up a small saucer of milk which stood on the top of it.
512 "No; we don't keep a cat. But there is a cheetah and a baboon."

513 "Ah, yes, of course! Well, a cheetah is just a big cat, and yet a saucer of milk does
514 not go very far in satisfying its wants, I daresay. There is one point which I should
515 wish to determine." He squatted down in front of the wooden chair and examined
516 the seat of it with the greatest attention.

517 "Thank you. That is quite settled," said he, rising and putting his lens in his
518 pocket. "Hullo! Here is something interesting!"

519 The object which had caught his eye was a small dog lash hung on one corner of
520 the bed. The lash, however, was curled upon itself and tied so as to make a loop of
521 whipcord.

522 "What do you make of that, Watson?"

523 "It's a common enough lash. But I don't know why it should be tied."

524 "That is not quite so common, is it? Ah, me! it's a wicked world, and when a
525 clever man turns his brains to crime it is the worst of all. I think that I have seen
526 enough now, Miss Stoner, and with your permission we shall walk out upon the
527 lawn."

528 I had never seen my friend's face so grim or his brow so dark as it was when we
529 turned from the scene of this investigation. We had walked several times up and
530 down the lawn, neither Miss Stoner nor myself liking to break in upon his thoughts
531 before he roused himself from his reverie.

532 "It is very essential, Miss Stoner," said he, "that you should absolutely follow my
533 advice in every respect."

534 "I shall most certainly do so."

535 "The matter is too serious for any hesitation. Your life may depend upon your
536 compliance."

537 "I assure you that I am in your hands."

538 "In the first place, both my friend and I must spend the night in your room."

539 Both Miss Stoner and I gazed at him in astonishment.

540 "Yes, it must be so. Let me explain. I believe that that is the village inn over
541 there?"

542 "Yes, that is the Crown."

543 "Very good. Your windows would be visible from there?"

544 "Certainly."

545 "You must confine yourself to your room, on pretence of a headache, when your
546 stepfather comes back. Then when you hear him retire for the night, you must open
547 the shutters of your window, undo the hasp, put your lamp there as a signal to us,
548 and then withdraw quietly with everything which you are likely to want into the
549 room which you used to occupy. I have no doubt that, in spite of the repairs, you
550 could manage there for one night."

551 "Oh, yes, easily."

552 "The rest you will leave in our hands."

553 "But what will you do?"

554 "We shall spend the night in your room, and we shall investigate the cause of this
555 noise which has disturbed you."

556 "I believe, Mr. Holmes, that you have already made up your mind," said Miss
557 Stoner, laying her hand upon my companion's sleeve.

558 "Perhaps I have."

559 "Then, for pity's sake, tell me what was the cause of my sister's death."

560 "I should prefer to have clearer proofs before I speak."

561 "You can at least tell me whether my own thought is correct, and if she died from
562 some sudden fright."

563 "No, I do not think so. I think that there was probably some more tangible cause.
564 And now, Miss Stoner, we must leave you for if Dr. Roylott returned and saw us our
565 journey would be in vain. Good-bye, and be brave, for if you will do what I have
566 told you, you may rest assured that we shall soon drive away the dangers that
567 threaten you."

Setting is an important part of any detective novel. The traditional scene of a crime for British Detective Fiction usually involves a Country Manor House, often one which is in a state of (dis)repair.

Re-read lines 445-454 📖 How does this setting build tension and mystery?

👤 Time to be the detective 👤

- 📖 In your case notes, draw and label a plan of the house.
- 📖 Draw the crime scene, noting in all of the details Holmes points out
- 📖 Make a hypothesis about the death of Miss Stoner's sister.

- 📖 What can we learn about Holmes Character from these lines:

"I believe, Mr. Holmes, that you have already made up your mind," said Miss Stoner, laying her hand upon my companion's sleeve.

"Perhaps I have."

"Then, for pity's sake, tell me what was the cause of my sister's death."

"I should prefer to have clearer proofs before I speak."

- 📖 The trap has been set to catch the villain. What is Sherlock's plan? How successful do you think it will be?

568 Sherlock Holmes and I had no difficulty in engaging a bedroom and sitting-room
569 at the Crown Inn. They were on the upper floor, and from our window we could
570 command a view of the avenue gate, and of the inhabited wing of Stoke Moran
571 Manor House. At dusk we saw Dr. Grimesby Roylott drive past, his huge form
572 looming up beside the little figure of the lad who drove him. The boy had some
573 slight difficulty in undoing the heavy iron gates, and we heard the hoarse roar of the
574 Doctor's voice and saw the fury with which he shook his clinched fists at him. The
575 trap drove on, and a few minutes later we saw a sudden light spring up among the
576 trees as the lamp was lit in one of the sitting-rooms.

577 "Do you know, Watson," said Holmes as we sat together in the gathering
578 darkness, "I have really some scruples as to taking you to-night. There is a distinct
579 element of danger."

580 "Can I be of assistance?"

581 "Your presence might be invaluable."

582 "Then I shall certainly come."

583 "It is very kind of you."

584 "You speak of danger. You have evidently seen more in these rooms than was
585 visible to me."

586 "No, but I fancy that I may have deduced a little more. I imagine that you saw all
587 that I did."

588 "I saw nothing remarkable save the bell-rope, and what purpose that could
589 answer I confess is more than I can imagine."

590 "You saw the ventilator, too?"

591 "Yes, but I do not think that it is such a very unusual thing to have a small
592 opening between two rooms. It was so small that a rat could hardly pass through."

593 "I knew that we should find a ventilator before ever we came to Stoke Moran."

594 "My dear Holmes!"

595 "Oh, yes, I did. You remember in her statement she said that her sister could smell
596 Dr. Roylott's cigar. Now, of course that suggested at once that there must be a
597 communication between the two rooms. It could only be a small one, or it would
598 have been remarked upon at the coroner's inquiry. I deduced a ventilator."

599 "But what harm can there be in that?"

600 "Well, there is at least a curious coincidence of dates. A ventilator is made, a cord
601 is hung, and a lady who sleeps in the bed dies. Does not that strike you?"

602 "I cannot as yet see any connection."

603 "Did you observe anything very peculiar about that bed?"

604 "No."

605 "It was clamped to the floor. Did you ever see a bed fastened like that before?"

606 "I cannot say that I have."

607 "The lady could not move her bed. It must always be in the same relative position
608 to the ventilator and to the rope—or so we may call it, since it was clearly never
609 meant for a bell-pull."

618 About nine o'clock the light among the trees was extinguished, and all was dark in
619 the direction of the Manor House. Two hours passed slowly away, and then,
620 suddenly, just at the stroke of eleven, a single bright light shone out right in front of
621 us.

622 "That is our signal," said Holmes, springing to his feet; "it comes from the middle
623 window."

624 As we passed out he exchanged a few words with the landlord, explaining that we
625 were going on a late visit to an acquaintance, and that it was possible that we might
626 spend the night there. A moment later we were out on the dark road, a chill wind
627 blowing in our faces, and one yellow light twinkling in front of us through the
628 gloom to guide us on our sombre errand.

629 There was little difficulty in entering the grounds, for unrepaired breaches gaped
630 in the old park wall. Making our way among the trees, we reached the lawn, crossed
631 it, and were about to enter through the window when out from a clump of laurel
632 bushes there darted what seemed to be a hideous and distorted child, who threw
633 itself upon the grass with writhing limbs and then ran swiftly across the lawn into
634 the darkness.

635 "My God!" I whispered; "did you see it?"

636 Holmes was for the moment as startled as I. His hand closed like a vice upon my
637 wrist in his agitation. Then he broke into a low laugh and put his lips to my ear.

638 "It is a nice household," he murmured. "That is the baboon."

639 I had forgotten the strange pets which the Doctor affected. There was a cheetah,
640 too; perhaps we might find it upon our shoulders at any moment. I confess that I felt
641 easier in my mind when, after following Holmes' example and slipping off my
642 shoes, I found myself inside the bedroom. My companion noiselessly closed the
643 shutters, moved the lamp onto the table, and cast his eyes round the room. All was
644 as we had seen it in the daytime. Then creeping up to me and making a trumpet of
645 his hand, he whispered into my ear again so gently that it was all that I could do to
646 distinguish the words:

647 "The least sound would be fatal to our plans."

648 I nodded to show that I had heard.

649 "We must sit without light. He would see it through the ventilator."

650 I nodded again.

651 "Do not go asleep; your very life may depend upon it. Have your pistol ready in
652 case we should need it. I will sit on the side of the bed, and you in that chair."

653 I took out my revolver and laid it on the corner of the table.

654 Holmes had brought up a long thin cane, and this he placed upon the bed beside
655 him. By it he laid the box of matches and the stump of a candle. Then he turned
656 down the lamp, and we were left in darkness.

657 How shall I ever forget that dreadful vigil? I could not hear a sound, not even the
658 drawing of a breath, and yet I knew that my companion sat open-eyed, within a few
659 feet of me, in the same state of nervous tension in which I was myself. The shutters
660 cut off the least ray of light, and we waited in absolute darkness.

661 From outside came the occasional cry of a night-bird, and once at our very
662 window a long drawn catlike whine, which told us that the cheetah was indeed at
663 liberty. Far away we could hear the deep tones of the parish clock, which boomed
664 out every quarter of an hour. How long they seemed, those quarters! Twelve struck,
665 and one and two and three, and still we sat waiting silently for whatever might
666 befall.

667 Suddenly there was the momentary gleam of a light up in the direction of the
668 ventilator, which vanished immediately, but was succeeded by a strong smell of
669 burning oil and heated metal. Someone in the next room had lit a dark-lantern. I
670 heard a gentle sound of movement, and then all was silent once more, though the
671 smell grew stronger. For half an hour I sat with straining ears. Then suddenly
672 another sound became audible—a very gentle, soothing sound, like that of a small jet
673 of steam escaping continually from a kettle. The instant that we heard it, Holmes
674 sprang from the bed, struck a match, and lashed furiously with his cane at the bell-
675 pull.

676 “You see it, Watson?” he yelled. “You see it?”

677 But I saw nothing. At the moment when Holmes struck the light I heard a low,
678 clear whistle, but the sudden glare flashing into my weary eyes made it impossible
679 for me to tell what it was at which my friend lashed so savagely. I could, however,
680 see that his face was deadly pale and filled with horror and loathing. He had ceased
681 to strike and was gazing up at the ventilator when suddenly there broke from the
682 silence of the night the most horrible cry to which I have ever listened. It swelled up
683 louder and louder, a hoarse yell of pain and fear and anger all mingled in the one
684 dreadful shriek. They say that away down in the village, and even in the distant
685 parsonage, that cry raised the sleepers from their beds. It struck cold to our hearts,
686 and I stood gazing at Holmes, and he at me, until the last echoes of it had died away
687 into the silence from which it rose.

688 “What can it mean?” I gasped.

689 “It means that it is all over,” Holmes answered. “And perhaps, after all, it is for the
690 best. Take your pistol, and we will enter Dr. Roylott’s room.”

691 With a grave face he lit the lamp and led the way down the corridor. Twice he
692 struck at the chamber door without any reply from within. Then he turned the
693 handle and entered, I at his heels, with the cocked pistol in my hand.

694 It was a singular sight which met our eyes. On the table stood a dark-lantern with
695 the shutter half open, throwing a brilliant beam of light upon the iron safe, the door
696 of which was ajar. Beside this table, on the wooden chair, sat Dr. Grimesby Roylott
697 clad in a long grey dressing-gown, his bare ankles protruding beneath, and his feet
698 thrust into red heelless Turkish slippers. Across his lap lay the short stock with the
699 long lash which we had noticed during the day. His chin was cocked upward and
700 his eyes were fixed in a dreadful, rigid stare at the corner of the ceiling. Round his
701 brow he had a peculiar yellow band, with brownish speckles, which seemed to be
702 bound tightly round his head. As we entered he made neither sound nor motion.

703 “The band! the speckled band!” whispered Holmes.

704 I took a step forward. In an instant his strange headgear began to move, and there
705 reared itself from among his hair the squat diamond-shaped head and puffed neck
706 of a loathsome serpent.

707 "It is a swamp adder!" cried Holmes; "the deadliest snake in India. He has died
708 within ten seconds of being bitten. Violence does, in truth, recoil upon the violent,
709 and the schemer falls into the pit which he digs for another. Let us thrust this
710 creature back into its den, and we can then remove Miss Stoner to some place of
711 shelter and let the county police know what has happened."

712 As he spoke he drew the dog-whip swiftly from the dead man's lap, and throwing
713 the noose round the reptile's neck he drew it from its horrid perch and, carrying it at
714 arm's length, threw it into the iron safe, which he closed upon it.

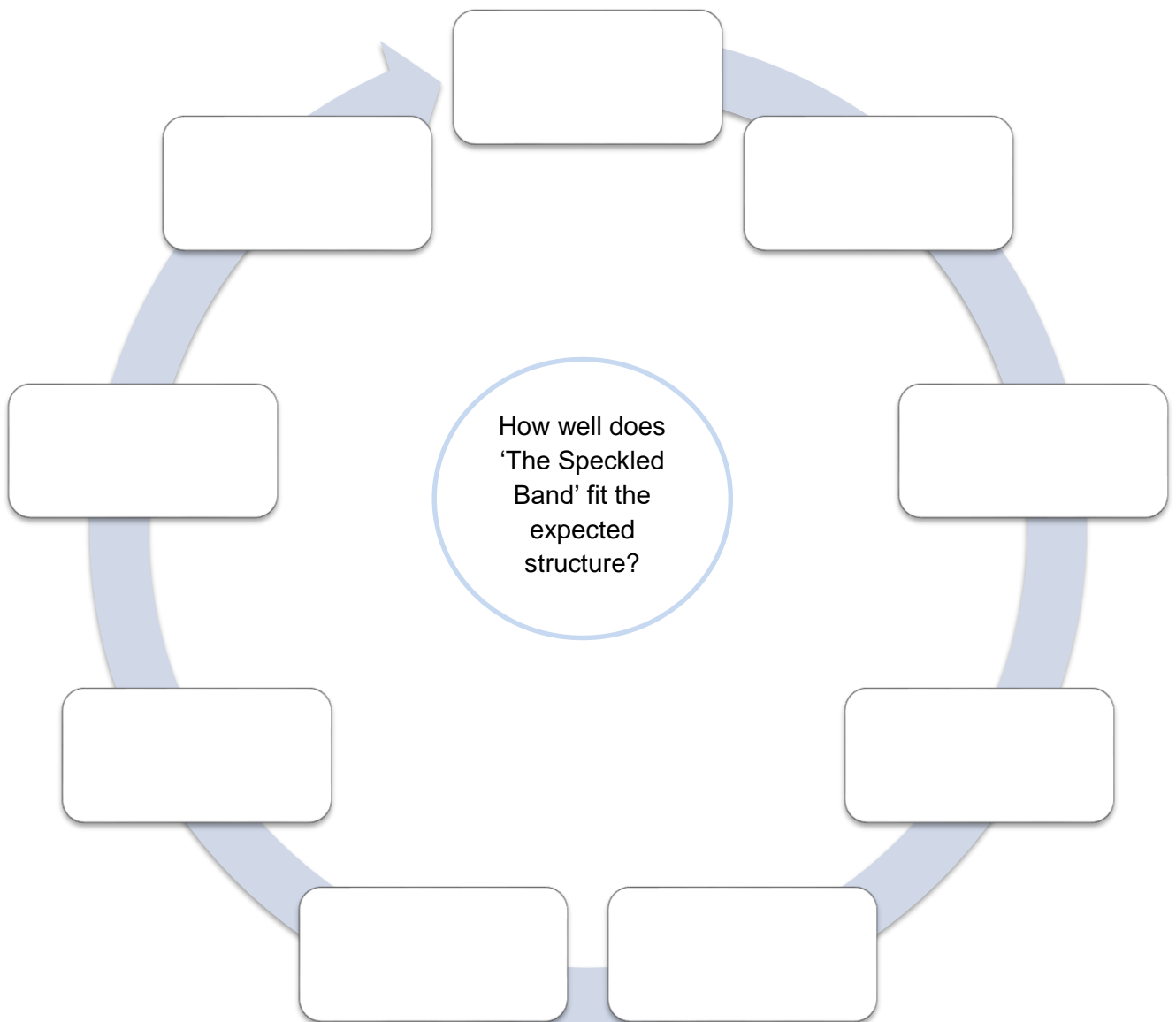
715 Such are the true facts of the death of Dr. Grimesby Roylott, of Stoke Moran. It is
716 not necessary that I should prolong a narrative which has already run to too great a
717 length by telling how we broke the sad news to the terrified girl, how we conveyed
718 her by the morning train to the care of her good aunt at Harrow, of how the slow
719 process of official inquiry came to the conclusion that the doctor met his fate while
720 indiscreetly playing with a dangerous pet. The little which I had yet to learn of the
721 case was told me by Sherlock Holmes as we travelled back next day.

722 "I had," said he, "come to an entirely erroneous conclusion which shows, my dear
723 Watson, how dangerous it always is to reason from insufficient data. The presence of
724 the gipsies, and the use of the word 'band,' which was used by the poor girl, no
725 doubt, to explain the appearance which she had caught a hurried glimpse of by the
726 light of her match, were sufficient to put me upon an entirely wrong scent. I can only
727 claim the merit that I instantly reconsidered my position when, however, it became
728 clear to me that whatever danger threatened an occupant of the room could not
729 come either from the window or the door. My attention was speedily drawn, as I
730 have already remarked to you, to this ventilator, and to the bell-rope which hung
731 down to the bed. The discovery that this was a dummy, and that the bed was
732 clamped to the floor, instantly gave rise to the suspicion that the rope was there as a
733 bridge for something passing through the hole and coming to the bed. The idea of a
734 snake instantly occurred to me, and when I coupled it with my knowledge that the
735 doctor was furnished with a supply of creatures from India, I felt that I was probably
736 on the right track. The idea of using a form of poison which could not possibly be
737 discovered by any chemical test was just such a one as would occur to a clever and
738 ruthless man who had had an Eastern training. The rapidity with which such a
739 poison would take effect would also, from his point of view, be an advantage. It
740 would be a sharp-eyed coroner, indeed, who could distinguish the two little dark
741 punctures which would show where the poison fangs had done their work. Then I
742 thought of the whistle. Of course he must recall the snake before the morning light
743 revealed it to the victim. He had trained it, probably by the use of the milk which we
744 saw, to return to him when summoned. He would put it through this ventilator at
745 the hour that he thought best, with the certainty that it would crawl down the rope
746 and land on the bed. It might or might not bite the occupant, perhaps she might
747 escape every night for a week, but sooner or later she must fall a victim.

748 "I had come to these conclusions before ever I had entered his room. An
749 inspection of his chair showed me that he had been in the habit of standing on it,
750 which of course would be necessary in order that he should reach the ventilator. The
751 sight of the safe, the saucer of milk, and the loop of whipcord were enough to finally
752 dispel any doubts which may have remained. The metallic clang heard by Miss
753 Stoner was obviously caused by her stepfather hastily closing the door of his safe
754 upon its terrible occupant. Having once made up my mind, you know the steps
755 which I took in order to put the matter to the proof. I heard the creature hiss as I
756 have no doubt that you did also, and I instantly lit the light and attacked it."

757 "With the result of driving it through the ventilator."

758 "And also with the result of causing it to turn upon its master at the other side.
759 Some of the blows of my cane came home and roused its snakish temper, so that it
760 flew upon the first person it saw. In this way I am no doubt indirectly responsible for
761 Dr. Grimesby Roylott's death, and I cannot say that it is likely to weigh very heavily
762 upon my conscience."



Case notes of Dr John Watson: "The Speckled Band"

<i>Who</i>	
<i>What</i>	
<i>When</i>	
<i>Where</i>	
<i>How</i>	
<i>Why</i>	

 Using the case notes and narrative of Dr John Watson, write a front page news article reporting death of Dr Grimesby Roylott.