Pre-reading research challenge

Before you begin reading, you are going to do some research into some of the ideas and themes in story. Use the internet, an encyclopaedia or other books in the library, or people who might have answers!

Names

In the story the names of key characters are important. Understanding the meanings of names or where they come from will help you understand the story and the writer’s intentions.

- Where does the name Cain come from? Why might a writer choose this name for a character?
- Who was Midas? What did he do? What lesson can we learn from his story?
- What or who is Orpheus? What did Orpheus do? If someone or something is given this name, what might the author want us to understand about them?

Brain box brilliance!

- This final question is a real challenge – can you find a way that all three names might be linked together?
Pre-reading research challenge

The Prince of Mist by Carlos Ruiz Zafón

Stories

Writers are often inspired by tales they have read and this is true of Carlos Ruiz Zafón. Knowing about some similar tales will help set the scene for reading his novel, The Prince of Mist.

- What can you find out about a short story by the writer W. W. Jacobs called ‘The Monkey’s Paw’? What happens in the story?
- What is the moral or the lesson of the tale?

If you get the chance you should read this short story as it is a brilliant and dark horror – just like The Prince of Mist.

- Find out about the story of Rapunzel.
- Try to find out about the original tale (not the safe children’s version).
- What might be the moral or lesson of the tale?
- What can you discover about the tale of Doctor Faustus or Dr Faust?
- Who wrote the story? What happens in the story? What did Doctor Faustus do?
- What moral or lesson that we can learn from his story?

Creative thinker’s challenge!

All of the research tasks link together and will help build up some ideas about the story. Produce a visual representation showing the links and connections between all the different stories and characters.

- You could connect your ideas in a brainstorm or mind map.
- You might draw a Venn diagram with overlapping circles that show where the ideas are linked.
- You could illustrate your ideas with key images or symbols.
- You might find some other imaginative way to represent the information that you found out.

Share your ideas with your class before reading The Prince of Mist.