After reading the whole novel, you are going to devise and perform some drama based on the events of the novel’s conclusion. You have a choice with regard to group sizes and tasks. However, no matter what group you are working in, you will need to remember to use different ways to convey action, character, atmosphere and tension when you are scripting and performing your pieces. This should include dialogue, gesture and movement.

Before you begin, work in your group to mind map the elements of a successful piece of drama. You could begin with:

a) the audience are entertained throughout.

b) ...

The tasks:

A: Individual work

Either:

Imagine that you are Ludlow Fitch. You have been working with Joe in the City for five years now, and have met quite a few secret-keepers. You should script, practise and perform a monologue where you entertain your audience by telling the best two or three stories you have heard.

Or:

Imagine that you are Jeremiah Ratchet in the afterlife! You should script, practise and perform a monologue where you explore the events of the conclusion of the story from Jeremiah’s perspective, particularly the villagers ransacking his house and the loss of all his possessions. You should let the audience know how you feel about all the key characters in the book!

B: Pair work

Either:

You are Joe Zabbdio and Ludlow Fitch, looking back over the events of the novel. You should script and perform a conversation where you reflect on the story of ‘The Black Book of Secrets’, focusing particularly on the death of Jeremiah Ratchet and its impact on Pagus Parvus. What do you think the town will be like in the future?

Or:

You are Polly and Ludlow five years in the future. You should script and perform a conversation where you talk about the events of the past five years. It’s up to you to invent what has happened to these two over the past five years. Have they met up? Or is this the first time they’ve met? Have they been working together? It’s up to you to decide, but remember that everything that you decide about the characters should be made clear to the audience.
C: Groups of three or four

Select a key character each from the story. You should script, practise and perform a conversation between these characters where they explore the events of the story. Whoever you choose should have strong feelings about the events in Pagus Parvus and be ready to share them!

Reflections on your work:

After you have practised and performed the piece, you should write four paragraphs where you reflect on:

a) your performance in the drama

Think about:
- how clearly you spoke
- how effective you were at using gesture and movement to convey character
- how effective you were at using intonation and pitch to add extra meaning to the language you used
- did you get the audience reaction you wanted? How can you tell?

b) your preparation for the drama

Think about:
- how well you knew the sequence and order of the drama
- how well you remembered your lines
- was there anything that you realised afterwards you should have prepared for?

c) if appropriate, your group work skills.

Think about:
- did everyone in your group contribute?
- were there any arguments? How did you resolve them?
- did everyone in your group feel happy with their role and their performance?