

Revise unseen fiction

The Book Thief

Do Not Say We Have Nothing

Tess of the d'Urbervilles

All the Light We Cannot See

Everything I Never Told You

The Adventure of the Speckled Band

The Handmaid's Tale

Rebecca

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Teachit sample

Introduction

This GCSE pack has been designed to support students with the reading fiction elements of GCSE English Language. It has been devised for use with the AQA, Edexcel and WJEC Eduqas specifications. The activities will help students to consolidate and practise skills in:

- comprehension and inference
- selecting and synthesising information
- analysing language and structure
- evaluating texts critically.

The activities target the relevant assessment objectives: AO1, AO2 and AO4. The pack contains eight fiction text excerpts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. There are teaching notes for each extract that provide suggested answers and discussion points. Two of the extracts (*Rebecca* and *The Handmaid's Tale*) have detailed support for teachers marking the practice exam content.

The texts are organised as follows:

Text 1: *Do Not Say We Have Nothing* by Madeleine Thien (2016)

Text 2: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy (1891)

Text 3: *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr (2014)

Text 4: *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier (1938)

Text 5: 'The Adventure of the Speckled Band' by Arthur Conan Doyle (1892)

Text 6: *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak (2005)

Text 7: *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng (2014)

Text 8: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985)

Our thanks go to our contributor Lyndsey Chand who has written this teaching pack.

Rebecca



This extract is from the opening of a novel by Daphne du Maurier, which was written in 1938. In this section, the narrator describes a dream she has had about Manderley, a house she used to live in.

Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading up to the drive, and for a while I could not enter, for the way was barred to me. There was a padlock and a chain upon the gate. I called in my dream to the lodge-keeper, and had no answer, and peering closer through the rusted spokes of the gate I saw that the lodge was uninhabited. 5

No smoke came from the chimneys, and the little lattice windows gaped forlorn. Then, like all dreamers, I was possessed of a sudden with supernatural powers and passed like a spirit through the barrier before me. The drive wound away in front of me, twisting and turning as it had always done, but as I advanced I was aware that a change had come upon it; it was narrow and unkept, not the drive that we had known. At first I was puzzled and did not understand, and it was only when I bent my head to avoid the low swinging branch of a tree that I realised what had happened. Nature had come into her own again and, little by little, in her stealthy, insidious way had encroached upon the drive with long, tenacious fingers. The woods, always a menace even in the past, had triumphed in the end. They crowded, dark and uncontrolled, to the borders of the drive. The beeches with white, naked limbs leant close to one another, their branches intermingled in a strange embrace, making a vault above my head like the archway of a church. And there were other trees as well, trees that I did not recognise, squat oaks and tortured elms that straggled cheek by jowl with the beeches, and had thrust themselves out of the quiet earth, along with monster shrubs and plants, none of which I remembered. 10 15 20 25

The drive was a ribbon now, a thread of its former self, with gravel surface gone, and choked with grass and moss. The trees had thrown out low branches and the gnarled roots looked like skeleton claws. Scattered here and again amongst this jungle growth I would recognise shrubs that had been landmarks in our time, things of culture and grace, hydrangeas whose blue heads had been famous. No hand had checked their progress, and they had gone native now, rearing to monster height without a bloom, black and ugly as the nameless parasites that grew beside them. 30

Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier

On and on, now east now west, wound the poor thread that once had been our drive. Sometimes I thought it lost, but it appeared again, beneath a fallen tree perhaps, or struggling on the other side of a muddied ditch created by the winter rains. I had not thought the way so long. Surely the miles had multiplied, even as the trees had done, and this path led but to a labyrinth, some choked wilderness, and not to the house at all. I came upon it suddenly; the approach masked by the unnatural growth of a vast shrub that spread in all directions, and I stood, my heart thumping in my breast, the strange prick of tears behind my eyes. 35 40

There was Manderley, our Manderley, secretive and silent as it had always been, the grey stone shining in the moonlight of my dream, the mullioned windows reflecting the green lawns and the terrace. Time could not wreck the perfect symmetry of those walls, nor the site itself, a jewel in the hollow of a hand. 45

The terrace sloped to the lawns, and the lawns stretched to the sea, and turning I could see the sheet of placid silver under the moon, like a lake undisturbed by wind or storm. No waves would come to ruffle this dream water, and no bulk of cloud, wind-driven from the west, obscure the clarity of this pale sky. 50

Rebecca



- 1 Write down a definition for each of these common word classes (you can use a dictionary to help if you need to):

Word class	Definition
verb	
adjective	
adverb	
concrete noun	
abstract noun	
pronoun	

- 2 Read through this section of the extract:

Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading up to the drive, and for a while I could not enter, for the way was barred to me. There was a padlock and a chain upon the gate. I called in my dream to the lodge-keeper, and had no answer, and peering closer through the rusted spokes of the gate I saw that the lodge was uninhabited.

For each of the words in the table below, identify the **word class**. Then write down what effect the word has within the extract.

seemed

barred

iron

rusted

peering

uninhabited

3 Based on the extract you have read, how does the setting of *Rebecca* sound? Explain your answer, and support it with at least three quotations.

4 Now read through the next part of the novel opening:

No smoke came from the chimneys, and the little lattice windows gaped forlorn. Then, like all dreamers, I was possessed of a sudden with supernatural powers and passed like a spirit through the barrier before me. The drive wound away in front of me, twisting and turning as it had always done, but as I advanced I was aware that a change had come upon it; it was narrow and unkept, not the drive that we had known. At first I was puzzled and did not understand, and it was only when I bent my head to avoid the low swinging branch of a tree that I realised what had happened. Nature had come into her own again and, little by little, in her stealthy, insidious way had encroached upon the drive with long, tenacious fingers. The woods, always a menace even in the past, had triumphed in the end. They crowded, dark and uncontrolled, to the borders of the drive. The beeches with white, naked limbs leant close to one another, their branches intermingled in a strange embrace, making a vault above my head like the archway of a church. And there were other trees as well, trees that I did not recognise, squat oaks and tortured elms that straggled cheek by jowl with the beeches, and had thrust themselves out of the quiet earth, along with monster shrubs and plants, none of which I remembered.

Select three words from the extract which you think are particularly effective. Write them down below. Then, for each one, write down the word class and the effect it has within the passage: