

Year 6-7 Transition
English Activities

The First Day of School



Stockport Academy

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The First Day of School

The Instructions

When you come to Stockport Academy, you will have English lessons almost every day. The English team are very excited to meet you and to begin exploring literature with you. To get us started, we are going to look at four extracts from very famous novels about the first day of school.

- Task 1: Read all four extracts and decide which is your favourite.
- Task 2: Try and put the texts in order of when they were published. Can you make any guesses as to when they were written? What clues can you find to help you do this? Once you've had a go, use the internet to find out when each text was published.
- Task 3: Complete some Key Stage 3 style analysis on each text using the sheets to help you.
- Task 4: Write a short story that has the title 'The First Day at School'. There is a sheet to help you plan your writing. Once you have written this, email it to Mrs Cawsey at kerry.cawsey@stockport-academy.org – we would love read what you have written and give some prizes to the best stories!

The First Day of School

The Extracts

Extract 1

My first quarter at Lowood seemed an age; and not the golden age either; it comprised an irksome struggle with difficulties in habituating myself to new rules and unwonted tasks. The fear of failure in these points harassed me worse than the physical hardships of my lot; though these were no trifles.

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Brontë

Extract 2

Jem condescended to take me to school the first day, a job usually done by one's parents, but Atticus had said Jem would be delighted to show me where my room was. I think some money changed hands in this transaction, for as we trotted around the corner past the Radley Place I heard an unfamiliar jingle in Jem's pockets. When we slowed to a walk at the edge of the schoolyard, Jem was careful to explain that during school hours I was not to bother him, I was not to approach him with requests to enact a chapter of Tarzan and the Ant Men, to embarrass him with references to his private life, or tag along behind him at recess and noon. I was to stick with the first grade and he would stick with the fifth. In short, I was to leave him alone.

To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee

Extract 3

The stone walls were lit with flaming torches like the ones at Gringotts, the ceiling was too high to make out, and a magnificent marble staircase facing them led to the upper floors. They followed Professor McGonagall across the flagged stone floor. Harry could hear the drone of hundreds of voices from a doorway to the right – the rest of the school must already be here – but Professor McGonagall showed the first years into a small, empty chamber off the hall. They crowded in, standing rather closer together than they would usually have done, peering about nervously.

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, by J. K. Rowling

Extract 4

The wide playgrounds were swarming with boys. All were shouting and the prefects urged them on with strong cries. The evening air was pale and chilly and after every charge and thud of the footballers the greasy leather orb flew like a heavy bird through the grey light. He kept on the fringe of his line, out of sight of his prefect, out of the reach of the rude feet, feigning to run now and then. He felt his body small and weak amid the throng of the players and his eyes were weak and watery.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, by James Joyce

Extract 5

The village school at that time provided all the instruction we were likely to ask for. It was a small stone barn divided by a wooden partition into two rooms - The Infants and The Big Ones. There was one dame teacher, and perhaps a young girl assistant. Every child in the valley crowding there, remained till he was fourteen

years old, then was presented to the working field or factory, with nothing in his head more burdensome than a few mnemonics, a jumbled list of wars, and a dreamy image of the world's geography.

Cider with Rosie, by Laurie Lee

Extract 6

Games-playing at school is always fun if you happen to be good at it, and it is hell if you are not. I was one of the lucky ones, and all those afternoons on the playing-fields and in the fives courts and in the squash courts made the otherwise grey and melancholy days pass a lot more quickly.

Boy, by Roald Dahl

My favourite extract:

What chronological order do you think they go in?



Earliest text

Most recent text

How many did you get correct?

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The Analysis - Example

You should choose two or three extracts and answer the following questions. I have done the first extract for you.

1. METHODS: highlight and label the methods the authors have used in the extracts.

Interesting adjectives *Alliteration* *Personification*

Extract 1: My first quarter at Lowood seemed an age; and not the golden age either; it comprised an **irksome** struggle with difficulties in habituating myself to new rules and **unwonted** tasks. The **fear of failure** in these points **harassed** me worse than the physical hardships of my lot; though these were no trifles.

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Brontë

2. EFFECT: Do the methods convey a certain emotion or reaction from the reader? Have they been used at a specific point to convey meaning or reveal information about the protagonist?

The adjectives 'irksome' and 'unwonted' show that the speaker has a negative experience at school. The reader feels sorry for the character. The use of personification shows how the 'fear of failure' was as bad as a person harassing the speaker. This further makes the reader feel sympathy and perhaps anger that a young girl is going through this.

3. EXPLAIN: how did you come to your conclusion regarding the age of this text? How do the protagonists' views of school differ? How has setting been used to imply difference? What attitudes towards school have been conveyed?

I decided that this text was set a long time ago (more than 100 years) because of some of the vocabulary used. I don't think it's quite as old as Shakespeare because the words are not different to today's language but just more uncommon.

The protagonist's views of school are different to others because she is more concerned with her feelings than with the setting of the school, like some of the other texts. This text conveys a very negative view of school and the things that she has to do there.

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The Analysis

You should choose two or three extracts and complete answer the following questions. I have done the first extract for you.

1. METHODS: highlight and label the methods the authors have used in the extracts. (you can do this on the extract sheet)
2. EFFECT: Do the methods convey a certain emotion or reaction from the reader? Have they been used at a specific point to convey meaning or reveal information about the protagonist?

Text 1 –

Text 2 –

3. EXPLAIN: how did you come to your conclusion regarding the age of this text? How do the protagonists' views of school differ? How has setting been used to imply difference? What attitudes towards school have been conveyed?

Text 1 –

Text 2-

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The Writing Task

Write a short story that has the title 'The First Day at School'. This can be realistic or complete fantasy! Try to include some descriptive techniques, such as similes and metaphors. You should also think carefully about the words you use to ensure they are super effective.

Plan

Set the scene - show off your descriptive techniques by describing the place your story is set.

Zoom in on your character – remember to show not tell.

Introduce a problem – Your problem can be introduced in a simple sentence.

Complication and climax – combine your setting, your character and the problem to explore what happens.

Resolution - How does the story end?

Now write up your story. Once you are finished, email it to Mrs Cawsey at kerry.cawsey@stockport-academy.org – we would love read what you have written and give some prizes to the best stories!