

## Reading for Learning lessons using Booked-up titles in Guildford

### The effects

At George Abbot School in Guildford, the Information Services Manager has developed lessons for Year 7 using the Booked Up titles, to help them develop notetaking skills and reading strategies for fiction. These lessons are valued by English staff and many elements from them have been used by the teachers in other lessons that they teach.

### The experience

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In 2007 all students in Year 7 were able to choose a book as part of the Booked Up project. Rather than just handing those books out we decided to use them in English lessons and so planned 6 lessons through which we would teach some different reading strategies.

The reading strategies focus on the things we take away from reading, rather than the things we bring to reading.

### Lesson 1

We looked at the front cover of each book and students wrote about their connections predictions about the cover and how it made them feel. We then did an activity to teach students about narrative hooks where they matched up first sentences to the narrative hook types and then they read the first sentence of their book and explained what type of narrative hook they thought it used.

### Lesson 2

We introduced the students to the different reading strategies by using a passage from a story; we then got the students to write down a list of the strategies and as they read their books they jotted down their use of the strategies along with the page number.

**predictions P, connectionsV, visualiseVI, questions?Q, deductionsD, inferencel, vocabularyVo**

### Lesson 3

When students finished a chapter they decided what happened in the chapter and then wrote a subheading for the chapter in the same vein as [Girl of the Limberlost](http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/StrGirl.html) <http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/StrGirl.html> or the [Spiderwick Chronicles](http://www.friends-tv.org/epguide.html#first). Another example is the episode titles from [Friends](http://www.friends-tv.org/epguide.html#first) – see <http://www.friends-tv.org/epguide.html#first> or give a list of what the chapter features as in [The Book Thief](#). Students did this for every chapter and started adding this to the blank page at the front of their books. Students also started to write a character analysis by drawing the character and then labelling it as they read things about the character in the story.

## Lesson 4

Visualising – Students pause while reading to make a quick sketch of

- an important scene
- a major character's action
- a key setting

and jot down a caption to support the drawing.

Students may want to recreate one scene into a comic strip, using examples from [Stormbreaker](#) graphic novel.

The teacher can feedback using a visualiser to display work

## Lesson 5

Student write a letter to the **author** telling them what they liked, E.g.

I enjoyed your book because it was easy to follow the chain of events

I liked the way you described the girl, I could really picture her on the swing with her hair flying in the wind.

Or what was missing. E.g.

After he had lost the match maybe Sarah could have invited him to her house.

Or what improvements you would have liked to see, E.g.

I would like to know why it had to end badly. You could have added exactly what happened in the changing rooms, I wanted to know why it ended like it did without me having to guess why.

I thought that the x page was good and that you did a pretty good job of explaining what happens when... but you did not say anything about how....

The other thing that I would have put in the book would have been how....

Overall I thought that your book was .....

## Lesson 6

Authors use different ways of saying things to make their writing interesting – different ways to start sentences, not just “Then...” This links back to types of first sentence – narrative hooks.

Recap parts of speech by using an extract from [Mortal Engines](#)

*“The sun was rising, lifting wreaths of steam from the wet mud. London was still moving, visibly smaller since the last time he looked. The city usually stopped for a few days when it had eaten, and some part of Tom’s brain that was not quite numb wondered idly. Where on earth is it going?”*

and ask the students to mark different parts of speech.

Students look for sentences in their books which start with different parts of speech. Students could also record all the different ways that the author has reported speech (alternatives to ‘said’).

## Resources and staffing

The lessons used the titles provided free of charge for Year 7 students as part of the Booked Up project.

## Partners

Lessons were planned for the English Department.

## **Outcomes**

English teachers have repeated, extended and adapted some of the activities with different year groups and in other lessons.

We are repeating the module next year as the English department felt that it help students develop their reading comprehension skills.

## **References**

These lessons were developed with reference to Aesthetic reading strategies as explained in these two websites

<http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/index.html>

[http://www.linkslearning.org/Teachers/2\\_Reading/index.html](http://www.linkslearning.org/Teachers/2_Reading/index.html)

They both have audio and video clips showing teachers using the strategies.

## **The future**

Many other opportunities are taken to help students develop reading skills. This year the school has put together a working group to develop materials for teachers on note taking and information about referencing and plagiarism