



Holy Family Catholic Primary School

English - UKS2 – Night Mail Overview



Text: Night Mail by W H Auden

Outcomes: Summaries, analysis and performances
Main Outcome: Poem with similar structure

Overview and Outcomes: This is a planning sequence using the poem 'Night Mail', which was written in 1936 to accompany the documentary film of the same year and the same title. The film depicted a London, Midland, and Scottish Railway (LMS) mail train travelling from London to Scotland. It was produced by GPO Film Unit, directed by Harry Watt and Basil Wright, and narrated by John Grierson and Stuart Legg. Auden's poem was read toward the end of the film, set to music by Benjamin Britten. Lines were chopped and changed to fit the film. The intention of the film was to show the public how the mail was distributed by train. The rhythm of the film matches the train's movement. Auden apparently used a stopwatch as he set the lines to the film. The form of the poem is made up of eight rhymed, four-beat couplets.

Coverage from National Curriculum 2014: Reading and Writing coverage from Curriculum 2014. Spoken language is covered throughout.

Word Reading

Apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (morphology and etymology), as listed in English Appendix 1, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words that they meet

Reading Comprehension

- Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
- Preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience
- Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
- Summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas
- Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- Discussing and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader

Writing Transcription (Spelling and Handwriting)

- Use knowledge of morphology and etymology in spelling and understand that the spelling of some words needs to be learnt specifically, as listed in English Appendix 1
- Use dictionaries to check the spelling and meaning of words

Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

- Using expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely
- Selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning

Writing (Composition)

- Assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing
- Proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning
- Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear
- In narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance the action
- Précising longer passages