

LITERATURE – 2A

Tom is an orphan who lives with Mr Allworthy. One day he goes out with his only friend, the **gamekeeper**. They go onto the neighbour's land, which they have been told not to do. There's the sound of a gun shot ...

START THINKING ...

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- Are you good at keeping secrets? Why or why not?
- Do you know if somebody is lying to you? How?
- Is it sometimes better to tell a 'white lie'? If so, when?

TOM JONES (1749) Henry Fielding

The gentleman himself was at that time on horse-back, and hearing the gun go off, he immediately made towards the place, and discovered poor Tom; for the **gamekeeper** had leapt into the thickest part of the hedge, where he had happily
5 concealed himself.

Having searched the lad, and found the **partridge**, the gentleman rode off angrily to tell Mr Allworthy. He was as good as his word: for he rode immediately to his house, and complained in as bitter language as if his house had been broken
10 open, and the most valuable furniture stolen out of it. He added, that some other person was in his company, though he could not discover him; for that two guns had been discharged almost in the same instant.

At his return home, Tom was presently brought before Mr
15 Allworthy. Tom was then **interrogated** who was with him, which Mr Allworthy declared he was resolved to know, acquainting the culprit with the circumstance of the two guns; but Tom stoutly persisted in asserting that he was alone; yet, to say the truth, he hesitated a little at first, which would have confirmed Mr
20 Allworthy's belief.

The gamekeeper, being a suspected person, was now sent for, and the question put to him; but he, relying on the promise which Tom had made him, to take all upon himself, very resolutely denied being in company with the young gentleman
25 the whole afternoon.

Mr Allworthy then turned towards Tom, with more than usual anger, and advised him to **confess** who was with him. The lad, however, still maintained his resolution, and was dismissed by Mr Allworthy, who told him he should have to the next morning
30 to consider of it, when he should be questioned by another person, and in another manner.

In the morning, when Tom attended the reverend Mr Thwackum, the person to whom Mr Allworthy had committed the instruction of the two boys, he had the same questions
35 put to him by that gentleman which he had been asked the evening before, to which he returned the same answers. The consequence of this was, so severe a **whipping**, that it possibly fell little short of torture.

Tom bore his punishment silently and with great courage; and though his master asked him, between every stroke,
40 whether he would not confess, he was contented to be flayed rather than **betray** his friend, or break the promise he had made.

The gamekeeper was now relieved from his anxiety, and Mr Allworthy himself began to be concerned at Tom's sufferings:
45 for besides that Mr Thwackum, being highly enraged that he was not able to make the boy say what he himself pleased, began now to suspect that the squire had been mistaken. Now, as cruelty and **injustice** were two ideas of which Mr Allworthy could by no means support a single moment, he sent for Tom,
50 and said, 'I am convinced, my dear child, that my suspicions have wronged you; I am sorry that you have been so severely punished on this account.' And at last gave him a little horse to make him amends; again repeating his sorrow for what had past.

Tom's guilt now flew in his face more than any severity could make it. He could more easily bear the lashes of Thwackum, than
55 the generosity of Allworthy. The tears burst from his eyes, and he fell upon his knees, crying, 'Oh, sir, you are too good to me. Indeed you are. Indeed I don't deserve it.'

Thwackum did all he could to persuade Allworthy from showing any **compassion** or kindness to the boy, saying, 'He
60 had persisted in an untruth,' and gave some hints, that a second whipping might probably bring the matter to light.

But Mr Allworthy absolutely refused to consent to the
65 experiment. He said, the boy had suffered enough already for concealing the truth, even if he was guilty, seeing that he could have no **motive** but a mistaken point of honour for so doing.

Glossary

gamekeeper a person whose job is to take care of wild animals and birds that are kept especially for hunting
conceal to hide something
partridge a bird with a round body and a short tail that is sometimes hunted for food or for sport
interrogate to ask someone a lot of questions for a long time in order to get information
confess to say that you have done something wrong

whipping when a person or animal is hit with a whip
betray to behave in a dishonest way to someone who trusts you
injustice a situation or action in which people are not treated fairly
compassion a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering or bad luck of others
motive a reason for doing something, often for a crime

2 **▶▶2A.1** Read the text and listen.

3 Read the text again. Mark the sentences T (true), F (false) or DS (doesn't say).

- 1 The gentleman's house was burgled.
- 2 The gamekeeper said he wasn't with Tom when the gun was fired.
- 3 Tom screamed loudly every time he was hit.
- 4 Tom tells Mr Thwackum that the gamekeeper was responsible.
- 5 Mr Allworthy doesn't like seeing Tom being treated unfairly.
- 6 Mr Thwackum regularly hits Tom to make him tell the truth.

4 **READ BETWEEN THE LINES** Answer the questions. Give reasons and examples from the text.

- 1 Does the gentleman think stealing a bird is a serious crime? How can you tell?
- 2 Is Tom good at lying? Why?
- 3 What does 'He could more easily bear the lashes of Thwackum, than the generosity of Allworthy.' mean?

5 **VOCABULARY** Complete the sentences with the correct words from the glossary in the correct form.

- 1 In the 18th century, women _____ valuable items under their dresses to stop pickpockets.
- 2 In 1792, the body of Colin Roy Campbell was found, but nobody _____ to his murder.
- 3 Treason, the crime of _____ your country, was still punishable by death in the UK until 1998.
- 4 Politicians rarely showed any _____ for the poor people they represented.
- 5 Criminals were sent to Australia as _____ was no longer seen as a usual punishment after 1776.
- 6 Only 5% of the population could vote in the 1750s. There was a great sense of _____.

6 Underline five words in the text that are new to you. Look them up in a dictionary and then write each of them in a sentence.

7 **ROLE PLAY** Work in pairs. Tom tells the gamekeeper what happened when he left. Student A is Tom, Student B is the gamekeeper. Read the beginning of the conversation and then continue it with your own ideas.

- TOM It's OK. I wouldn't have told him you were there even if he had whipped me a thousand times.
- GAMEKEEPER I don't know what to say. I'm so sorry I didn't confess. What happened to you?

8 **LISTENING** **▶▶2A.2** Listen to the next part of the story. Complete the sentences with the names in the list. You can use each name more than once.

The gamekeeper | Allworthy | Thwackum | Tom

- 1 _____ sold a horse.
- 2 _____ thinks _____ is cruel.
- 3 _____'s family is poor.
- 4 _____ says he will help _____ in the future.

9 **▶▶2A.2** Listen again. Circle the correct answer.

- 1 Tom kept the horse for *less than* / *exactly* / *more than* six months.
- 2 If Tom is rude about Thwackum again, Mr Allworthy *will hit* / *won't support* / *won't listen to* him.
- 3 Tom enjoyed *feeding* / *riding* / *selling* the horse the most.
- 4 The gamekeeper hasn't got *a job* / *children* / *problems*.
- 5 Tom blames *the gamekeeper* / *Mr Allworthy* / *himself* most for the gamekeeper's suffering.

WRITING A story

10 **WRITING** Write a story in which the main character has a secret.

- Include rhetorical questions to engage the reader (*What would you do if...? Have you ever...?*).
- Give your story a clear beginning, middle and ending.
- Use a variety of tenses to show which actions happened first and how long they lasted.
- Include adjectives and adverbs to make the characters and situations convincing.
- End the story with a twist (something unexpected) or an unanswered question.

THINK STYLE

Significance of names

The names Feilding gave to two of his main characters tell us a lot about them. We know that Mr Allworthy is likely to be a moral character (he is 'all worthy'), but that Thwackum is likely to be the opposite (*thwack* means to hit).

11 Think of some more examples of meaningful names from films you've watched or books you've read. Then invent a name for a character in a novel or film and explain why the name is meaningful.