

LITERATURE 3A

TEACHER'S NOTES

AUTHOR	Arthur Conan Doyle
TITLE	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> (Chapters 2 & 9)
THEMES	Crime, mysteries, making deductions
WRITING	An article
THINK STYLE	Cliffhangers

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. He wrote 53 short stories and four novels featuring Sherlock Holmes.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a doctor and travelled extensively. He was interested in politics and social justice. Although Sherlock Holmes is known around the world, Doyle wanted to kill him off early on as he wanted to concentrate on writing more serious novels. He was so reluctant to write any more short stories featuring him that he insisted on a very large sum from his publisher to write another story. He thought that nobody would agree to pay him such a large sum so he wouldn't have to write about Holmes again. This didn't work, so he ended up writing more. He killed Sherlock Holmes in 1893, but his readers were so upset that he wrote *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1901.

INTRODUCTION

Ask students if they have heard of Arthur Conan Doyle or *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Ask them if they've heard of Dr Watson or Sherlock Holmes. They may have seen the film featuring Robert Downey Jr and Jude Law, or seen the series starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman. If they have, ask them to describe the characters. Use the information in the *About the author* box to provide an introduction. Ask if students know any of the novels mentioned. Depending on the class, it may be appropriate to use L1 at this stage.

START THINKING ...

- 1 Find an illustration or image of Sherlock Holmes and project it on the whiteboard. Ask students to describe what they see and what type of character they think Holmes is.

Organise the class into pairs or small groups and have students briefly discuss the questions. Then ask students for their opinions. Encourage them to back up their answers with examples and to give reasons to justify their answers.

- 2 Draw students' attention to the text in the top right-hand corner of the page which 'sets the scene' and clarify understanding. Play the audio. When students have read and listened to the text once, allow time to check unfamiliar words in the glossary.

Optional extension

Ask some comprehension questions to check general understanding of the text.

- 3 Students read through the questions. Check for understanding and remind them to refer closely to the text to find the answers.

Answers

- 1 science
- 2 he was worried that there was a strange creature on the moor
- 3 a large, black animal
- 4 he didn't think it was true
- 5 two

- 4 Students read the text again. Discuss the questions and answers with the class.

Suggested answers

- 1 Because he didn't want people to think that he believed in superstition.
- 2 Possibly because he had seen something terrible before he died. This could have been the thing that was terrorising him.
- 3 When he saw the hound's footprints.



CRITICAL THINKING

Ask the students the questions: *Are there more or fewer crimes now than a hundred years ago? Have the types of crimes changed? Is it more or less difficult to catch criminals? How have improvements in science helped to catch criminals?* Working individually, students write notes for each question. When students have finished, ask them to work in small groups to compare their ideas. Bring their ideas together on the board and discuss their ideas as a class.

As an extension, ask students to imagine that Holmes and Watson are investigating crimes now. What would the characters do differently? Ideas could include: Mortimer could try to take a photo of the hound on his smartphone; Sherlock could look at the film from the security cameras around the house.

- 5 Read through the sentences one at a time to check comprehension of any unknown vocabulary. Working individually, students complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in the glossary. Ask individual students for answers.

Answers

- 1 justified
- 2 Butlers
- 3 sparsely
- 4 glimpse
- 5 inquests
- 6 tragedy

Optional extension

Ask students which facts they find interesting or surprising and why. Point out that these facts all relate to life in the early 1900s. Ask them to think about how life has changed since then using the words in the text. For example, they could talk about how there is less countryside so people live more closely together, people are less likely to have butlers, people are less superstitious, etc.

- 6 Ask students to read the text again and to underline five more words that are new to them. Ask them to write the words in sentences. They then read their sentences in pairs and correct each other's mistakes.

ROLE PLAY

- 7 Organise the class into pairs. Read the instruction and check that students understand what they are going to do. Ask a student to read the first part of the conversation. Ask another student to give an example of how they could reply. Brainstorm ideas and phrases on the board. Set a time limit of 5–10 minutes. Monitor and offer support while students are preparing their role plays. Students should write their scripts. Encourage as many students as possible to perform their role plays. Consider asking groups to perform to each other. The 'audience' group can monitor language use and make corrections if necessary. This can also be done as a full-class exercise.

LISTENING

- 8 Before listening, explain that students are going to hear about what happened when Watson and Sir Charles's nephew Henry confronted Barrymore at the window looking out to the moor. Play the recording twice. The first time, encourage students to listen without taking notes.

Answers

- 1 shadows 2 signal 3 assure 4 conspiracy
5 plot 6 prisoner

- 9 Students read through the questions. Encourage students to answer from memory. Play the recording again for students to complete their answers and to check.

Answers

- 1 the light from Barrymore's candle which is shaking
2 a small, yellow light 3 for over a hundred years
4 Barrymore's wife/the prisoner's sister
5 one signifies that the food is ready, the other where Seldon is

AUDIOSCRIPT (abridged from Chapter 9)

'What are you doing here, Barrymore?'

'Nothing, sir.' His agitation was so great that he could hardly speak, and the shadows sprang up and down from the shaking of his candle. 'It was the window, sir. I go round at night to see that they are fastened.'

'On the second floor?'

'Yes, sir, all the windows.'

'Look here, Barrymore,' said Sir Henry, sternly; 'we have made up our minds to have the truth out of you, so it will save you trouble to tell it sooner rather than later. Come, now! No lies! What were you doing at that window?'

'I was doing no harm, sir. I was holding a candle to the window.'

'And why were you holding a candle to the window?'

'Don't ask me, Sir Henry – don't ask me! I give you my word, sir, that it is not my secret, and that I cannot tell it.'

I took the candle from the trembling hand of the butler.

'He must have been holding it as a signal,' said I. 'Let us see if there is any answer.' I held it as he had done, and stared out into the darkness of the night. And then I gave a cry of exultation, for a tiny pin-point of yellow light glowed steadily in the centre of the black square framed by the window.

'There it is!' I cried.

'No, no, sir, it is nothing – nothing at all!' the butler broke in; 'I assure you, sir—'

'Move your light across the window, Watson!' cried the baronet. 'See, the other moves also! Now, you rascal, do you deny that it is a signal? Come, speak up! Who is out yonder, and what is this conspiracy that is going on?'

'It is my business, and not yours. I will not tell.'

'Then you leave my employment right away.'

'Very good, sir. If I must I must.'

'And you may well be ashamed of yourself. Your family has lived with mine for over a hundred years under this roof, and here I find you deep in some dark plot against me.'

'No, no, sir; no, not against you!' It was a woman's voice, and Mrs Barrymore was standing at the door.

'We have to go, Eliza. This is the end of it. You can pack our things,' said the butler.

'It is my doing, Sir Henry – all mine. He has done nothing except for my sake and because I asked him.'

'Speak out, then! What does it mean?'

'My unhappy brother is starving on the moor. The light is a signal to him that food is ready for him, and his light out yonder is to show the spot to which to bring it.'

'Then your brother is—'

'The escaped prisoner, sir – Seldon, the criminal!'

WRITING: AN ARTICLE

- 10 Read through the *Writing* skills box. Ask students if they can remember the correct structure of an article from Unit 8. Students can write their article in class or for homework. Students then swap their article with a partner. They read each other's work and highlight any mistakes. They assess whether the student has answered the question fully and whether they have included all of the points. They then return the article to the original student who looks at the comments and redrafts their work. Ask some students to read their articles out loud to the class.

THINK STYLE

Cliffhangers

- 11 Read the *Think* box and check that students understand the meaning of *cliffhanger*. Ask students to think of a film or series they have watched or a book they have read recently and tell the class about the cliffhanger. Discuss what they think makes a successful cliffhanger. Ask them to read the last line of the reading text 'Mr Holmes, they were the footprints of a gigantic hound!' or to listen again to the last two lines of the listening text 'Then your brother is—' 'The escaped prisoner, sir – Seldon, the criminal.' and to make notes about what happens next. They can then present their ideas to the class. Remind them that each chapter should end with a cliffhanger.

Additional reading or internet research topics

- Britain in the 1900s
- The life of Arthur Conan Doyle
- Sherlock Holmes short stories