

**Year 2 The Dark – Lemony Snicket illustrated by Jon Klassen**

<p><b>Overview of the unit</b> including writing outcomes</p>	<p><b>Linked Texts</b> – picture books, novels, non-fiction, film and moving image, music and art</p>
<p>This unit opens up different views of night-time and darkness. 5-7 years olds will tend towards ego-centrism and single viewpoints. The curriculum in all subjects ought to open up their views to acknowledge and explore difference.</p> <p>One of the most effective ways to do this is through fictional experiences in story and the power of language to change viewpoint in poetry.</p> <p>Through this unit, children should be more able to appreciate the positive aspects of darkness and night-time and be able to talk about any fears they have and what they can do to help this.</p> <p><b>Big reading questions:</b></p> <p>Can we have different feelings about the dark? Why might that be? How can a writer help us to see the beauty and wonder of the dark?</p> <p><b>Possible writing outcomes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write simple poems that personify the dark – bringing it to life like a character</li> <li>2. Write a letter of advice written to Laszlo to help him with his fear of the dark</li> <li>3. Create and write a description of the character of the dark</li> <li>4. Write a guide to the wonders of the dark for other children (and adults...)</li> <li>5. Write a lullaby to help a young child fall asleep feeling safe in the dark</li> <li>6. Write the story of Orion and the Dark from the point of view of the character of the dark, or write their own night-time adventure.</li> </ol>	<p>Good to link to an exploration of light and shadow night and day and the seasons through science.</p> <p>Books and other texts should be made available on nocturnal animals.</p> <p><b>Picture Books</b> Orion and the Dark, Emma Yarlett The Night Gardener, Terry and Eric Fan The Night Box, Louise Grieg, Ashling Lyndsay Nightlights, Lorena Alvarez (graphic novel)</p> <p><b>Non-Fiction</b> Bat Loves the Night, Nicola Davies Fox Explores the Night, Martin Jenkins</p> <p><b>Poems</b> Don't be Scared, Carol Ann Duffy The Night, Eleanor Farjeon Escape at Bedtime, Robert Louis Stevenson Playing with Stars, Brian Moses The Dark, James Carter</p> <p><b>Lullabies</b> Three Good Things, Jan Dean Cradle Song, Thomas Dekker Golden Slumbers, Paul McCartney Sweet and low (from The Princess), Alfred Lord Tennyson Seal Lullaby, Rudyard Kipling</p>
<p><b>Notes on pupil sub-groups</b> needing specific emphasis based on on-going assessment</p>	
	<p><b>Paintings/Visuals</b> Starry Night, Vincent Van Gogh Fishermen at Sea, J.M.W. Turner Pictures of Earth etc from the Hubble telescope</p>

## Year 2 Reading Comprehension

**Making meaning through connections with known words and sentence patterns, own experience, knowledge of the world and other texts**

### Reading range

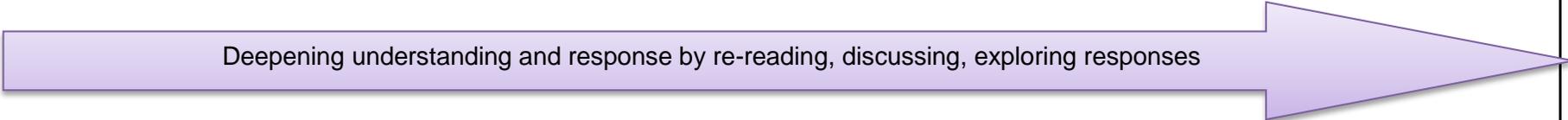
- contemporary and classic poetry,
- key stories (high quality core texts for all children), fairy stories, traditional tales – considering their characteristics (themes, genre features, archetypal characters, story shapes, changes in mood)
- non-fiction structured in different ways – linked to the curriculum and children’s own interests

**Each school should include elements of their vision and values to include texts from a variety of cultures and traditions, those that explore rather than confirm stereotypes, those that explore ethics, morality, spirituality, values, choices and dilemmas.**

### Curriculum opportunities

- re-reading instructional texts to improve fluency
- have books read aloud to them beyond that which they can read independently
- re-reading core shared texts to deepen inferences, build understanding of sequence and story structure and develop personal responses and evaluation
- learn a repertoire of poetry by heart
- have the strategies and processes for using non-fiction books modelled and shared
- develop and evaluate over time clear rules for discussion
- use role play and drama strategies to identify with and explore characters and to support the adoption of story language

Deepening understanding and response by re-reading, discussing, exploring responses



	Literal comprehension			Inference				Critical and evaluative reading		
National curriculum objectives	Discuss and clarify the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary	Discuss the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related	Retell a range of familiar stories, adopting story language	Re-read with fluency: appropriate pace and intonation to make the meaning clear	Speak clearly in presentations, performances and role-plays, increasingly listening to and responding to others	Make inferences on the basis of what is being said and done	Predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far	Discuss their favourite words and phrases	Take part in discussions, asking questions, expressing views and considering the opinions of others	Make links between what they are reading and other books they have read
	explain and discuss their understanding of books, poems and other material, both those that they listen to and those that they read for themselves.					participate in discussion about books, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say				
strategies	Clarify, monitor, summarise, explain, retrieve					Empathise, visualise, make links, predict, question, notice writers’ choices				

**Suggested teaching sequence** including layered questions: literal, inferential, evaluative

**Possible adaptations:** scaffolds (thinking grids/support, adult guide, pre-teach, group formation), sub-groups, additional challenge, task design, specific focus, emphasis

Use the ppt provided.

**Prior knowledge**

Look at the picture of the night sky on the first slide – how does it make you feel?

Can we have different feelings about the dark? Talk to a partner and try to share a time when the dark is good and not so good. In your groups – sort the given pictures in to groups – when does darkness seem friendly and not friendly?

(as the unit develops, collect reasons why and examples of the dark as positive. Keep adding different adjectives – comforting, kind, magical, protective – with examples: The dark is...because...

Collect exciting and comforting dark places – bring pictures from home and allow the children to add ideas on post-its.)

**James Carter: The Dark – poem**

Read the poem aloud with rhythm and changes in tone and volume – give each stanza some texture!

As a pair:

Pick your favourite lines and be ready to share why you like them.

Is there a line you don't understand?

Take this to the pair opposite and see if you can work it out together.

Now as a group of 4:

What do you think the poet thinks of the dark and why?

Explore through talk then ask the children to record their answers

Together:

You will be given one of the stanzas to perform.

- Which lines might you all read together?
- Will each line be loud or soft – or even a whisper?
- What tone of voice will you use?
- Will you use any actions or facial expressions?

After a grand class performance:

Is it important that the poem has a regular, bouncy four beats per line and uses end of line

rhymes? Does this add to the poet's message?

Together:

How does the poet make the dark seem like it is alive?

Try to find three ways the speaker makes the dark seem good. Be ready to share this.

Re-read the final stanza.

How do the last two lines make you feel about the dark?

Record answers in reading journal – give inform/infer retrieval grids as a scaffold for those who need it.

### **Don't be afraid of the dark – poem**

Read the opening of Carol Ann-Duffy's 'Don't be afraid of the dark'

The dark is only a blanket  
for the moon to put on her bed.

The dark is a private cinema  
for the movie dreams in your head.

Choose your favourite couplet - how does it make you feel about the dark?

What has made you feel this?

Now prepare your own ideas to see the wonder of other dark places:

<b>Dark places</b>	<b>What is special about it?</b>	<b>It looks like...</b>
The night sky	It's huge and I can see the stars and moon	White splattered paint on a cloth
A rabbit's burrow under the ground	It's cosy and safe	An underground home
My cupboard	It's packed full and messy	A hiding place for toys


Model how to take one of your ideas and use the poetry writing frame to structure lines.

e.g. The dark is a cloth spread across the skies  
where the stars are splattered like paint

Invite the children in to use your other ideas together. Accept that there can be different ways of using the ideas and make it clear how the prepositions for, where, behind – or others – are used to begin each second line. Lead this in to children using their own ideas to construct a poem with at least 3 couplets. Share some emerging answers together = some may work well and some may need improving – invite the group in to help.

Read the whole of Duffy's poem and ask children to discuss in small groups

Choose your favourite lines and explain how they make you think about the dark.  
Now as a group they must prepare an answer to these questions to share with the whole group, with their reasons:

Do you like the ending?  
Do you think this poem would be a good lullaby to share with children at bedtime?

Now return to the children's own poems. Can they add at least two more ideas to their poem and think of a title and an address to their reader at the end, as Duffy has done.

### **The Dark – Lemony Snicket & Jon Klassen**

1. Read the first two pages of the story. Is there anything in Laszo's house that makes the dark more frightening? Re-read the words and look at the pictures to use as evidence.
2. Continue to read and stop at p.8 Do you think the dark has become more or less frightening to Laszlo? How does the writer make the dark seem more frightening?
3. Use Snicket's device of bringing the dark alive with verb choices to write two short poems. First make the dark frightening, then make choices that make it

positive. Your working wall and previous work on poetry should feed these choices.

4. Read the next page. Why does Laszlo say 'Hi' to the dark each morning if he is afraid? What could he do to be less afraid? Enlist the class to write Laszlo a letter that you will leave under his duvet at night-time. Use think-pair-share to gather ideas of what you could include in the letter. Why do we now think the dark and the night-time can be wonderful? Can we use some of the poetic techniques we have used – bringing the dark alive, comparing it to other things? Agree the shape – at least three paragraphs – the content ideas and the techniques you can include in the letter before asking children to draft their letter to Laszlo. Share emerging examples, asking a group of children to listen as if they are Laszlo as snippets are read aloud. Would the letter be comforting? Would it make them feel differently about the dark?
5. Read to p.15 The voice of the dark is like a character. What can we tell about the character of The dark from his voice? Write 3 adjectives to describe the character of The dark. You might wish to use the grid on the ppt to prompt inferences about his character from description.
6. Read to p.29 – miss the full page of text that interrupts Laszlo following the voice – you will return to this later. Pause at p.29 and ask for a prediction: Why has The dark led Laszlo all the way to this point? What do you think will be in the bottom drawer? What makes you think this? Should Laszlo trust the dark? You could set up a conscience corridor with one child being Laszlo and listening to the advice of the other children – should he trust the dark?
7. What is the readers' reaction when they find out it is a bulb? Go back to your words to describe The dark – are you still happy with these or do you need to change them? If so, why is this?
8. Now read the full page spread. Lead this session with adults supporting some children in guided sessions, whilst other children have some time to re-read the passage in groups then record their answers: Can you find more reasons why we should feel good about the dark in this passage?

**Work towards children creating their own illustration of 'The dark' as a character, which they will accompany with a description.**

You may wish to read together Emma Yarlett's 'Orion and the Dark' in which Orion, a young boy who is afraid of the dark, is invited to take a night-time tour of his house to conquer his fears.

Build skills with:

If the dark were a character – what would they look like? Draw and label your character of the dark, using noun phrases to describe its appearance. Use adjectives to build its character. How can the dark be:  
Kind...? The dark is kind because...  
Playful...?  
Gentle...?  
Magical...?

How would it move – think of the right verbs.  
The dark...  
Spills across...  
Spreads around...  
Dances among...  
Sleeps beneath...  
Rests inside...

A model passage exists on the ppt but a teacher modelling the writing of their own passage and exploring the process of the choices they make and the transcription skills they use will be more powerful.

You may wish to move straight to preparing to write a guide book if you feel the skills above have been robust through the previous writing tasks

**Don't be afraid of the dark!**

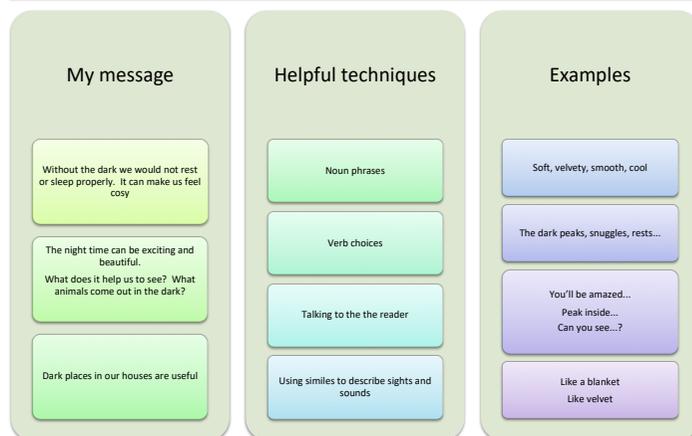
Now build a specific area on your writing wall to support this task. Make the purpose and audience clear with the writing LO as a question:

***Can you write a guide book for children to help them to notice and celebrate the wonderful things about the dark?***

First create content ideas, then build techniques drawing on all the literature you have explored to arrive at a supportive composition driven working wall that looks something like this:

## Don't be afraid of the dark!

Can you write a guide book for children to notice and celebrate the wonderful things about the dark?



Build some structural/grammar skills included on slide 46 of the ppt through teaching. The slide is not meant for children – but to model to teachers how Year 2 grammar could be fed purposefully in to this task. Use the sequence:

1. How does this make us feel about the dark? How is this useful?
2. Model composition
3. Shared composition
4. Over to you – practise composition using your own ideas.

Provide children with a graphic organiser to map the focus of each section, perhaps using sub-headings:

### **The snuggly dark**

It helps us to sleep, makes us feel cosy...

### **The magical dark**

Seeing the moon and stars at night, nocturnal animals, fireworks...

### **The useful dark**

Places where we store things, the shadows of trees...

### **Where next?**

Depending on time constraints and the needs of your group, you could move to reading and lullabies (looking at how Paul McCartney's Golden Slumbers was used for the 2018 John Lewis Christmas advert soundtrack. Why would they use a lullaby? Why was there a scene at

night?)

If children need practice at story writing, they could write the EXISTING story of Orion's adventure with the dark – from the Dark's viewpoint. They will need to rehearse the stages of the story in character – break in to 5 stages:

1. Seeing poor Orion unhappy through his window
2. Stepping in and inviting him to join you
3. Taking him to parts of the house
4. Taking him outside and up to the sky
5. Promising you will never be far away

Some children will need more challenge and could plan their own night-time adventure with the character of the dark that they created. Make must make sure that The Dark teaches them new things about night-time sounds, creatures and wonders!

## Year 1 writing behaviours

<b>Generating ideas</b>	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Composing and experimenting</b>	<b>Reviewing and refining</b>
Participate in role play, drama, oral retelling using story language	Use story maps and/or picture cues to support retelling	Say out loud what they are going to write about	Discuss what they have written with their teacher or other pupils
Participate in discussion about what is read to them, taking turns and listening to what others say	Retell stories to anchor in memory before writing	Compose a sentence orally before writing it	Read aloud their writing clearly enough to be heard by their peers and their teacher
Begin to imitate language matched to context	Contribute to shared writing, adding to and using word banks and other scaffolds	Use word walls and other scaffolds created during talk and shared reading	Respond to others' writing as a reader

PTO

## Year 2 writing behaviours

Generating ideas	Planning	Composing and experimenting	Reviewing and refining
Participate in role play, drama, oral retelling to extend understanding and try out the language of the text	Retell stories and say out loud what they are going to write about to anchor in memory before writing	Encapsulate what they want to say, sentence by sentence	Evaluate what they and others have written with their teacher or other pupils
Participate in discussion about what is read to them, taking turns and listening to what others say	Map out ideas, key words and phrases including new vocabulary using notes, story maps and boards, concept maps	Re-read during and after composition to check writing makes sense (e.g. consistent tense) and make simple additions and revisions	Read aloud their writing with appropriate intonation to make meaning clear
Explain and discuss their understanding of texts and topics, asking and answering questions	Contribute to shared writing, adding to and using word banks and other scaffolds	Use word walls and other scaffolds created during talk and shared reading with greater independence	Proof-read to check for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar