



Teaching Notes & Resources

Key Stage 2

Themes: Adventure | Dystopia | Magic | Friendship

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Nightspark by Michael Mann

ABOUT THE BOOK

Nightspark is the second and final book in the *Ghostcloud* series.

Having escaped from the half-bombed, blackened power station where he was being imprisoned, 12-year-old Luke is finally reunited with his family above ground. But though Luke tries to readjust, he can't shake the guilt he feels for leaving behind his friend Ravi, nor the feeling that someone – or something – is watching him from the shadows.

With the help of ghost-girl Alma and his friend Jess, Luke must journey across the country and sea to find Ravi, the friend who was there for him in his darkest hours. And in doing so, he must face his past and confront his deepest fears . . .

A riveting, magical adventure set in the waterways of a richly reimagined England, and the epic conclusion of the *Ghostcloud* duology.



"A superbly inventive and magical debut"

Piers Torday

ABOUT GHOSTCLOUD

Catch the wind. Find your freedom.

An enchanting, thrilling adventure set deep underneath a richly reimagined London for 9+ readers.

Kidnapped and forced to shovel coal underneath a half-bombed, blackened power station, Luke's life is miserable. Then, he discovers he can see things others can't. Ghostly things. Specifically, a ghost-girl named Alma, who can ride clouds through the night sky and bend their shape to her will. With Alma's help, Luke discovers he is in fact a rare being – half-human and half-something else . . .

Then Luke learns the terrible truth of why children are being kidnapped and forced to work in the power station, and he becomes even more desperate to escape.

Can Luke find out who he really is . . . and find his freedom?



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BRINGING A WORLD TO LIFE

As we read *Nightspark*, we feel immersed in the sights, smells and sounds of the world or setting that Luke and his friends travel through. But how does the author, Michael Mann, bring the different locations in his story to life?

As you read, keep a record of any examples of descriptive language of the various locations in the story.

Descriptive language can include the following:

- Vivid details. Specific details paint a picture in the reader's mind and appeal to the reader's senses, i.e. sensory language
- Figurative language. Tools of the writer's craft, such as simile and metaphor, add depth to authors' descriptions
- Interesting and extensive vocabulary. For example, unusual or eye-catching word choices

Can you think of anything else?

TASK 1

Keep a record as you read! Use the template on the next page to note down examples of the author's descriptive language. What mood or atmosphere is created in each setting? How does the author use descriptive language to do this? Some of the rows have been left blank for you to identify any further locations in the story that interest you.

Extension: Which is your favourite description and why? Choose one of the settings in the first column and use Michael Mann's descriptive language to draw the scene.



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Setting	Pages	Examples of descriptive language	Mood/atmosphere created
Limehouse Docks	14-15	E.G. They gazed out over the mud-grey river.	Gloomy, ominous, mysterious.
Temple			
Bloomsbury & Great Ormond Street			
Battersea Power Station			
The Water Markets			



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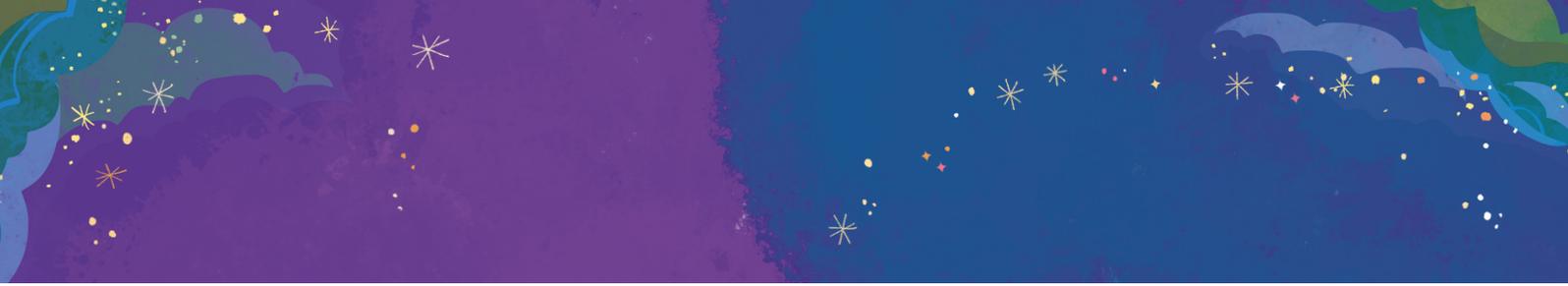
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The Strand & Vaudeville Square	The Slums	Olympic Stadium	Paternoster Square	Carter Lane

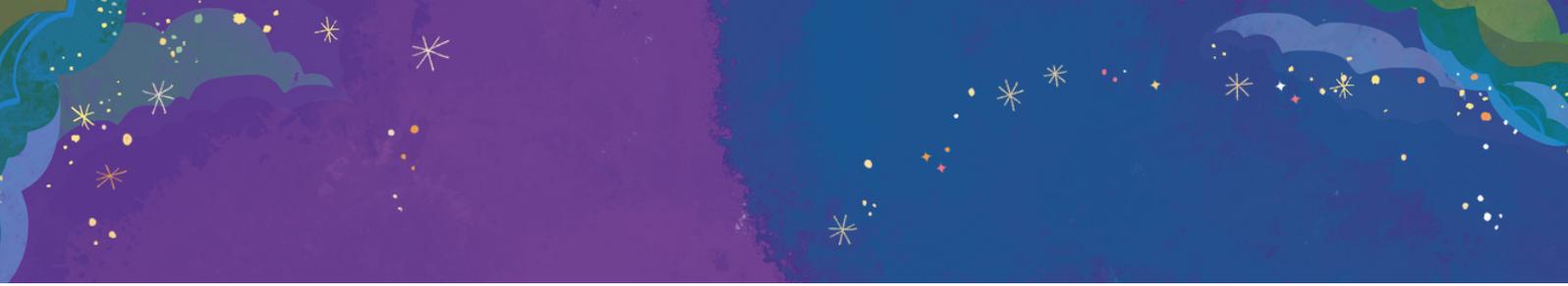


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Mansion House	Teddington Lock				



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TASK 2

Let's take a closer look at Michael Mann's use of sensory description. Read the description of the view from Limehouse Docks below, taken from pages 14–15.

They gazed out over the mud-grey river. To the right, cargo-ships steamed past the arched loading bays of Wapping docks, filled with tar, grain and scented tobacco. A grid of canals ran into the distance packed with pie sellers, tea hawkers and greedy-eyed boat cleaners.

- What can you see?
- What can you smell?
- What can you hear?
- What can you taste?
- What can you touch?

TASK 3

Using Michael Mann's example as inspiration, write your own description of a setting of your choice to bring it to life! Your challenge: it only needs to be three sentences long, but can you fit in as much descriptive language as possible? Share your sentences with your classmates and create a wall display of your descriptive language.

Sentence 1:

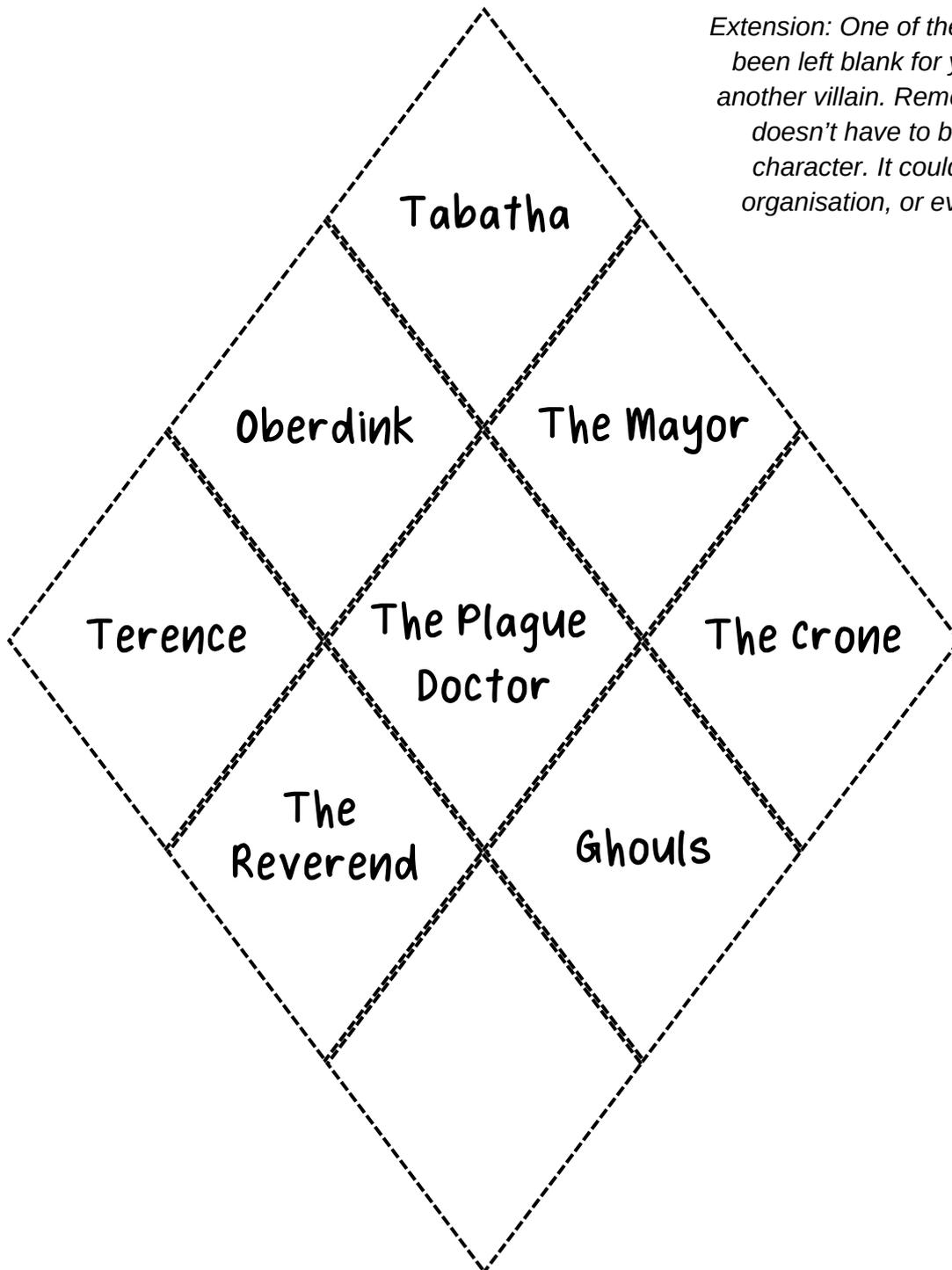
Sentence 2:

Sentence 3:



TASK 4

Below is a 'diamond nine' of the different villains or obstacles in the story. Cut out the segments of the diamond. As you read, rearrange the diamond to show which villain is the biggest threat to Luke (where the top of the diamond represents the biggest threat). Give reasons for how you arrange your diamond. You might want to review your diamond after reading every chapter.



Extension: One of the diamonds has been left blank for you to identify another villain. Remember, a villain doesn't have to be a physical character. It could also be an organisation, or even a feeling.



TASK 6

In Chapter 16, Luke faces Tabatha in a chilling encounter. Re-read the chapter and note down any particularly effective descriptions of Tabatha – for example, this one on page 146:

He was nearly at the door. He could hear sirens blaring in the distance, the voices from outside, when from the door to his room stepped a hideous shadow – a half-formed, melting spectre of a woman.

It slipped and slid down the corridor after him. Neck craning. Eyes blazing. All nails and limbs. It moved with a scratching, scuttling sound.

Create a sketch of Tabatha based on these descriptions. Then, sketch a villain of your own. How can you make your villain as frightening as possible?



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