Cracks

Overview

Set in 2024, this is the story of a boy, Cal, who wakes from a 12-year coma and gradually discovers that the world he knows (complete with dreadful stepfather and stepbrother, school, best friend Amil and ineffective mother) is, in fact, composed of memories transplanted into his brain via a dead donor. The world of 2024 is founded on paranoia, and those in charge will do anything to maintain power. Set against them is the resistance movement, Torch, who rescue Cal from the Facility where he’s being used as a lab rat.

Cal feels he cannot trust Torch. He escapes from them and sets about finding the truth about what happened to him and his family. He teams up with Jax and Kyla in a kind of Fagin’s den run by Zander, but is forced to flee when Zander threatens to turn him in to the authorities for a substantial reward. At the climax, Cal confronts his nemesis, Dr Cavendish, both physically and in the mental world he’s been put in by the experiment. The Facility is destroyed in the ensuing explosion, Jax is killed but Cal is reunited with Torch and, through them, with Kyla and his real family.

Background and context

The novel fits well into the increasingly popular ‘speculative fiction’ genre. The term ‘speculative’ generally refers to a setting in the near future (as opposed to science fiction, where many novels are set in the far future) and often such novels describe a dystopian environment where conventional society has collapsed, often as a result of political upheaval, environmental damage and/or experimentation with genetic modification. Speculative fiction allows authors to explore the ‘what if…?’ question using realistic, contemporary concerns.

The hugely popular The Hunger Games trilogy and film are perhaps the best-known examples of this genre and may well be familiar to some students. These novels and the film are, of course, American in origin whereas Cracks is a very British novel with elements, especially in the setting, that students will find easy to connect with, and a central character whose life, particularly in the first part of the novel, will be recognisable from many TV programmes – although not, hopefully, from real life.

Author information

Cracks is Caroline Green’s second novel. Her first, Dark Ride, was published in 2011 and won the RoNA Young Adult award. Students might be interested to know that she was a journalist for many years before turning to fiction, and says that ‘making things up is much, much more enjoyable than writing about real things’.

For students who like to know about the authors of their class novels (or for a useful research task), a good starting point is the author’s website at http://www.carolinegreen.net.

Why study this book?

The novel provides teachers with an excellent combination of action, mystery and theme. It raises important questions about power, control and the ethics of medical advances, as well as providing valuable learning opportunities in key reading skills such as inference and deduction and the use of structural devices. The writer’s style and the reading level of the text make it well suited to a wide range of abilities, and there are many opportunities for differentiation so that the experience of reading the novel becomes valuable in ensuring progression.

Characterisation in Cracks is highly effective, with clearly delineated main characters and a hero who is easy to identify with and support. There’s an ambivalence about some of the secondary characters, so younger readers may be unsure (just as the hero is unsure) whether they are on the side of good or evil.

The novel works on the simple, but highly useful, principle of building tension throughout so that the plot continues to engage the reader as he or she comes to care more and more about what happens to the protagonist. In addition, there is much about the protagonist’s life that is mysterious or deliberately difficult to make sense of, providing fertile ground for prediction and sequencing activities – and a strong sense of satisfaction for students when questions are resolved and what was previously opaque becomes clear.
Ways into the book

There are several possible starting points, depending on whether the general approach is likely to be thematic or structural. Of course, it is perfectly possible to cover both areas, but this will depend to a large extent on where the novel fits in the overall scheme of work for the year group or key stage, and the areas within the reading and writing curriculum that students need to focus on.

Thematically, key starter questions will probably revolve around medical progress, experimentation and the use/misuse of power. If doctors could plant other people’s memories into a subject’s brain, what would be the consequences? How might this be misused by those interested in maintaining control? What is a medically induced coma? Why would this be used? What other forms of mental manipulation are in use – or could be in use – in the near future?

If a more structural approach is wanted, a useful starting point is the more philosophical question ‘How do we know what is real?’ There are numerous accounts of experiments and tricks that can convince people that what they are seeing is real (an excerpt from a Derren Brown TV programme could well engage students), together with explanations as to how these work. The opening chapters of Cracks can then be read with an eye on what clues the author gives us that what we’re experiencing through Cal is not real, although it appears to be.

An initial activity linking both of these approaches might be to start with giving students the opening page of George Orwell’s 1984 and annotating it together for examples of how the writer builds a world that immediately raises questions about control, surveillance and shifts in the way society works, as well as aspects that seem unreal. This can lead in to a shared reading of the first chapter of Cracks, with students bringing the ‘forensic’ approach of their starter activity to bear on the opening of their new class novel.

Creative approaches

One key to enjoying this novel is to make sure that students can reassemble Cal’s real life through what he (and the readers) gradually discovers as the story progresses. To this end, it will be helpful for students to maintain a reading journal or log so that they can note down facts as they come across them, with the idea of assembling a complete timeline/character profile by the time they reach the end. An alternative way to do this is to open a ‘Torch case file’ for the subject ‘Callum Michael Conway’, to include regularly updated reports from Torch agents on the progress of the case.

To assist students who have a keen visual approach to fiction, the creation of an electronic or paper-based ‘character collage’ is an excellent activity. Students can collect and display images showing what they think the main characters look like, and can also add single words or short phrases that highlight themes or character traits to the collage. The resulting collages make an excellent display for the duration of the scheme of work.

There is a video trailer for the novel on the Piccadilly Press website at http://www.piccadillypress.co.uk/teen/caroline-green/cracks.html

If the facilities are available, students could make a similar short video, narrated by Cal, at different stages in the novel – or at the end. An alternative would be to produce the script and/or storyboard for such a video.

Further reading and resources

As Cracks is a self-contained novel (i.e. not part of a series), teachers may want to focus on the reading experience itself, together with the activities suggested in the scheme of work. However, broadening the scope of the unit of work – and providing further reading for students who have particularly enjoyed the novel – can be achieved through using some of the following resources:

Dark Ride is Caroline Green’s first novel (ISBN: 978 1 8481 2138 6).
Lovereading has a section called ‘Alternative Futures’, often featuring novels suitable for young adult, more able, readers at http://www.lovereading.co.uk/genre/dst/Alternative-Futures-Dystopian-Fiction.html

The sister site, Lovereading4kids, has a section called ‘Undercover Reads’ featuring natural follow-on novels from *Cracks*. Visit the website at http://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/genre/ucr/Undercover-Reads.html

A good deal of fun can be had with optical illusions and perception puzzles, raising questions about the reality or otherwise of what we see. Several examples are at http://www.scientificpsychic.com/graphics/

Wikipedia has a thought-provoking page on credible predictions of the near future – at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_future_in_forecasts – which could be accessed to provide background for discussion and speculative thinking.
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<td>RAF 3; RAF 4</td>
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<td>Lesson 11: Updates</td>
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Lesson plan 1

What does the future hold?

Objectives
To be able to speculate on possible futures.
To understand how to maintain a reading log.

Key learning
5.2; 6.1

Main targeted assessment
RAF 7; S&LAF 2

Learning outcomes
All will take part in a discussion activity and will think about what might happen to society and the environment in the future; they will also begin to keep a reading log.
Most will be able to suggest more than one possible future and explain how it might come about.
Some will confidently discuss a range of possible futures and the actions (or lack of them) that will bring these about.

Starter
Display the following sentence stem: When I’m 30 …
Ask students to complete five sentences with this beginning, focusing not on themselves but on what the world will be like and what might be happening around them.

Working through the lesson
1. In groups of four, students should compare the sentences written for the starter activity and each group should decide on the most interesting and/or plausible suggestions. Take feedback to arrive at a ‘Top futures’ list.
2. Give out reading logs (see Worksheet 1 for a possible format) and explain the ways in which they are to be used. Ask students to copy the agreed ‘Top futures’ list to a page at the beginning.
3. Ask students to write the word ‘Cracks’ in the centre of a reading log page. Allow five minutes for a free-association activity to generate mind maps based on this word.
Lower-ability students can be provided with the first few nodes of the mind map already written in.

Plenary
Allow five minutes for pairs of students to come up with at least two positive and two negative speculative forecasts. Divide the class into halves. Then choose three students from one half to say ‘The near future will be better than today. We will …’ and three students from the other half to say ‘The near future will be worse than today. We will …’

Homework
Ask students to access and read http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_future_in_forecasts. Provide printed copies for those who are likely to be unable to read this online.
First page analysis

Objectives
Be able to use inference and deduction in order to extract information from text.

Key learning
5.1; 6.3

Main targeted assessment
RAF 3; RAF 5; S&LAF 2

Learning outcomes
All will take part in a close-reading activity requiring the use of deductive skills.
Most will be able to come up with a range of inferences and deductions, and support them with evidence from the text.
Some will be able to extrapolate a wide range of perceptive inferences from available evidence.

Starter
Ask students to write down the names of five characters from books they’ve recently read or TV programmes/films they’ve watched. Next to each character, note down what he/she did – or looked like – that made the character memorable. Ask the students to share their list with a partner and try to come up with some suggestions as to what makes a character memorable.

Working through the lesson
1. With the class, read the opening sequence of the novel (p1, ending at ‘... get out of there as fast as I can.’). It will be useful to have this section photocopied onto a larger sheet of paper to facilitate annotation.

2. Display the questions: Who? What? Where? Arrange students in groups of four, with a copy of the opening text for each student. Allocate one question to each group. The idea is for the group to answer their question as fully as possible by annotating their copies to show evidence that allows an inference to be made and to note what the inference is.

3. Re-form the groups so that there are representatives of all the questions together. Through explanation and discussion, students in all groups should emerge with a fully annotated version of the opening section.
Lower-ability students can be supported by giving them the ‘What?’ question – which is easier – or by pointing out for them particular words or phrases that give clues to setting, character or events and asking them to make an educated guess.

Plenary
Tell the class that they can now demonstrate the skill of inference. Direct attention to the novel’s opening line. Ask students to note down at least two inferences they can make (there will be at least one more ‘crack’; subsequent cracks may not be freaky). Take feedback.

Homework
Ask students to read Chapters 1–3 and update their reading logs to include what they now know or can infer about Cal’s life.
The life of Cal

Objectives
Be able to interpret events and ideas from the text.
Be able to use the skill of skimming a text to pick up important information.

Key learning
5.1; 5.2

Main targeted assessment
RAF 1; RAF 3

Learning outcomes
All will more fully understand the life of the novel’s central character.
Most will pick up the medical imagery that underlies the life of the central character.
Some will be able to explain the author’s use of foreshadowing.

Starter
Give students three minutes to find as many examples as they can of ‘something’s not quite right’ by skimming through pp1–19 (Chapters 1–3 – already read for homework). Take a small number of examples as feedback.

Working through the lesson
1. Model the process of collecting a ‘fact’ about Cal’s life by scanning a page of the novel, noting down a fact and putting the page reference in brackets after it.
2. Use shared discussion and the skills practised in the starter activity to assist the class in coming up with two further facts, listed in the same way.
3. Independently, students should assemble as many facts as time allows, up to the end of Chapter 3; they should add them to the list from the modelling and sharing process.
4. Set a challenge. Students have 10 minutes to come up with any reference to a medical term or procedure in pp1–26. Only the page number and paragraph need to be jotted down.

Lower-ability students can be given one or two examples to start them off, (e.g. p4 paragraph 4); higher-ability students can work on step 4 as a guided group and can be introduced to the term ‘foreshadowing’.

Plenary
Divide the class into halves. Allow some thinking and preparation time, then select a student from one half to complete the sentence ‘We know that Cal …’ followed by a selected student from the other half to complete the sentence ‘Yes, but …’, focusing on aspects of Cal’s life that don’t ring true and/or the medical references that undermine what the reader is learning about Cal’s life.

Homework
Ask students to read Chapters 4–9 and update their reading logs. As an extension activity, students could be asked to produce a 100-word summary of Part 1 of the novel.
K-W-L charting

Objectives
Be able to understand and select information from a text.

Key learning
5.1

Main targeted assessment
RAF 2; RAF 3

Learning outcomes
All will be able to summarise and consolidate their understanding of Part 1 of the novel.
Most will be able to pick out and include only essential detail in their summary, and will be able to raise important questions about the next stage of the novel.
Some will begin to reflect on key elements of plot and character and the future direction of the story.

Starter
‘Fridge magnets’ activity: ask students, working individually or in pairs, to make a list of up to 10 single words that, when assembled in some sort of order, will make up the story of Cracks so far. Content words only are allowed (i.e. no connectives, pronouns or determiners). They can then shuffle the words and pass them on so that another student or pair can rearrange them to make a plausible alternative summary.

Working through the lesson
1. A ‘reverse cloze’ activity: ask students to write independently five sentences describing and summarising the events of Part 1 of the novel. (If the extension activity from Lesson 3 was set, this can be used as a starting point for students.) They should then produce a second version that replaces key content words with a line or a blank space. Redistribute the cloze passages and ask students to solve the one they are given.
2. Give out the K-W-L chart (Worksheet 2) and model how it could be completed with entries for Chapters 1–3.
3. Independently, students should complete the chart for Chapters 4–9. Lower-ability students could be set to finding just two entries for the chart, completed with support as necessary.
4. Read together Chapters 10 and 11.

Plenary
Point out that the summaries developed in the lesson would be useful for someone who is joining the class late. Ask a student to give one example of an item or fact they selected to include in their summary. Then ask them to complete the sentence ‘I chose this because …’, with an emphasis on why it would enable someone to catch up with the rest of the class. An example would be ‘… because it tells us a great deal about Cal’s personality’.

Homework
Ask students to find out anything they can about medical breakthroughs of the 20th century. They could be given some words and phrases to direct their search, such as ‘penicillin’, ‘pacemaker’, ‘dialysis machine’, ‘CT scan’, ‘laser surgery’. They should bring their research to the next lesson.
Medical experiments and the Torch case file

Objectives
Be able to understand and select information from a text.
Be able to talk in purposeful ways to explore ideas.
Be able to produce writing that is appropriate to the task and purpose.

Key learning
1.1; 1.2; 2.1; 3.1; 5.1; 5.2; 7.2, 8.5

Main targeted assessment
RAF 2; RAF 3; S&LAF 1; S&LAF 2; WAF 1; WAF 2

Learning outcomes
All will take part in a discussion about medical experiments and will write a short report.
Most will be able to consider two sides of an argument and write from a point of view different to their own.
Some will explore sophisticated ideas about medical experimentation and will write an imaginative and well-crafted formal report.

Starter
Ask students, in pairs, to describe to each other a medical breakthrough of the 20th century (researched for homework from Lesson 4). They should try to use the ‘Five Ws and an H’ (Who, What, Why, When, Where, How) structure for their explanations.

Working through the lesson
1. Display the discussion question: Researchers think that an important breakthrough in finding a cure for cancer is not far away. However, they need to do some experiments involving powerful drugs on 2,000 volunteers of different genders and ages, including children from the age of 11 upwards. Should they be allowed to do so?
2. In small groups, students should come up with both ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answers, with reasons. (Use Worksheet 3 to facilitate this). If time allows, groups can be asked to make short presentations to persuade the class to agree on one point of view only.
3. Introduce and explain the ‘Torch case file’ (Worksheet 4). Ask students to update the file, writing from the point of view of a Torch resistance fighter, with what they know so far.

Plenary
Select students to tell the class something they know now that they didn’t know at the beginning of the lesson. (Note that this could be something about medical experimentation or a particular aspect of the story.)

Homework
Ask students to read Chapters 12–15 and update their reading logs.
Cal’s diary

Objectives
Be able to understand and select information from a text.
Be able to produce an imaginative and interesting piece of writing.

Key learning
5.1; 5.2; 7.2; 8.1; 8.5; 8.6

Main targeted assessment
RAF 1; RAF 2; WAF 1; WAF 2; WAF 7

Learning outcomes
All will write a diary entry for Cal.
Most will write more than one diary entry showing the development of the character and his predicament.
Some will produce an imaginative set of diary entries that show a sophisticated understanding of Cal’s character.

Starte
Refresh memories of the events of Chapters 12–15 (read for homework from Lesson 5). Ask students to write down a series of thought bubbles to show what Cal is thinking at this point in the story.
Read p107 (the first page of Chapter 16) and compare students’ thought bubbles with the author’s handling of Cal’s reflections.

Working through the lesson
1. Model the beginning of a diary entry written by Cal immediately after his escape from the Facility. Several points should be made explicit about the diary form: use of the first person; some abbreviations are acceptable; the audience is the writer himself, so a reflective style should be used.
2. As a shared activity, develop the first diary entry by taking suggestions from the class and ensuring that they meet the criteria established in step 1.
3. Independently, students should further develop the diary. Worksheet 5 can be used as a writing space. The aim is to write more than one entry and, if possible, to ensure that an entry is written at the point in the story the reading has reached (i.e. the beginning of Chapter 16).

Plenary
Ask some students to read out one of their diary entries. After each reading, select one or two students to assess how well the entry reflects Cal’s inner thoughts, and to suggest one improvement that could be made to the diary entry.

Homework
Students can be encouraged to work on their diary entries for Cal so that their work can be used for a reading and/or a writing assessment.
Students should read Chapters 16–20 in preparation for the next lesson.
Building tension

Objectives
Be able to explain and comment on a writer’s use of language.
Be able to comment effectively on the effect of the text on the reader.

Key learning
5.1; 5.2; 6.2

Main targeted assessment
RAF 2; RAF 5; RAF 6; WAF 2; WAF 7

Learning outcomes
All will be able to explain how the writer creates tension in the canal episode.
Most will be able to offer an explanation of how the writer creates tension, supported by a range of examples from the text, with some analysis of the effect.
Some will be able to adapt their explanation for a younger audience.

Starter
Ask students to complete the Cracks wordsearch (Worksheet 6).

Working through the lesson
1. Read p136 together, from ‘All this grinds away inside …’ to ‘… his eyes wide and scared.’
2. Elicit from the class the devices that are used to make this moment in the text tense and exciting. Draw attention to the use of the present tense, the short sentences, the judicious use of exclamation marks, the one-sentence paragraph, the paragraph beginning ‘And …’
3. Ask students to jot down notes on the devices used.
4. Set a short piece of explanatory writing entitled ‘How to create tension in your writing’. Encourage the use of clear points supported by quotations from the extract under discussion. These should be followed by an explanation of the effect created. (This type of writing is usually known as ‘PEE’ paragraphs, where the letters stand for ‘Point’, ‘Evidence’, ‘Explanation’.)

This task can be differentiated for higher-ability students by asking them to prepare a ‘cheat sheet’ for younger students to explain some tension-building devices.

Plenary
Ask a student to read out one of their points, but without the quotation. Ask a different student to supply the quotation that might support the point, and a third student to finish off with an analytical explanation. After each reading, select another student (or two) to assess how well the entry reflects Cal’s inner thoughts, and to suggest one improvement that could be made.

Homework
Ask students to update their reading logs. Remind them that they can discuss effects created by the writer as well as accounts of plot and character development.
Imagined futures – worldbuilding

Objectives
Be able to explain and comment on a writer’s use of language.
Be able to comment effectively on a writer’s viewpoint.

Key learning
3.1; 5.1; 5.2; 6.1; 6.2

Main targeted assessment
RAF 2; RAF 3; RAF 5; RAF 6; RAF 7; S&LAF 2

Learning outcomes
All will compile a list of key words and phrases that help create the setting of a major section of the novel. Most will be able to offer an explanation of how the writer views the possible effects on a future society of current behaviours and attitudes. Some will be able to explain how a critique of contemporary values is implicit in the writer’s description of the future.

Starter
Display the word ‘Environment’. Ask students either to discuss with a partner or to jot down one or more ideas about what the future will be like if we do nothing to change our present behaviour regarding the environment. Take feedback from the class.
Repeat using the word ‘Population’, and again using the word ‘Conflict’. Take feedback after each word. The class should describe a very unhealthy dystopian future!
Encourage higher-ability students to go beyond obvious effects and to consider the wider impact.

Working through the lesson
1. Read Chapters 21 and 22 together.
2. Working in small groups, ask students to build a mind map with ‘Society 2024’ at the centre. They should aim to create an impression of the way the writer sees society developing, as reflected in these chapters, and what they know of the society in 2024 from the novel up to this point. Short quotations should be added to the mind map.
Lower-ability students may need to be given some of the first branches off the central ‘Society 2024’ to work with, such as ‘pig flu’, ‘government’, ‘law and order’, ‘living conditions’.
3. Ask all groups to prepare an answer to the question: What view of our future does the writer put forward in this novel? Take feedback from several groups.

Plenary
Ask all students to find a single quotation from Chapters 21 and 22 that helps readers understand the world of 2024 pictured by the writer. Selected students should read out their quotation and explain how it communicates a viewpoint.

Homework
As an extension task, ask students to look up the meaning of the word ‘dystopia’ and compile a list of up to 10 dystopian novels.
Describing a future world

Objectives
Be able to produce a text that is appropriate to the task (descriptive writing).
Be able to select appropriate and effective vocabulary.

Key learning
7.1; 8.3; 8.5

Main targeted assessment
WAF 1; WAF 2; WAF 3; WAF 7

Learning outcomes
All will produce a short piece of descriptive writing.
Most will produce a more developed piece that may have dystopian elements in the description.
Some will produce a convincing description that would be entirely appropriate in a dystopian novel.

Starter
Reread pp144–46 (from ‘We walk into a concrete stairwell … to … criss-cross the city). Ask students to write down five details from the scene – one detail for each of the senses (touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing). Take feedback from the class.

Working through the lesson
1. Remind students that good description should engage all the senses.
2. Use Worksheet 7 as a visual stimulus to prompt whole-class discussion of dystopian elements.
3. Ask students to choose one of the images as a starting point for a piece of descriptive writing. The aim should be to capture in a maximum of 400 words the look and feel of the place in the picture. Suggest to middle- and higher-ability students that four or five well-developed paragraphs should suffice.

Lower-ability students can be supported through the use of the writing frame on Worksheet 8.

Plenary
Ask selected students to read out one or two sentences that they are particularly proud of from their work in progress. Ask them to explain to the class why they feel it is an especially powerful piece of description.

Homework
The descriptive writing can be further developed or finished for homework.
Ask students to read Chapters 23–25 and update their reading log.
Structure and prediction

Objectives
Be able to comment on the structure of a text.
Be able to deduce possible and plausible continuations in the story.

Key learning
5.1; 6.3

Main targeted assessment
RAF 3; RAF 4

Learning outcomes
All will be able to explain the writer’s use of the ‘low point’ in the story.
Most will be able to predict a reasonable continuation from the low point.
Some will be able to construct a convincing continuation and denouement based on what has gone before.

Starter
Dictionary challenge: give each student a dictionary and set up a race to find definitions for the following five words: speculate; dystopia; narrative; dictatorship; denouement.
You may wish to choose easier words to suit the ability of the group.

Working through the lesson
1. Read together from p168 ‘I want to punch something.’ to p170 ‘…etched into its synthetic fur.’
2. Explain that in many novels the writer brings the hero to a low point, where everything seems hopeless. Use questioning to elicit why this might be done (in academic analysis of narrative theory, it is so that the hero’s eventual triumph is even sweeter for the reader).
3. Establish the idea that if this is a low point, things can only get better for Cal. In groups, students should come up with a sequence of events that will lead to the end of the novel.
4. Take the best ideas from each group and compile a list. This can be used as part of a display, and checked against when the novel is finished.

Plenary
Students must prepare a short paragraph to read out in class. It should contain one predicted event and a reference to an earlier event or a point in the novel on which this prediction is built. Select students to read out their predictions.

Homework
Ask students to read Chapters 26 and 27.
As an extension activity, students can be asked to produce a graph of Cal’s emotional state plotted against the chapters in the novel. Chapter 25 would see the graph at its lowest point.
Updates

Objectives
Be able to select and retrieve information.
Be able to produce texts that are appropriate for reader and purpose.

Key learning
5.2; 6.3; 7.2; 8.5; 8.6

Main targeted assessment
RAF 2; RAF 3; RAF 5; WAF 1; WAF 2; WAF 3; WAF 7

Learning outcomes
All will add to their reading log and the ‘Torch case file’.
Most will complete their ‘Torch case file’ and begin to add reflective paragraphs to their reading log.
Some will complete their ‘Torch case file’ and write a series of paragraphs reflecting on the effect of the novel on themselves as readers.

Starter
Change the tense: ask students to rewrite the paragraph on p171 beginning ‘Self-pity and tiredness …’ in the past tense.
Higher-ability students could be asked to comment on whether the result is better or worse than the original, and to give reasons.

Working through the lesson
1. The main thrust of this lesson is to allow students time to update their ‘Torch case file’ and reading log.
This lesson will also give teachers a valuable opportunity to provide verbal feedback to a range of students in order to support them in developing appropriate styles and content for the different writing tasks. The verbal feedback is an important part of differentiating and supporting the students in their ongoing work, and in preparing the class for the summative assessment.

Plenary
Choose up to three students during the course of the lesson and brief them that, at the end of the lesson, they will be asked to say something about the different approaches to writing they used for the two tasks. Explain that they will need to read out one sentence from each of their writing tasks to illustrate the difference. At the end of the lesson, encourage the rest of the class to ask questions after each short explanation by the chosen students.

Homework
Some students may need more time to complete the two writing tasks.
As an extension activity, students can be asked to carry out research to find information for a LoveReading-style website. Taking Cracks as the main text, the students should make notes in order to create the ‘If You Like ... You’ll Love’ section.
Bringing it all together

Objectives
Understand the structure of a text.
Understand the importance of the climax and anti-climax in a novel.

Key learning
5.1; 5.2; 6.2; 6.3

Main targeted assessment
RAF 1; RAF 2; RAF 3; RAF 4

Learning outcomes
All will share in an exciting and satisfying reading experience.
Most will be able to understand the writer’s use of climax and anti-climax.
Some will be able to make sophisticated connections between elements in the novel and explain how the climax fuses all these elements together.

Starter
Ask students, individually or in pairs, to draw a graph line illustrating how intense the action has been through the novel so far. Take contributions to arrive at an agreed class graph line showing a steadily rising trend with the occasional spike.
Point out that this is the normal trend for an action novel. Then add a steep upward line to the class graph that goes virtually off the scale.

Working through the lesson
1. Chapters 28-30 represent the climax of the novel. If possible, they should be read straight through by an accomplished reader or the teacher.
2. Use Worksheet 9 to support students in recognising how all the elements of the novel come together in the climax.
3. Now add a gently declining line to the graph created in the starter activity and explain that this is known as the “anti-climax”.
4. Ask students to read to the end of the novel (Chapter 31) themselves.

Plenary
Show the promotional video for the novel at http://www.piccadillypress.co.uk/teen/caroline-green/cracks.html.
Ask students to come up with ideas for a script that Cal would deliver after the events of the novel.

Homework
Ask students to complete the reading log for the novel and add a final reflection on their reading experience.
Making a reading log

A simple reading log or journal will give you space to include drawings, maps, charts and diagrams, as well as to write your reflections about your reading of a book. The top third of each page should be blank, and the bottom two-thirds should be lined.

Your reading log could include:

- notes about characters and content
- questions about characters, plot, unfamiliar words, questions you would like to ask the author
- descriptions of settings and people
- thoughts and feelings you have while reading
- visualisations, for example, drawings of characters, mind maps, timelines
- lines or phrases from the book that stand out for you, and why.
K-W-L chart

Name: ____________________________ Date: ________________

Think about the character Cal. In the first column, write what you already know about him (K). In the second column, write what you want to know about him (W). After you have read further, write what you learned (L) in the third column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I KNOW</th>
<th>What I WANT to know</th>
<th>What I LEARNED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A moral question

Researchers think that an important breakthrough in finding a cure for cancer is not far away. However, they need to do some experiments involving powerful drugs on 2,000 volunteers of different genders and ages, including children from the age of 11 upwards. Should they be allowed to do so?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>
Torch case file

The leaders of Torch, the resistance movement, will need to keep track of their secret operations. This is a page for adding to the case file on Callum. You will need to update it with details of what Torch have done, what they are planning to do and what they need to achieve in Callum’s case. You can add notes, diagrams, charts and/or fully written out accounts of what has been done in this case as you go along.
Cal’s diary

Imagine that Cal kept a diary. At key moments in his adventure after coming out of the coma, he finds some time to update his diary with short accounts of what has happened to him and his thoughts and feelings about his situation.

What would he write? Use the diary page below to build up a picture of Cal’s life written in his own words. Remember that you can ask for more copies of the diary page as you need them.

2024

Date:

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
The wordsearch

c t a c l i h r t r c o r s e
h o n e n c f i n t o h e u r
a l r d r g i d e n o h f o t
r p y o a e h n m o r t t e o
a g t f a c i l i t y d t u d
c a n f t o m h r i t y h a a
t c t i i w c a e a o s t r e
e d e h t o a o p d g t f a f
r a a h p t p t x t o o y t e
r m t e l r e n e n e p n h d
r e w o p o e s f a a i s a f
e u f r l t o t t t f a a o r i
i l l w s i n t u e r o e p o
o a t i e y r o m e m s n a v
t o d o e d t b y d n e e d p

Words to find
author, character, dystopia, experiment, facility, memory, plot, power, setting

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Dystopias
**Descriptive writing**

Use the writing frame below to help you with your descriptive writing. Each box can contain one paragraph of your final piece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>In the distance I can see …</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The air is filled with strange sounds such as …</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>When I press my fingers to the wall it feels …</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The place smells different, like …</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>I take my cereal bar out of my pocket. It tastes …</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Bringing it all together**

Towards the end of the story, the writer brings together many of the elements from the earlier part of the novel and repeats them, sometimes in a slightly different form.

Complete the table below to show how some of the main ideas and characters reappear in the climax. Two rows have been added for you to include your own suggestions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>How some of the main ideas and characters are used in Chapters 28–30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Des</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Xbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Cavendish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley Hall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cracks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal’s alternative life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A website specialising in fiction for 11–14-year-olds is asking for contributions. Here is the brief.

We’re looking for readers’ reviews of high-quality science fiction or fantasy novels that particularly appeal to young people.

Your review should be no more than 400 words long. Remember not to give too much of the story away! Remember, too, that you’ll need to explain why the book is worth reading. Feel free to include drawings, diagrams or other images with your review to help readers get a good sense of the characters and the setting.

Put together your contribution. It can be handwritten or produced as either a Word document or a PowerPoint presentation.