KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER:

Short Stories

Core Knowledge

Writers use stories to present deeper ideas.
- Writers often have a **didactic** message or a **moral** in their work.
- You can write a *thesis statement about a writer's deeper meaning* following the steps in the Writing Strategy for Reading.

Writers structure short stories for effect.
- Stories **establish** important details in the **exposition**, then build **tension** through a series of **shifts** before a **climax**.
- You can analyse structure by following the steps for *Analysing structure: beginnings* & *Analysing structure: shifts/developments* in the Writing Strategy for Reading.

Writers create and use settings for a purpose.
These purposes might include:
- to establish a **tone**
- as part of conveying a **didactic** message
- to highlight something about a character
- to reflect the features of the genre.

Language can be analysed when it evokes something for the reader.
For example, words could be analysed if they evoke:
- an image in the reader's mind
- a powerful emotion in the reader
- a memory or connection
- a particular thought
- a reaction.

You can analyse language by following the steps for *Analysing a word choice* in the Writing Strategy for Reading.

Dystopian conventions (features)
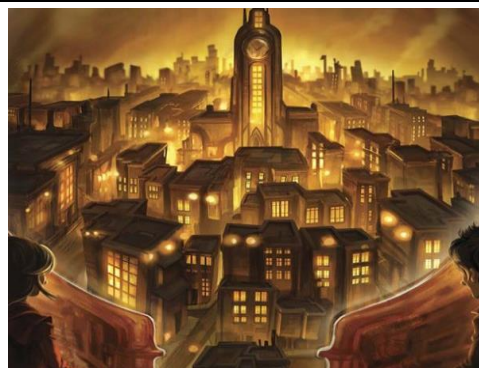
- Set in an <u>imagined society</u> where many people are victims of **oppression**.
- There is a government or ruler who is responsible for **injustice**.
- Often (but not always) set in the future.

Gothic conventions (features)

- A sense of mystery and fear.
- Dark, sinister **settings**.
- Isolated **settings**.
- The supernatural (e.g. ghosts).

Texts studied:
- **'Examination Day'** – Henry Slesar
- **'The Pedestrian'** – Ray Bradbury
- **'The Phantom Hitchhiker'** – Daniel Cohen
- **'The Fly-Paper'** – Elizabeth Taylor

Key Skills
[Models for each key skill can be found in your copy of the **Writing Strategy for Reading**.]

▼ Thesis statement about a character ▼
1. Subordinating conjunction (e.g. *As/Because*)
2. Subordinate clause (character's actions/features)
3. Comma
4. Main clause (effect/consequence of actions).

▼ Thesis statement about a writer's idea ▼
1. Writer's surname
2. Analytical verb + *how/that*
3. Idea the writer wants to show.

▼ Thesis statement about a writer's deeper meaning ▼
1. Prepositional phrase (e.g. *At first glance*)
2. Comma
3. Main clause (surface meaning)
4. Semicolon + *however* + comma
5. Main clause (deeper meaning, including analytical verb).

▼ Introducing textual detail: description ▼
1. Sentence connective to give example (e.g. *For example*)
2. Comma
3. *when* + details about who is speaking and why
4. Comma
5. *he/she says* + speech copied from the text (in inverted commas) + full stop.

▼ Comment on the effect on the reader ▼
1. Main clause starting with *The reader/audience* + tentative word (e.g. *might*) + their possible response
2. Subordinating conjunction (e.g. *because*)
3. Subordinate clause explaining <u>why</u> the reader/audience might feel this way.

▼ Analyse a word choice ▼
1. [Writer's surname]*'s lexical choice of '*[one word]*'* + analytical verb
2. comment on the <u>meaning(s)</u> of the word + full stop.
3. Cause and effect connective (e.g. *Therefore*) + comma + *this* + analytical verb (e.g. *suggests*) + effect.
[Try to follow with adding/developing connective + further analysis]

▼ Analysing structure: beginnings ▼
1. *At the beginning* + comma + [Writer's surname] + *focuses on* + who/what the focus is at the start of the text + full stop.
2. *We learn that* + important information given about the focus + *because* + textual detail + full stop.
3. Cause and effect connective (e.g. *Therefore*) + comma + *we* + effect (reader/audience's reaction, e.g. *think/feel/wonder/understand/realise…*).

▼ Analysing structure: shifts/developments ▼
1. *Later* + comma + *there is a* [shift/development] *in* + what the change or development is + *when* + textual detail (usually a reference) + full stop.
2. *This* + analytical verb (e.g. *reveals*) + comment on the effect / what the reader/audience learns + full stop.
3. Cause and effect connective (e.g. *Therefore*) + comma + *we* + effect (reader/audience's reaction, e.g. *think/feel/wonder/understand/realise…*).

Key Vocabulary

Word	Meaning	Image
climax	The point that a story's tension builds up to.	
didactic	Intended to teach, usually with a moral message.	
dystopia	An imagined society with a lot of oppression and injustice.	
establish	To set up an idea.	
evoke	To bring up something into the mind (e.g. thoughts/an idea/an image/a feeling/a sense of...)	
exposition	Key background information in a story, usually at the beginning.	
foreshadowing	When a writer hints about something that happens later on in the story.	
gothic	Associated with darkness, mystery, horror and gloom.	
injustice	A lack of fairness.	
manipulate	To control or influence someone or something unfairly.	
oppression	The treatment of a group of people in an unfair way, often by limiting their freedom.	
setting	The time and place of events in a story.	
shift	An important change or development in a story.	
social commentary	Writing about issues in society.	
society	People living together in a community.	
structure	The order of events in a story.	
tension	An element of a story that evokes emotions such as worry, anxiety, fear and stress in the reader/audience.	
tone	The mood a writer creates.	