

Year 6 Transition Task 1 – The Locked Observatory

At Heston Community School, we use a method of reading text called Reciprocal Reading. Your task is to have a go at this. **All work should be neatly handwritten to give in to your tutors on the first day of School in September.**

1) Before You Read

Prediction Task: Look at the title *The Locked Observatory*. Predict:

Where might the story take place? What might be inside the observatory? What problem might the characters face?

Write 3- 4 sentences explaining your ideas on a piece of paper titled: 1) **Prediction**

Extract

Mia pulled her school blazer tighter as she followed the narrow path behind the old science block. Rainwater dripped from the trees overhead, and the evening sky had already started to darken. At the very top of the hill stood the observatory, a round stone building that most students ignored.

"Are you sure we're allowed up here?" asked Lewis.

Lewis stopped beside the rusted gate and glanced back towards the school buildings below.

"Are you sure we should be here?" he asked quietly.

Mia shrugged.

"Probably not allowed," she admitted. "But Mr Hammond said nobody had used the telescope for years."

"That doesn't mean we can just wander in," Lewis replied, peering through the bars of the gate.

"That's exactly why I want to look around," said Mia.

Rain tapped softly against the gate as Mia slowly pushed it open.

The gate creaked loudly as they pushed it open. Inside, the observatory smelled of dust and damp paper. Broken chairs were stacked against one wall, and old star charts covered the tables. In the centre of the room stood a huge telescope, pointing towards the glass roof above.

Lewis noticed something strange straight away.

"There's a light on," he whispered.

At the far side of the room, a small lamp flickered beside an open notebook. Someone had been there recently.

Mia stepped closer and brushed dust from the pages. Most of the writing was impossible to read, but one sentence had been underlined several times:

Do not point the telescope towards the northern sky after midnight.

A loud thud echoed above them.

Both children froze.

Paragraph 1 Tasks

2a) Vocabulary Tasks: Find words in the **first paragraph** that suggest:

1. The setting feels gloomy. 2) The observatory is old. 3) The weather is unpleasant.

2b) Comprehension Tasks (write in full sentences)

1) Where is the observatory located? 2) Why do most students ignore it? 3) What mood is created in the opening paragraph?

2c) Summary Task: Summarise the first paragraph in no more than 15 words.

Paragraph 2 Tasks

3a) Prediction Task: What do you think Lewis is worried about? Use evidence from the text.

3b) Vocabulary Task: What does the word *rusted* suggest about the gate?

3c) Comprehension Task 1) What does Mia reveal about the observatory? **2)** What does this tell us about her personality?

3d) Summary Task: Summarise the conversation between Mia and Lewis in two sentences.

Paragraph 3 Tasks

4a) Vocabulary Task: Find two details that help readers imagine the inside of the observatory.

4b) Comprehension Task: What objects are inside the observatory? Why might the telescope be important later in the story?

4c) Summary Task: Write one word explaining the condition of the observatory.

Paragraph 4 Tasks

5a) Prediction Task: Why might the light be important?

5b) Vocabulary Task: Explain the meaning of the word *flickered*.

5c) Comprehension Task: 1) Why are Mia and Lewis surprised? **2) What** clue suggests another person has been there?

5d) Summary Task: Summarise what the children discover.

Paragraph 5 Tasks

6a) Vocabulary Task: What does the word *underlined* suggest about the warning?

6b) Comprehension Task: 1) What warning is written in the notebook? **2) Why** does the final sentence create suspense?

7) Summary Task: Summarise the ending of the extract in one or two sentences.

Challenge Questions (optional)

8a) Why do you think the writer chose to end the extract with a loud thud?

8b) What genre do you think this story belongs to? Explain your answer.

8c) Predict what might happen next.

Academic Language at Heston Community School

Over the summer, see if you can use **at least 10 words** from the list below in a sentence when you talk to your friends and family.

Abhorrent	(v.) to hate, detest (Because he always wound up getting hit in the head when he tried to play cricket, Marcin began to find the sport <u>abhorrent</u>)
Aberration	(n.) something that differs from the norm (In 1974, Poland won the World Cup, but the success turned out to be an <u>aberration</u> , and Poland have not won a World Cup since).
Acquiesce	(v.) to agree without protesting (Though Mr. Pop wanted to stay outside and work in his garage, when his wife told him that he had better come in to dinner, he <u>acquiesced</u> to her demands).
Alacrity	eagerness, speed (For some reason, Simon loved to help his girlfriend whenever he could, so when his girlfriend asked him to set the table he did so with alacrity)
Erudite	(adj.) learned (My English teacher is such an <u>erudite</u> scholar that he has translated some of the most difficult and abstruse Old English poetry.)
Indolent	(adj.) lazy (Why should my <u>indolent</u> children, who can't even pick themselves up off the sofa to pour their own juice, be rewarded with a trip to Burger King?)
Impudent	(adj.) casually rude, insolent, impertinent (The <u>impudent</u> young woman looked her teacher up and down and told him he was hot.)
Staid	(adj.) sedate, serious, self-restrained (The staid butler never changed his expression no matter what happened.)
Umbrage	(n.) resentment, offence (He called me a lily-livered coward, and I took <u>umbrage</u> at the insult.)
Inveterate	(adj.) stubbornly established by habit (I'm the first to admit that I'm an <u>inveterate</u> cider drinker—I drink four pints a day.)
Obtuse	(adj.) lacking quickness of sensibility or intellect (Political opponents warned that the prime minister's <u>obtuse</u> approach to foreign policy would embroil the nation in mindless war.)
Brazen	(adj.) excessively bold, brash, clear and obvious (Critics condemned the writer's <u>brazen</u> attempt to plagiarise Frank's work.)
Clandestine	(adj.) secret (Announcing to her boyfriend that she was going to the library, Maria actually went to meet George for a <u>clandestine</u> liaison.)
Fractious	(adj.) troublesome or irritable (Although the child insisted he wasn't tired, his <u>fractious</u> behaviour - especially his decision to crush his jam sandwiches all over the floor - convinced everyone present that it was time to put him to bed.)
Amiable	(adj.) friendly (An <u>amiable</u> fellow, Neil got along with just about everyone.)

Modicum	(n.) a small amount of something (Refusing to display even a <u>modicum</u> of sensitivity, Magda announced her boss's affair to the entire office.)
Lurid	(adj.) ghastly, sensational (Barry's story, in which he described a character torturing his neighbour's tortoise, was judged too <u>lurid</u> to be published on the English Library's website.)
Plethora	(n.) an abundance, excess (The wedding banquet included a <u>plethora</u> of oysters piled almost three feet high.)
Meticulous	(adj.) extremely careful with details (The ornate needlework in the bride's gown was a product of <u>meticulous</u> handiwork.)
Quaint	(adj.) charmingly old-fashioned (Mary was delighted by the <u>quaint</u> bonnets she saw in Romania.)
Incisive	(adj.) clear, sharp, direct (The discussion wasn't going anywhere until her <u>incisive</u> comment allowed everyone to see what the true issues were.)
Extol	(v.) to praise, revere (Kamila <u>extolled</u> the virtues of a vegetarian diet to her meat-loving boyfriend.)
Avarice	(n.) excessive greed (The banker's <u>avarice</u> led him to amass an enormous personal fortune.)
Vociferous	(adj.) loud, boisterous (I'm tired of his <u>vociferous</u> whining so I'm breaking up with him.)
Nadir	(n.) the lowest point of something (My day was boring, but the <u>nadir</u> came when my new car was stolen.)
Galvanise	(v.) shock or excite (someone) into taking action (The urgency of his voice <u>galvanized</u> them into action)
Hyperbolise	(v.) represent something as being larger, better, or worse than it really is; exaggerate (Victims are prone to <u>hyperbolize</u> and invent details that just aren't there)
Dearth	(n.) a scarcity or lack of something (There is a <u>dearth</u> of evidence)
Vivacity	(n.) (especially in a woman) the quality of being attractively lively and animated (He was struck by her <u>vivacity</u> , humour and charm)
Febrile	(adj.) characterized by a great deal of nervous excitement or energy (The <u>febrile</u> atmosphere of the city)
Ubiquitous	(adj.) present, appearing, or found everywhere (His <u>ubiquitous</u> influence was felt by all the family)
Motif	(n.) a dominant or recurring idea in an artistic work (Superstition is a recurring <u>motif</u> in the book)
Decry	(v.) publicly denounce (They <u>decried</u> human rights abuses)



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