

Pre 1914 Fiction

KS3 English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Break down the long Bleak House sentence.

Step 1 · Find the main idea

Fog everywhere: up the river and down the river.

Step 2 · Add the first detail

Up the river it 'flows among green aits and meadows' ('aits' are small river islands).

Step 3 · Add the second detail

Down the river it 'rolls defiled', dirtied, among ships and pollution.

Step 4 · Put it in your own words

Fog covers the whole of London, from the clean countryside upriver to the filthy city docks.

Answer: Fog covers everything, from the green countryside upstream to the polluted city, and it gets dirtier reaches London.

Check: Chunking turns one long sentence into a clear picture.

2. Now try one with the steps

How does Dickens use a list to present Scrooge?

Step 1 · Quote

Step 2 · Notice the pattern

Step 3 · Effect of the list

Step 4 · Effect of the sounds

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. In which year was A Christmas Carol published? Write the year. [1]

2. In which year did Queen Victoria's reign begin? Write the year. [1]

3. Who wrote Jane Eyre? [1]
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-
4. How many words ending in -ing are in Dickens's list describing Scrooge? Write the number. [1]
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-
5. What does 'solitary' mean? [1]
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6. Why might a Victorian novel have lots of cliffhangers? [1]
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-
7. What does 'omniscient' mean when describing a narrator? [1]
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8. Give one effect of the simile 'solitary oyster'. [2]
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9. What impression of London does the Bleak House extract give? [2]
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10. How does the first sentence of Jane Eyre hint at Jane's situation? [2]
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11. Explain one way the opening of Pride and Prejudice is ironic. [2]
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12. Give two features of nineteenth-century fiction that can make it harder for modern readers. [2]
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13. Why is it useful to know about workhouses when reading A Christmas Carol? [2]
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14. Choose one extract in the Learn tab and explain how the writer uses setting or description to suggest a theme. [3]

4. Before you hand it in

Giving up on a long sentence halfway through.

Find the main clause, then add one extra part at a time.

Bolting a list of historical facts onto an answer.

Link context to the writer's purpose: 'Dickens presents Scrooge's cruelty to the poor to criticise...'

Taking Austen's opening line literally.

Ask whether the narrator really believes what they say, or is mocking it.

Assuming modern meanings for old words.

Check context, footnotes or a glossary, and keep a list of old words read.