iNVENTiVE

Using the resource and Inventive podcast

This resource is based on the Inventive podcast. The podcast mixes engineering fact with fiction. Each podcast features an interview with an engineer. That interview was used as inspiration by a variety of authors and poets to create a piece of fiction.

These resources make use of those pieces of writing to support the teaching of English.

A short audio clip about the engineer provides context and can be played during a lesson. Students may wish to listen to the whole podcast in their own time. All resources can be accessed using the QR code below.

This English lesson resource supports students in:

Reading:
- make inferences and refer to evidence in the text
- check their understanding to make sure that what they have read makes sense
- study setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these.

Writing
- summarise and organise material, and support ideas and arguments with factual detail.

Additional context and careers resources

Audio clips from Inventive podcast

- **Clip 1: The Shard -** Roma describes her role in working on the Shard
- **Clip 2: Concrete -** Roma describes the superpower she would like to have.
- **Clip 3: The Nightbuilder** - Listen to the story.

For other resources including posters and more information about Roma:

nustem.uk/inventive/#roma

Meet the engineer

Roma Agrawal
Structural Engineer, Broadcaster and writer

Roma started her career as a structural engineer working in teams to design and build bridges and buildings. She is currently an author and broadcaster using her engineering experience to explain science and engineering to children and adults.

Meet the Author
C M Taylor
The Nightbuilder

C M Taylor is a novelist, screenwriter and lecturer. He uses this pen name because there was already another author called Craig Taylor.

Craig takes Roma's interview, and love of concrete, to create a story about a mysterious Nightbuilder, and the Mayor of a run-down seaside down.

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NEWCASTLE

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The table provides an outline of the resource activities, and suggests approximate timings for each activity. You may wish to adapt these to suit your students' needs.

1	Meet the Engineer (pg 2)	15 min	Read the summary of the life of the engineer. Clip 1 provides a brief introduction to Roma and the work that she has done. Explain that students are going to read a story inspired by the podcast, and the interview with the Engineer.
2	Developing inference skills (pg 3)	10 min	Analyse the title - The Nightbuilder In pairs students discuss their initial thoughts. Key questions: • Nightbuilder. Why is it all one word? Could this suggest a name? • Why are they building at night? Is it illegal, secretive? • Who is the builder? What impressions do we have of a builder? Discuss the title as similar to a superhero name such as Superman, The Black Widow, The Hulk etc.
3	Text analysis - making inferences based on textual evidence (pg 4 - 8)	20 min	Close textual analysis of the opening paragraph. Specific focus on the description of the main character and the seaside town. Students to make inferences about both and use the text to support their points. You could model the paragraph about the character and students independently complete the paragraph about the town (example given on page 4)
4	Text analysis - Character development (pg 9 - 15)	30 min	Read from "who are you then…." This is where we meet The Nightbuilder for the first time. Students list the things they learn about The Nightbuilder. Students then read the conversation between the Major and The Nightbuilder - discuss use of direct speech to develop the characters. How do we see the relationship develop?

5	Research task using skimming and scanning. (pg 16 - 17)	30 min	Analyse the quotation from The Nightbuilder. "But I'm not the boss of physics. If gravity wants to pull something down, it will."
			Students should research the learning Tower of Pisa linking their understanding of forces in science to the real life situation. (You may wish to liaise with your science department to support this activity)
			Using skimming and scanning students create a summary paragraph.
6	Comparing characters (pg 18 - 20)	30 min	Research Banksy using appropriate reading techniques (skimming and scanning)
			Students to pick out 5 key points.
			Students then create a chart of the similarities and difference between Banksy and The Nightbuilder.
7	Essay question (pg 21 - 22)	45 min	There are two questions for students to answer.
			Quotes from Roma provide the context for each question. It would be helpful to re-listen to 'concrete' clip from the podcast to provide context.
			Students to write a response to one of the questions using the text to support their ideas.

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3. Activity: Text analysis suggested response

This text could be used as a model with students

The Nightbuilder

Although I did not notice at the time – bogged down as I was in turgid council business - the first inkling of the events which were to transform my dilapidated seaside town into a place of global fame – and in so doing, loosen the bonds of my own mournful emotional life – was a news report of the perplexing overnight appearance of a 40 metre-tall concrete mangrove tree on the fourth plinth of London's Trafalgar Square.

1. What impressions do you get of the main character?

In the first paragraph of The Nightbuilder, C M Taylor introduces the main character. The text is written in the first person and therefore avoids giving the central protagonist a name. The reader gets the impression that the central character is unhappy, the character describes their "own mournful emotional life". The word mournful is an unusual choice, it suggests that the central character has lost something important and they feel emotional about the loss.