

## Personal Study Notes

### Introduction:

This booklet has been designed to help you write a full set of notes on your Personal Study text. These notes will be invaluable to your work on your Personal Study during the rest of the course.

### Contents of this booklet:

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## UNDERSTANDING

### U1 Beginning of your text.



The beginning of a book is incredibly important - it sets the scene and the style for the rest of the novel. Make notes on the following points:

1. Setting - where and when does the action take place?

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2. Characters - who are the main characters and what is your initial impression of them?

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3. Can you make any predictions about what might happen next?

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Whose point of view is the story told from?

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**U3 Ending of the novel**

1. What did you expect to happen at the end of the novel?

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2. Were you satisfied with the ending? Why/why not?

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3. Why was the ending the only possible ending the book could have had in terms of themes, characterisation etc.?

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### ANALYSIS



There are four ways that the reader can understand a character through analysing their:

- a. personality
- b. role in the novel
- c. relationships with others
- d. developments (you have already completed this as part of your chapter summaries)

#### A1 Personality

You are now going to write a detailed character sketch of the main characters in your novel. Use evidence to back up what you have said (Evidence can take the form of quotes or incidents in the book).

Continue this on a separate sheet over the page.

Character's name:	
Age:	
Notes on physical appearance (their looks):	Notes on background (Home life, family etc.):
Notes on their personality (what they're like as a person)	Notes on their relationships with others (how do they interact):

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A2 Relationships



Another way to understand a character is through looking at their relationships with others.

Choose ONE relationship BETWEEN TWO CHARACTERS that you think is interesting in the way it develops. In the boxes below discuss and analyse the way this relationship develops throughout the book.

Relationship at the beginning (brief notes on who's involved in the relationship and what it's like)

Evidence (relevant quotes & page numbers):

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Relationship in the middle :

Evidence (relevant quotes & page numbers):

Relationship at the end:

Evidence (relevant quotes & page numbers):



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**Information box:**

If an author chooses to write in 1st person then this can be because they want the reader to form pictures/attitudes at the same time as the main character is forming pictures/attitudes

If an author chooses 3rd person then this can be because he wants the reader to know everything, more than the main character knows, so that the reader can make judgements.

- b. What sort of narrative voice does the novel have? (1st, 2nd or 3rd person)

1st  2nd  3rd

- c. Why do you think the author has chosen this particular voice to write in? (use the information box for help)

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- d. Is there only one narrative voice? If not, why is there more than one?

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**Flashbacks**

- e. Are flashbacks used to show events that have occurred in the past, or events that may occur in the future? What does the reader gain from these?

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### EVALUATION



No Personal Study is complete without your personal response to what you've read. You will have been forming opinions about what you feel while reading the novel, even if you haven't been aware of it! Now try and answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

#### E1 Plot

To what extent did the plot affect your enjoyment of the text? Were there interesting events and consequences, unexpected twists? Was your attention held throughout?

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#### Themes

Were any of the following ideas (themes) running throughout the book? You can tick more than one box.

- **conflict** - the character versus adults/authority
- **growing older** - character development
- **relationships** - mother/son, brother/sister etc.
- **prejudice** - east/west, religion, race

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- **social problems** - war, drugs, role of women
- **discovery** - search for happiness etc.
- **Any other** (please state)



**E2 Setting**

To what extent did the setting affect your enjoyment of the text? In what ways do both time and place affect the characters and their actions? How is the setting made convincing?

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**Characters**

To what extent did the characters affect your enjoyment of the text? Were the characters interesting? How are the characters conveyed - dialogue, actions, description?

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And finally . . .

You've now made extensive notes on:

plot	point of view	setting
themes	structure	characters

**For your study you should choose up to (but not more than) 3 of these features to write about. It is probably best if one of these is a theme (or themes), but the other 2 will depend on what impressed you and what you feel you can write about in depth.**