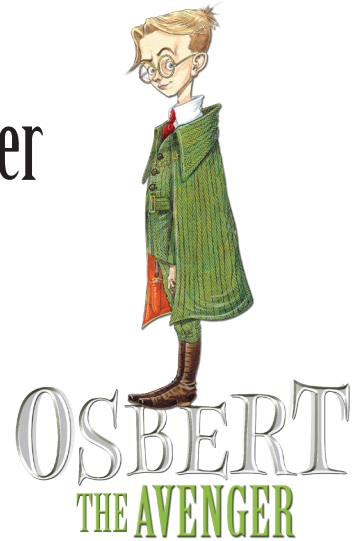




Teachers' Notes for Osbert the Avenger

By Christopher William Hill



Keep a reading log so you can record thoughts and ideas and viewpoints as they develop and change during the course of the story. This can include:

- Predictions
- Plot development – summarising each chapter
- Character studies – deduction and making inferences and refining opinions as the story progresses
- Author techniques – language, imagery, foreshadowing, themes, viewpoint.
- Vocabulary – clarifying unfamiliar words and extending personal vocabulary.

When considering discussion points, try out your ideas with a response partner before entering into whole class discussion.

Also identify the different locations on the map when they are mentioned in the story.

Book cover

Reflect and discuss

(Deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- Identify and clarify the meaning of any words with which you are unfamiliar.
- What do you think the subject matter of this book will be? Think about possible characters, settings (time and place) and events.
- How does the illustration offer extra clues?
- Why do you think this book is recommended 'For fans of Roald Dahl and Lemony Snicket'?

Quick research

Find out about either:

- Christopher William Hill

or

- Chris Riddell

Chapter 1

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions, prediction)

- Pages 7-9. What do we find out about the characters of:
 - Mr Brinkhoff
 - Mrs Brinkhoff
 - Osbert?

- Page 9. Re-read the small advertisement. What does this suggest to you?
- Page 9. Compare the arrival of Nanny with that of Mary Poppins.

- Page 10. Discuss Nanny's comment: "The thing about boys...even the oddest of them can become quite normal again. It's like gorillas in the zoo...Little boys must be tamed."
- Page 12. What do you think is Nanny's back story?
- Page 14. Discuss the change that has taken place in Nanny and Osbert's relationship.
- What is loyalty? Do you think it is always a good quality?
- How does the author end the chapter? What are your predictions for 'what would happen next?'



Vocabulary

Find out what three or more of the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own:

- obscure - page 7
- elevated - page 7
- colossus - page 7
- clerk - page 8
- irredeemably - page 9
- tentatively - page 11
- vigilant - page 13
- impressionable - page 13
- decrepitude - page 13
- algebra - page 14
- Municipality - page 17
- schnapps - page 19

Quick research

- Find out about the significance of yew trees - page 18.

Author technique

(Analysis)

- Read the final paragraph on page 7. Pick out the simile. What effect do you think the author was trying to create by choosing this simile?
- Read the paragraph on page 16, starting: "It's not so bad," said Nanny..." What sort of reaction does the author provoke and how does he do this?

Writing activities

With a writing partner:

- Create a school with a gallery of schoolteachers for different subjects on the curriculum, choosing appropriate names and giving brief, but vivid, character descriptions.
- Create a picture or map of the school and grounds.

Or

- After looking at a range of job advertisements for nannies/teachers, write one of your own. It can be humorous!
- Create a list of different childhood crimes and 'appropriate' punishments - see examples on page 13.

Individual task

- As you progress through the book, collect a list of all the characters who meet a gruesome end and state how they died.

Creative task

- Draw cartoons of the various types of boy encountered by Nanny on pages 12-13.

Or

- Draw the gateway described on page 17.



Chapter 2

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- Page 23. Why does Mr Brinkhoff lie about the Institute?
- Discuss the fear of failure and how it can affect people.
- Scan the text on page 24 to find out Mr Brinkhoff's philosophy.
Do you agree with this outlook? What does it tell you about Mr Brinkhoff?
- Explain what you understand by the Latin quotation on page 25.
- Predict what will happen to Osbert and the girl.



Vocabulary

Find out what three or more of the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own:

- diabolical – page 22
- gargoyles – page 22
- whimsical – page 23
- devouring – page 30
- labyrinthine – page 31

Author technique

(Analysis)

- Re-read from page 23. How does the author build up tension?
- Scan the text for each occasion when the porter speaks. How does the author convey the character of the porter?

Writing activities

Either

- Write about a time when you have taken a test and describe exactly how you felt. Don't forget to focus on physical details.

Or

- Write about an occasion when you felt you were being watched and convey how you felt.

Chapter 3

Reflect and discuss

(Deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- How do you think the Principal has gained so much power in the city?

Vocabulary

Dictionary race: working in competition with a partner, find out the meanings of ten of the following words and jot them down.

- humiliating – page 33
- porcelain-pale – page 34
- bewildering – page 35
- musty – page 37
- trepidation – page 38
- malevolent – page 39
- barbarity – page 39
- gramophone – page 42
- devious – page 42
- stratagem – page 42
- sadistic – page 43



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- veneer – page 43
- enterprising – page 44
- alleviate – page 44
- vindictive protégé – page 52

Who finishes first?

Extra challenge: Who can construct a new sentence using three of the words?

Quick research

- Find out what a solar eclipse is.
- What safety procedures should you adopt if you want to observe an eclipse?

Author technique

- Scan the text on page 40 to find a vivid simile and explain why it is effective.
- How do the brief details of what the tutors are eating on page 45 add to our understanding of their characters?

Drama

- Why is the word ‘interesting’ on page 50 a useful word to use on certain occasions? Can you think of an occasion when using this word could be used to avoid an awkward situation?
- Devise a short conversation with a partner when you use the word ‘interesting’ in this way.

Writing tasks

- Write two contrasting descriptions: of a kind and unkind teacher, giving them appropriate names.
- Draw up a fact file on each of the tutors. You may add extra information as you progress through the novel.

The Principal	Subject	Distinguishing features	Other
Dr Zilbergeld			
Anatole Strauss			
Professor Ingelbrod			
Mr Rudulfus			
Mr Lomm			

Chapter 4

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- Do failures deliberately inflict pain on others? What other reasons are there for becoming a bully?
- Discuss the use of the phrase: ‘hollow consolation.’ - page 59.
- Discuss Osbert’s opinion that : ‘there was one inevitable outcome to life; that Isabella would remain at his side forever.’
- Discuss whether what Mrs Brinkhoff says is always true: ‘The job worth starting is worth finishing.’ – page 65.
- Why does the Principal feel, on page 73, ‘the need to suppress such insolent intelligence.’ Can intelligence be ‘insolent?’
- What do you think will happen in the next chapter?

Vocabulary

Find out what three or more of the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own or find synonyms which you can successfully substitute in the sentence:



- discordant – page 59
- grotesque – page 59
- undaunted – page 61
- sombre – page 65
- furtive – page 65
- odious – page 68
- claustrophobic – page 69

Quick research

- Find out about ‘catgut’ – page 56.

Author technique

(Analysis)

- Scan the first page of this chapter to find an extended simile and explain what feelings are evoked by this choice.
- Scan page 60 to find another effective simile. What does this suggest to you?

Readers’ Theatre

(Deduction, inference)

- In groups of eight: the Principal, the waiter, Anatole Strauss, Mr Lomm, Mr Rudulfus, Dr Zilbergeld, the porter and the narrator – rehearse and prepare a reading of the following section: page 69 from ‘You’re late...’ to page 75 ‘Each of the tutors in their turn signed their names in red ink.’
- Think about and make performance notes on:
 - Who will read each section
 - What the dialogue should sound like
 - What the punctuation is telling you about how to read the extract
- Concentrate on fluency, timing, expression, intonation and phrasing so that you clearly convey the characters’ qualities.

Writing activities

- Devise some titles for grim pieces of music and also for uplifting pieces.

Creative task

- Listen to an unfamiliar piece of music which stops just before the ending and predict whether the notes will go up or down.

Chapter Five

Reflect and discuss

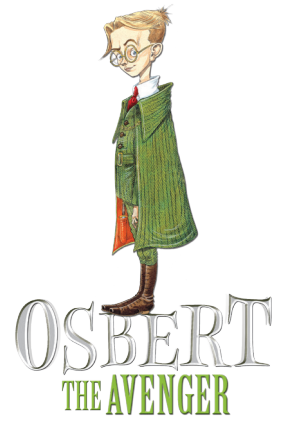
(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- ‘Life, as you well know, is not fair.’ Discuss these words of the Principal.
- What do you think would happen if Mr Spink did not follow the Principal’s instructions and dismiss Mr Brinkhoff?
- Re-read page 87.
 - Discuss the power of money
 - What does being ‘heroic’ involve?
- Where would you go to soothe ‘a troubled mind?’ - page 88. Would you choose a cemetery, like Osbert?
- What does Mrs Myop’s reaction to the Brinkhoff’s eviction tell you about her character?

Vocabulary

Find out what the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own:

- archly – page 79
- bailiffs – page 92
- insubordination – page 84



Drama

Re-read the first section of this chapter

- Hot seating:
- Read chapter 5 up to page 81.

Choose one of the following characters:

- Osbert
- Isabella
- The Principal

Or

- Read pages 90-97

Choose one of the following characters:

- Mr Brinkhoff
- Nanny
- Prepare your questions beforehand and think of any answers you would give if you were chosen to be a particular character.
- Try hot seating in twos or threes, then as a class.
- Concentrate on personal feelings and textual observations.



Writing activity

- Write a description of an unpleasant room. Remember that it is the little, vivid and sometimes unexpected details that can be most evocative.

Chapter 6

Reflect and discuss

(Literal comprehension, deduction, inference, prediction, forming and supporting opinions)

- Nanny says on page 98: 'I always say to him, you can't cut my liver out if I cut yours out first.' Scan through the first chapter to find another saying of Nanny's which means the same thing. What do you think of her approach to life?
- Discuss what makes a present special.
- Discuss whether you think that Osbert is right when he says: 'I will always save you,' to Isabella on page 111.
- Re-read pages 114 -115. Pick out the words and images which convey the Professor's character most effectively.
- Re-read the last page of this chapter. Discuss whether you believe that we tend to behave in the way that has been modelled to us.
- What do you think will happen next?

Vocabulary

Find out what the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own:

- fetid – page 98
- mausoleum – page 101
- artisan – page 103

Drama

- Conscience Alley: form two lines facing each other. One person takes the role of the Osbert and walks between the lines as each member of the group speaks their advice – whether take further revenge or not. It can be organised so that those on one side give opposing advice to those on the other. When the protagonist reaches the end of the alley, he makes his decision.

Writing activities

- Draw the three characters of Osbert, Mr Brinkhoff and the shopkeeper in the scene in the music shop and write thought bubbles for each of them.



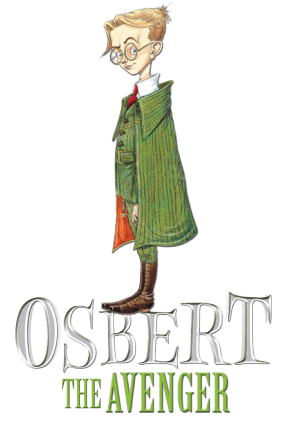
- Write about a time when you wanted to cry but didn't - page 109.

Chapter 7

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What do you think of Osbert's reaction on pages 124-5? How does it make you feel towards his character?
- 'Osbert was only upset by the fact that he had killed Professor Inglebrod by accident and not by design.' Discuss the implications of this statement. What do you think will happen next?
- Using clues from the text, can you infer what Isabella is thinking when she searches out Osbert at the end of this chapter?
- Do you agree with Osbert's reasoning at the end of the chapter? What do you think he might do next?



Quick research

- Find out about 'Memento Mori' artefacts.

Vocabulary

Find out what the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own:

- Coroner – page 121
- myopically – page 121

Author technique

(Analysis)

- Re-read pages 120-121: 'The tiny windowpanes ... the man was dead.'
Consider the description. Why do you think the author writes it in this way?

Writing activities

- Create a picture in words of a scene of your choosing, and then gradually zoom in on the details, as the author did in the above extract.

Chapter Eight

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What does Osbert's fascination with the butcher's shop indicate?
- How does Swallowman behave? How were you expecting him to behave after the initial description of him?
- When you have read as far as page 145, predict what might happen next.
- What do you think the money in the jar marked 'War Chest' will be used for?
- 'She loved Osbert and so she lied to him, in the hope she could make him happy.' What is your reaction to this statement? Does this approach work and is it right?
- What do you think Osbert's plans might be?

Vocabulary

- fauna – page 132
- lingonberry – page 134
- cloudberries – page 135
- confectioner – page 135
- miasma – page 148



Author technique

(Analysis)

- What makes the exchange between Mr and Mrs Mylinsky funny on page 138.
- Pick out details in the description of Mr Swallowman and his shop which you think are particularly effective. How do they make you feel?
- Find an example of foreshadowing on page 140.
- Find an example of an oxymoron on page 142. (A rhetorical figure of speech in which incongruous or contradictory terms are combined, as in a deafening silence and a mournful optimist).



Writing activity

- Re-read the description of Doctor Zilbergeld on page 144. Write a brief and vivid description of an unpleasant person, using an unusual simile which adds sensory detail.

Creative activity

- Design a hunting suit.

Chapter 9

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What does the conversation between Osbert and Isabella near the beginning of the chapter tell you about Isabella's character?
- Why do you think imagination is considered dangerous by the tutors from the Institute?
- Why was the box delivered to Doctor Zilbergeld 'wrapped with a bow of black ribbon'?
- What do you think will become of Doctor Zilbergeld?

Drama

- In pairs, taking the parts of Osbert and Isabella, prepare the dialogue on pages 152 – 154, conveying as much as possible about the characters through expressive reading.

Creative task

- Draw an illustration of Doctor Zilbergeld being suspended in the Oppenheimer Strudel Factory. Re-read the text so that you can incorporate as many details as possible, as well as adding your own imaginative touches.

Quick research/creative task

- Find a selection of different counting rhymes and make an illustrated book for the nursery class.

Chapter 10

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, making connections, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What do you find amusing about the opening section of this chapter?
- Can you think of any scenes from films or books which you are reminded of when Doctor Zilbergeld is being processed in the strudel machine?
- Find examples of 'black humour' in the text.

Noun, 1. black humour - the juxtaposition of morbid and farcical elements (in writing or drama) to give a disturbing effect.

- Predict what will happen as a result of the letters OS being written in jam.
- Why do you think that Osbert gave Isabella the envelope with the shard of strudel pastry inside it?



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- Why do you think Osbert decides to use a calling card and paste newspaper cuttings into his journal? What do you think might happen as a result of his actions?
- What is 'the point of teaching' – page 188?
- What do you think the Star Box is? Why do you think Mr Rudulfus reacts in this way when it is mentioned?

Vocabulary

Find out what the following words mean and use them in sentences of your own:

- Hallucinating – page 16
- sobriquet – page 181
- succulent – page 185

Author technique

(Analysis)

- Re-read the chapter to pinpoint an episode which you think is particularly easy to visualise and discuss the way in which the author has achieved this.
- Select similes from the text which you find effective and discuss why they work well.
- Pick out all the details relating to the snails (page 185 onwards) which create a reaction in the reader. Describe your personal response.

Science investigation

- Create an experiment where you hang an increasing number of weights on a piece of string. Measure the increase in length of the string each time a weight is added.
- Predict how many weights the string will tolerate before it breaks.
- Record your findings.

Writing activity

- Re-read the paragraph at the foot of page 177.
- Write about any memories that you might have which are triggered by certain smells.

Creative activity

- Design a calling card.

Chapter 11

Reflect and discuss

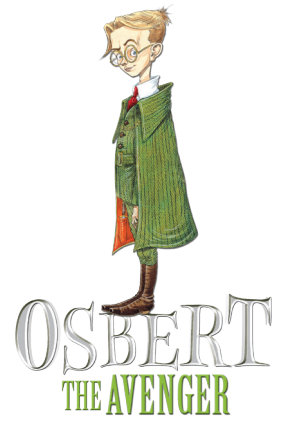
(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- Why do you think people would claim to be the Schwartzgarten Slayer?
- Do you think that rewards are effective? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
- Do you think it is important to teach a child 'the importance of taking responsibility for his actions?'
- What do you think will happen when Rudulfus discovers the contents of Osbert's box?

Vocabulary

Find out what the following words mean and use three of them in sentences of your own:

- eccentricity – page 189
- despised – page 189
- perambulator – page 190
- pitch – page 190
- congregated – page 192
- imminent – page 192
- modus operandi – page 192



Author technique

(Analysis)

- How does the author convey his own attitude to buying furs? Discuss whether people should wear furs.
- What senses does the author focus on in order to convey the nightmarish aspects of the scene with the ravens? - page 190.
- Find the metaphor on page 200. What does this suggest about Isabella?
- Chart how the author controls the rise and fall of tension throughout this chapter on a graph



Tension



Writing activities

- Write a quick pen portrait of someone who is eccentric.
- Find a range of collective nouns for animals. Choose one and write and illustrate a short story about it.

Chapter 12

Reflect and discuss

(Deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What does Nanny mean when she says 'If you pity the pig, you miss out on the bacon?'
- What is your view of Isabella at this point in the story?
- What is your reaction to the course of events with the custodian of the museum and the map of a secret passage?

Vocabulary

Find out what the following word means and use it in a sentence of your own:

- impoverished – page 210

Quick research

- Collect some old sayings and explain what they mean.
- Find out about marshmallows.
- Find out what Corinthian columns with bas relief are.

Author technique

(Analysis)

- The description of the 'most expensive chocolate confection' is macabre. Find other macabre examples in this chapter. Why do you think the author decides to such details?
- Re-read pages 213-220 to find examples of foreshadowing in the text. What do you think will happen next?



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Writing task

- Re-read page 208 - 209.

Write a paragraph describing your favourite shop, concentrating on small, sensory details.

Either:

- Write about a festival or special occasion that you have attended, paying attention to the details in your description.

Or:

- Devise a themed festival in celebration of something and give details of the proceedings.



Creative task

- Make a design for the Star Box.

Chapter 13

Reflect and discuss

(Literal comprehension, prediction, deduction, inference, making connections, forming and supporting opinions)

- What do we learn about the characters of the Principal, Mr and Mrs Brinkhoff and Osbert as a result of their exchange on page 235?
- What does the incident with Emeté Talbor's finger indicate about the character of Isabella?
- What does the scene with the old woman luring Isabella with the promise of sweets remind you of – page 241-242?
- Why do you think Mr Rudulfus wants Isabella 'to fully appreciate' her fate? - page 247.
- What is your reaction to Isabella's reading of the whole situation: 'She had almost died, and it was all Osbert Brinkhoff's fault.'
- Reread page 258. Why do you think the Principal says: 'Fear makes men do peculiar things ...We will not speak of this again.' Do you think his observation is true?
- Why do you think 'Isabella smiled?' - page 293.
- Why doesn't the book end with this chapter?
- What do you think might happen next?
- Who did you think was speaking at first on page 298?" "What are you doing?" said a voice.'
- What do you think Nanny will do with the items she has found under the floorboards?

Vocabulary

Dictionary race. Working in competition with a partner, find out the meanings of ten of the following words and jot them down.

- filberts – page 229
- carousel – page 229
- braziers – page 232
- circuitous – page 233
- burghers – page 236
- guildsmen – page 236,
- aldermen – page 236
- Terpsichore – page 239
- dispassion – page 241
- oblivious – page 247
- imminent – page 261
- alabaster – page 295



Quick research

- Find out about The Horsemen Of The Apocalypse – page 229

Drama

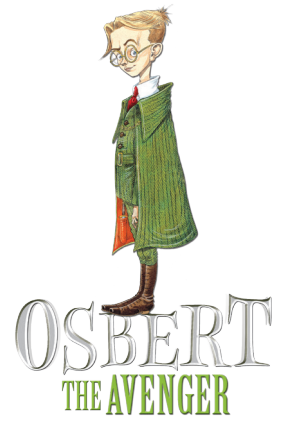
- Working in pairs, devise a scene between a fortune teller and a client. You might want to read some examples of horoscopes first to study the imprecise language that is used.

Think about whether you would use a crystal ball, tarot cards or a palm reading.

Use the thesaurus to find useful synonyms for a range of words that you might use.

- Rehearse and read aloud the fourth paragraph on page 238: 'For your delectation... recover.'

Find a range of synonyms for the words used in this extract and write and perform your own introduction to the spectacle.



Author technique

(Analysis)

- Find examples of foreshadowing on page 239. Why do authors use this technique?
- How does the author build up the tension on pages 241-242?
- Were you surprised to learn that Mr Rudulfus was the museum custodian? Do you think all ends need to be neatly tied up in order to make a satisfying story?
- Reread page 255 and discuss how tension and humour are used at this climactic point.
- Why does the final sentence of this chapter work so well?
- How does the author achieve a humorous effect at the chapter section ending on page 262?

Writing activity

Either:

- Reread the paragraph at the top of page 229 identifying the different senses which the author evokes, then write a paragraph describing the food stalls you would have at your festival focusing on senses in a similar way.

Or:

- Reread page 230 and describe a ride or sideshow which you would have at your festival.

Chapter 14

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, making connections, forming and supporting opinions)

- What does the Myops' decision to continue to send Isabella to The Institute indicate about relationships within the Myop family?
- What do you think Mr Lomm would do if he knew that Osbert was the Schwartzgarten Slayer?
- What is your reaction when adults tell you that you have grown? Do you agree that children like to be told that they have grown? Page 267.
- Which fairy tale does the scene between the disguised man and the porter on page 273 remind you of and what moral lesson does it convey?
- Why do you think Osbert picks up the broken fragment of the Principal's rapier?
- Reread the final conversation between Osbert and the Principal on pages 286-288. What does this reveal about the Principal's motivation?

Vocabulary

Dictionary race: working in competition with a partner, find out the meanings of ten of the following words and jot them down.

- cadaverous – page 263
- ravaged – page 263
- precocious – page 264



- dumb waiter – page 273
- genial – page 278
- obsequiously – page 278
- nemesis – page 279
- malevolently – page 282
- ingenuity – page 282
- leached – page 285
- pristine – page 285



Author technique

- Reread page 263, picking out the most effective words and phrases which describe the Principal.
- Reread pages 272-273: 'One particularly cold night ...private rooms.' Pick out the details which make the scene easy to visualise.
- Reread pages 283 -4: 'The smouldering log ...beside the door.' Find all the words and phrases relating to fire and classify them in the following groups (some may feature in more than one category):
 - Verbs
 - Adjectives
 - Adverbs
 - Similes
 - Metaphors
- Reread pages 288-290. How does the author enable you to visualise the scene so vividly?

Readers' Theatre

- In groups of three, prepare a short performance of page 276, in the role of the housekeeper, the porter and the narrator from: 'As the housekeeper ...lock the door behind her.'
- Think about and make performance notes on:
 - Who will read each part
 - What the dialogue should sound like
 - What the punctuation is telling you about how to read the extract
- Concentrate on fluency, timing, expression, intonation and phrasing so that you clearly convey the characters' qualities.

Writing activity

- Rewrite the following sentence in your own words: 'All day he had been seized by a morbid sense of his own impending mortality.'

Chapter 15

Reflect and discuss

(Literal comprehension, prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What indications can you find in the text that show the different ways in which Osbert and Isabella regard each other? Do you think Isabella's feelings are justified?
- Find all the details relating to the Inspector of Police. What picture does this form of his character?
- Reread pages 315-316. Pick out all the words and phrases relating to Isabella. What do they tell you about her?
- Do you think Osbert will be able to extricate himself from this situation? If so, how will he do this?

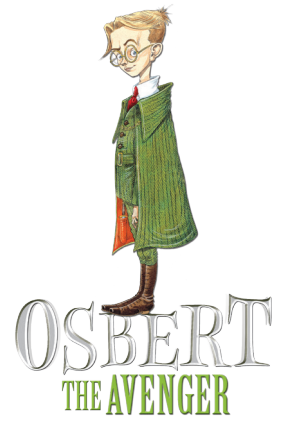
Readers' Theatre

(Literal comprehension, deduction, inference, empathy)

- In groups of nine: the Narrator, the Inspector of Police, Mrs Brinkhoff, Mr Brinkhoff, Nanny, Osbert, the Constable, the man in the dirty vest and his wife – rehearse and prepare a reading



- of the following section: page 307 - 312: "Many hours later... rolled slowly away."
- Think about and make performance notes on:
 - Who will read each section
 - What the dialogue should sound like
 - What the punctuation is telling you about how to read the extract
 - Concentrate on fluency, timing, expression, intonation and phrasing so that you clearly convey the characters' qualities.



Chapter 16

Reflect and discuss

(Prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What do you think of Osbert's values?
- Predict what will happen next.

Vocabulary

Find out what the following word means and use it in a sentence of your own.

- maladjusted – page 328.

Quick research

- Find out the meaning of the names Septimus and Octavius. What other words can you find beginning with sept and oct?

Readers' theatre

(Literal comprehension, deduction, inference, empathy)

- In groups, rehearse and prepare a reading of the following section: page 326-328: "At ten o'clock... Isabella Myop was laughing at him."

Some people may have to take more than one part as there are eleven roles: Octavius, Septimus, the first, second and third judges, Mrs Myop, Mr Lomm, Mrs Brinkhoff, Isabella, Osbert and the narrator.

- Think about and make performance notes on:
 - Who will read each section
 - What the dialogue should sound like
 - What the punctuation is telling you about how to read the extract
- Concentrate on fluency, timing, expression, intonation and phrasing so that you clearly convey the characters' qualities.

Epilogue and The Informant

Reflect and discuss

(Literal comprehension, prediction, deduction, inference, forming and supporting opinions)

- What do you find that is unexpected in the epilogue?
- Do you think that experiences change people? 'Nanny was a changed woman.' – page 332.
- Discuss what you can infer from the following extract:

'And what of Isabella Myop? Every evening, as she practised at home on the Constantin Violin, she would remember what Mr Lomm taught about inevitable musical outcomes, and the thought made her shiver.'
- Reread the top of page 334. Do you think that faces grow to reflect people's personalities and experience of life?
- Why do you think Mrs Myop tells Isabella such dark tales?



Vocabulary

Find out what the following word means and use it in a sentence of your own.

- Epilogue – page 331

Writing activity

Either:

- Write a sensationalist article for The Informant on how Osbert wreaks his revenge on Isabella.

Or:

- Devise a range of advertisements for The Informant.

Or:

- Write an article on your own choice of subject for The Informant.

Or:

- With a partner, write an agony aunt column addressing some of the problems that the citizens of Schwatzgarten might have and the advice that might be given.

Or:

- Write an obituary column for the newspaper for the different characters who have died. (You might want to read some examples from a newspaper first)

Class assignment: compile all the features into your own electronic edition of The Informant.



Overview

Reflect and discuss

(Forming and supporting opinions, analysis and evaluation)

- What did you like/dislike about this novel?
- Who is your favourite character overall? Give reasons for your choice.
- What authorial techniques do you particularly appreciate in this book?
- The subject of the book is a series of murders committed by a child. How does the author manage to write about a shocking subject in an acceptable manner?

Writing/creative activity

- Design your own cover and blurb for this novel.

