

Assessment Focuses

- RAF4** Identify and comment on the structure and organization of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level
- RAF6** Identify and comment on writers' purposes and viewpoints and the overall effect of the text on the reader
- RAF7** Relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions
- WAF1** Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts
- WAF2** Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose

Students should not have read the novel before this lesson.

Starter

The aim of this starter is to encourage students to consider what influences them when they are choosing a book to read.

Explain that there are many things that inform their impression of a book. Authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians all make efforts to attract readers and give readers an idea of what to expect from a book. Everything from the genre, the reputation of the author, the online 'extras', the displays used in bookshops or libraries as well as the cover, illustrations, colours, typography and back-cover blurb sets the scene and establishes readers' expectations.

Run through the slides of **PPT1**. This offers examples to get students thinking about what affects their choice of book. Ask students to select the most influential factor from those shown. Elicit why they think they are influenced by certain tactics and not others. Take feedback from the class and compare tastes and preferences.

Be sure to get students thinking about the influences that are more subliminal: for example, they may not realise how much the colours on the cover attract them.

The final slide begins to apply this to *Skulduggery Pleasant*, asking students to find clues in the cover and blurb that tell them about the genre, characters and reading experience ahead.

Development

Now that students have established their expectations based on the cover and blurb, explain that the early chapters and writing style of a book are also hugely influential in determining the success and appeal of a novel. Explain that readers want books to hook and engage them from the start and meet/exceed their expectations. (Clarify that this means the reader starts to enjoy the text, imagine they are there and want to know more – essentially, they want to read on.)

Go through the headings along the top of the table on **Worksheet 1**, which are the key ways that readers can be 'hooked' into a story.

Read Chapters 1–2 together. After reading, discuss which methods of engaging the reader were used in the chapters and ask students to complete the grid on **Worksheet 1**, starting with the examples provided, and then choosing two quotations of their own from the chapter.

Plenary

Ask students to write a two-paragraph review (both praise and critique) of their first impressions of *Skulduggery Pleasant*, drawing on the visual and textual 'hook' features discussed today. Were their genre and writing style expectations confirmed? Exceeded? Suggest students draw a conclusion and then support their assertion with evidence (e.g. '*The opening chapters of Skulduggery made me want to read on because ...*').

Homework

Ask students to read Chapters 3–6 and to be ready for a quiz on the first six chapters during the next lesson.

For each example from the text, fill in the columns you think are relevant. The first example has been done for you. Then add two further examples of your own, filling in the relevant columns.

	Something I am left wondering about	A character I am interested in or have a strong reaction to	A description or detail that helped me to imagine I was there	Something funny that entertained me	Something dramatic that excited or shocked me	A hint that something is going to happen that I want to read more about
Example 1 Gordon Edgley's sudden death came as a shock to everyone – not least himself. Page 11	This makes me question: - Who killed him? - How did he die?			This is quite funny - you can't be shocked if you're dead.		I think the book will solve the mystery of who killed him and I want to know more.
Example 2 'Stephanie could see the greed seep into ... looking.' Page 13						
Example 3 'Stephanie found she couldn't take her eyes off where he had been. Who was he? She hadn't even got his name.' Page 17						
Example 4						
Example 5						