

MORTAL ENGINES



OBJECTIVES

To recognise different methods used to introduce characters
To create a character introduction using chosen methods

OUTCOMES

Students will identify different methods of character introduction
Students will write creatively to introduce a character

RESOURCES

Mortal Engines by Philip Reeve
Resource 1: Meet the characters
Resource 2: An author's toolbox
Resource 3: Meet my character

LEAD IN

Read Resource 1 and discuss whether the author, Philip Reeve, wants the reader to like or dislike each of the characters introduced at this point in the novel.

Focus in on one or two characters: which details help to create a positive, negative or mixed impression of the character? Discuss how the details may **state** something about the character or **suggest** something about him or her.

TASK

Focus students on the craft of the author. The descriptions are a result of the author's decisions. Look at the Author's Toolbox (Resource 2). Use this to help identify the methods the author has used to create the characters.

Students can work in pairs or individually to identify the author's methods and their effects using Resource 2 to organise their ideas.

Next, invite students to imagine, plan and create characters of their own using Resource 3 to ensure varied use of structure and to scaffold responses if required.

EXTENSION

To further develop creativity and control, invite students to pair up and create an interaction between both their characters.

This could be delivered in the form of role play, cartoon sketching, or further creative writing such as a script or dialogue.



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MEET THE CHARACTERS

TOM

'Tom pushed his untidy hair out of his eyes and watched as the airships rose up and up and vanished into the slate-grey clouds. For a moment he found himself longing to go with them, up into the sunlight. If only his poor parents had not left him to the care of the Guild, to be trained as a Historian! He wished he could be cabin-boy aboard a sky-clipper and see all the cities of the world.'

- p10

VALENTINE

'Valentine jumped to his feet and came striding over to take it [the letter]. He was a tall, handsome man of nearly forty with a mane of silver-flecked black hair and a trim black beard. His grey mariner's eyes twinkled with humour, and on his forehead a third eye – the Guild-mark of the Historian, the blue eye that looks backwards into time – seemed to wink as he raised a quizzical eyebrow.'

- p18

KATHERINE

"He likes it best if you tickle his tummy. Dog, I mean, not Father." She laughed. She had a lot of long, dark hair, and her father's grey eyes and the same quick, dazzling smile, and she was dressed in the narrow silk trousers and flowing tunic that were all the rage in High London that summer. Tom gazed at her in wonder. He had seen pictures of Valentine's daughter, but he had never realized how beautiful she was.'

- p 20

HESTER

'She was no older than Tom, and she was hideous. A terrible scar ran down her face from forehead to jaw, making it look like a portrait that had been furiously crossed out. Her mouth was wrenched sideways in a permanent sneer, her nose was a smashed stump and her single eye stared at him out of the wreckage, as grey and chill as a winter sea.'

- p 28

MISS FANG

"Perhaps I may be of help?" suggested a soft, foreign-sounding voice at Tom's shoulder. The woman in the red coat had come silently to his side; a lean, handsome woman with badger slashes of white in her short black hair. Reflections of the hurricane lamps danced in her sunglasses, and when she smiled Tom noticed that her teeth were stained red.'

- p 75



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AN AUTHOR'S TOOLBOX

An author selects a variety of details (or tools) to help the reader to discover what the character is like.

AUTHOR'S TOOLBOX:

- facial description
- personal history
- dreams and wishes
- actions
- dialogue
- humour
- clothing
- thoughts
- exaggeration
- comparisons through metaphor or simile

Choose two characters and identify the tools used to introduce them. Explain what each detail suggests about the character.

Character name		
Type of detail	Example – give a short quotation ""	What does this detail suggest about the character?

Character name		
Type of detail	Example – give a short quotation ""	What does this detail suggest about the character?



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MEET MY CHARACTER

Practise using the Author's Toolbox by creating a character who Tom and Hester could meet in London, Batmunkh Gompa or on Airhaven.

Decide whether the character will be good, bad or a mixture of both.
Think about which tools you will use to create your character. Aim to include at least three.

You could use the tools to help you plan your creation. For example:

Dialogue → Actions → Facial features → Thoughts

OR

Clothing → Facial features → Dreams → Humour

Meet _____

The tools I choose:	My creative writing



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MORTAL ENGINES



OBJECTIVES

To recognise how an author selects language for effect

To design a detailed fantasy location.

To describe the location using adverbial phrases to add interesting details.

OUTCOMES

Students will design a fantasy location.

Students will create a written description, using adverbial phrases.

RESOURCES

Mortal Engines by Philip Reeve

Resource 1: Welcome to Airhaven

Resource 2: Crafting a description

Resource 3: Crafting a description

LEAD IN

Invite students to close their eyes while the extract describing Airhaven on Resource Sheet 1 is read aloud to them.

Next, ask students to draw what they see while the extract is read to them again at a steady pace. [The aim is to aid visualisation rather than to create a perfect picture.]

Read the extract one further time while students check which details they have included or missed out. Discuss what kinds of details the author, Philip Reeve, has chosen to include in Tom's first sight of Airhaven and the effect of these detail upon the reader.

TASK

Invite students to draw or map a street-view, as in this example, of a fantasy location of their choice, or of a location from the novel (Resource Sheet 1). The location could be in the air, below ground, on or under water.

In pairs, students explain what can be seen in this street to a partner.

Look at Resource Sheet 2. Identify how the author has created a busy location through his use of language. He has added adverbials to nouns to make them easier to visualise and to give a sense of movement.

Students use the table provided to help scaffold their own descriptions of the fantasy locations they have created.

EXTENSION

The descriptions and artwork could form a display to demonstrate success and remind students of this example of crafting language. Equally, students could work in pairs or groups, using role play as travel agents to promote a visit to their locations. Video editing apps could be used to generate on-screen advertisements.



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AIRHAVEN, FANTASY CITY

At last they were allowed up a metal stairway to the High Street. Airhaven's single thoroughfare was a hoop of lightweight alloy deckplates lined with shops and stalls, chandleries, cafés and airshipman's hotels. Tom turned around and around, trying to take everything in and make sure he would remember it for ever. He saw turbines whirling on every rooftop, and mechanics crawling like spiders over the huge engine pods. The air was thick with the exotic smells of foreign food, and everywhere he looked there were aviators, striding along with the careless confidence of people who had lived their whole life in the sky, their long coats fluttering behind them like leathery wings.

- From *Mortal Engines* by Philip Reeve, 2001

My Fantasy City _____

 SCHOLASTIC

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MORTAL ENGINES



THE AUTHOR'S CRAFT

Notice how the author makes Airhaven seem a busy location. He does this with sentence structures that include adverbials to make the picture come alive and appear full of activity.

At last they were allowed up a metal stairway to the High Street. Airhaven's single thoroughfare was a hoop of lightweight alloy deckplates lined with shops and stalls, chandleries, cafés and airshipman's hotels. Tom turned around and around, trying to take everything in and make sure he would remember it for ever. He saw turbines whirling on every rooftop, and mechanics crawling like spiders over the huge engine pods. The air was thick with the exotic smells of foreign food, and everywhere he looked there were aviators, striding along with the careless confidence of people who had lived their whole life in the sky, their long coats fluttering behind them like leathery wings.

Tom saw

noun	adverbial
turbines	<i>whirling on every rooftop</i>
mechanics	<i>crawling like spiders over the huge engine pods.</i>
aviators	<i>striding along with the careless confidence of people who had lived their whole life in the sky</i>
their long coats	<i>fluttering behind them like leathery wings.</i>

Select some details from your own fantasy city. Add the nouns to the table below and then add adverbials to increase detail and create a sense of activity.

noun	adverbial



MORTAL ENGINES



OBJECTIVES

To explore the theme of loyalty in the novel *Mortal Engines*.

OUTCOMES

Students will discuss the theme of loyalty in the novel and in relation to their own lives.
Students will create a poem about friendship loyalty.

RESOURCES

Mortal Engines by Philip Reeve

Resource 1: What is loyalty?

Resource 2: What about you?

Resource 3 : Loyalty is...

LEAD IN

Gather a collective definition of what loyalty is considered to be by the students in your class.

Using Resource Sheet 1, identify the characters who demonstrate loyalty, and the ways in which they do so.

Discuss why loyalty is a universal theme through all the novels in the series, and in most literature, plays and television productions.

TASK

Working in groups, students are given cards based on Resource Sheet 2. Students discuss the moral implications of each situation and decide whether the protagonist acts with loyalty or not, and what motivates or explains this choice. Next, the discussion can be opened out to the whole class to capture a wider range of opinions.

To consolidate the thinking and discussion, students can be asked to encapsulate their own interpretation of loyalty in a simple acrostic poem.

EXTENSION

Students could select a different poetic form to allow for further creativity. Equally, students could create a drawn or painted image to represent loyalty, or select their own preferences from a search using internet search engines with the appropriate safety restrictions deployed.



MORTAL ENGINES



THE LOYALTY LADDER

Discuss these characters to identify who they are loyal to.

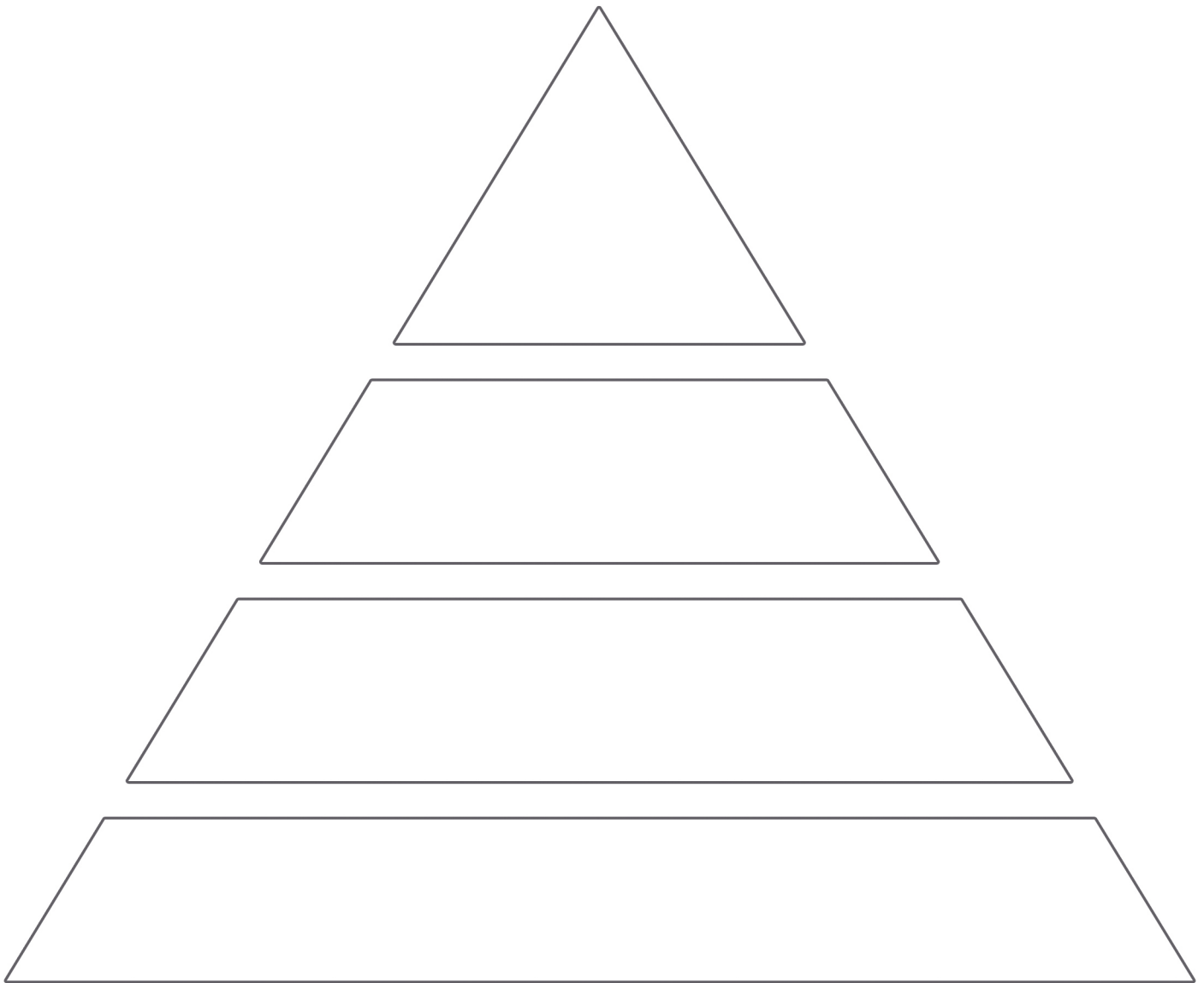
Then, place them on the Loyalty Ladder to show who demonstrates the greatest loyalty.

Tom
Hester
Katherine

Valentine
Wreyland
Peavey

Melliphant
Pomeroy
Miss Fang

Shrike
Crome
Beavis Pod



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WHAT ABOUT YOU?

We develop our thoughts and actions in relation to concepts such as truth, friendship, honour and loyalty throughout our lives.

What does loyalty mean to you today?

1. Your best friend finds £10 near the teacher's desk. She wants to use it to buy a gift for her mum's birthday. What do you do?

2. You're on a sponsored run with your friend Sam who is having trouble keeping up with you and the rest of your friends. What do you do?

3. You are talking with friends in the playground. Someone starts to make fun of Jo, your classmate, who is off school today. What do you do?

4. You're on a year group school trip and everyone had to bring a packed lunch. You are sitting next to Charlie, who you don't know very well, who has forgotten to bring one. What do you do?

5. Your grandmother can't get out and about these days so you usually help to get her shopping on a Wednesday. However, you get a last minute invitation to the cinema from a new friend on Wednesday afternoon. What do you do?

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LOYALTY IS ...

Create an acrostic poem to share your understanding of loyalty.

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