

Opening Doors

Year 6–7 Literacy Skills
Transition Booklet

Name:

Form:

Dear future NSG student,

We are very excited to open our doors and to welcome you into our school, and especially into the English department! We are based on the top and middle floors of the Elm building.

At Northampton School for Girls we absolutely love everything to do with books and reading, and we are very keen to encourage all of our students to be active readers. When you join us, you will read independently at the start of every English lesson and once a week you will spend a whole lesson in the library. For our first unit of work in English we will be reading a novel together and we are very much looking forward to sharing this experience with you. As well as this, you will also have a weekly reading focus in tutor time. With all of this in mind, we expect you to bring your independent reading book with you every day, as part of your school equipment.

As well as fostering your enthusiasm for all things related to reading, in the English department we also aim to nurture your writing skills, and we really enjoy helping you to become talented young writers. At least once a year we take part in competitions organised by “Young Writers” and many of our students have had their poems or short stories chosen to be published.

We really do believe that reading and writing can open doors to new worlds, and we hope that you enjoy completing our transition unit. We would also be very pleased if you enter our NSG Transition Writing Competition which is based on Activity 11: What’s behind the door? Details of how to enter are on the final page of this booklet. I look forward to receiving your entry.

Best wishes,

Mrs Jones

Head of KS3 English

“I read thousands of books and I will power myself with knowledge.”

Malala Yousafzi

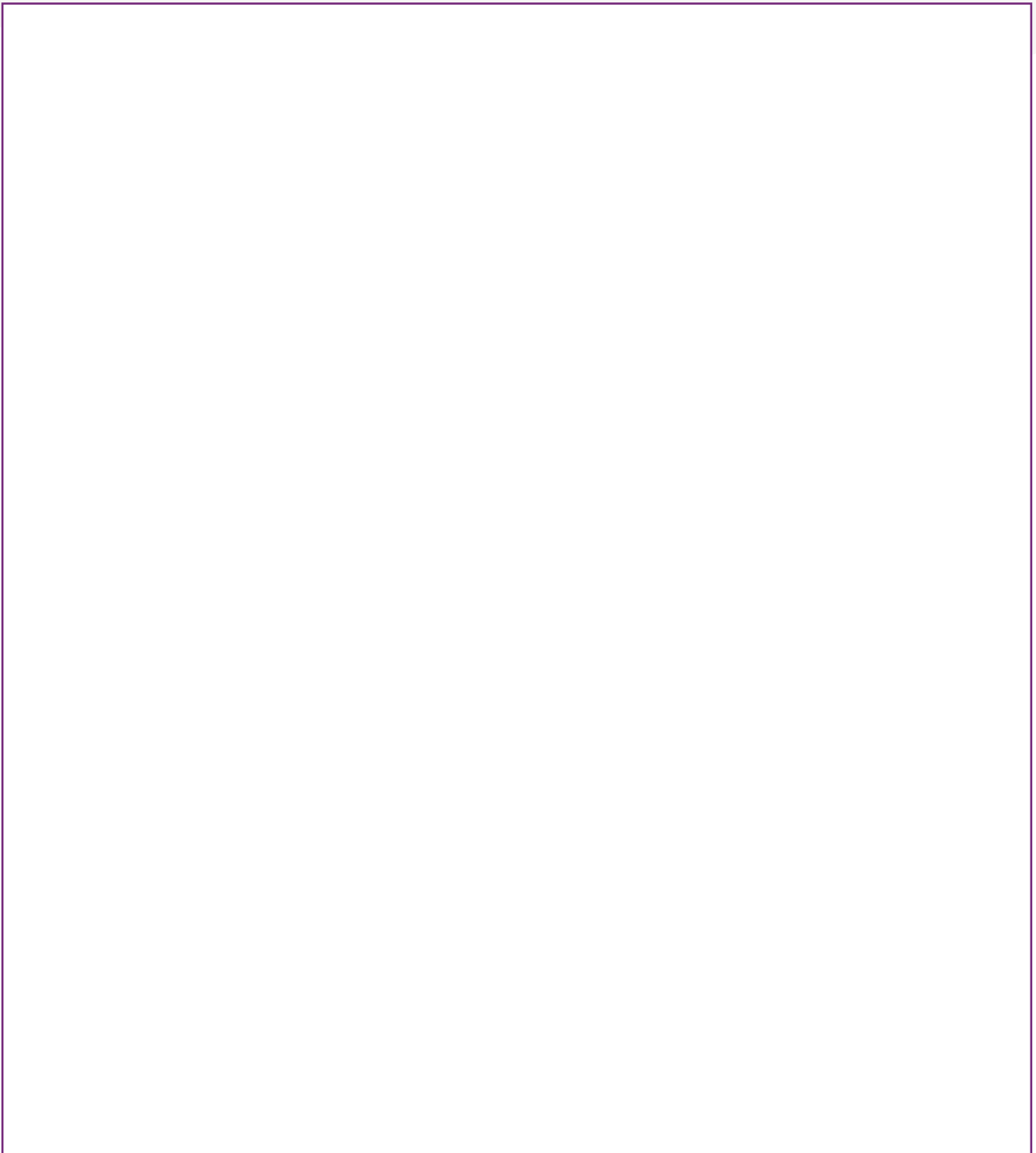
Activity One

Introducing Me

Use the space below to design a door that represents you.

You could include:

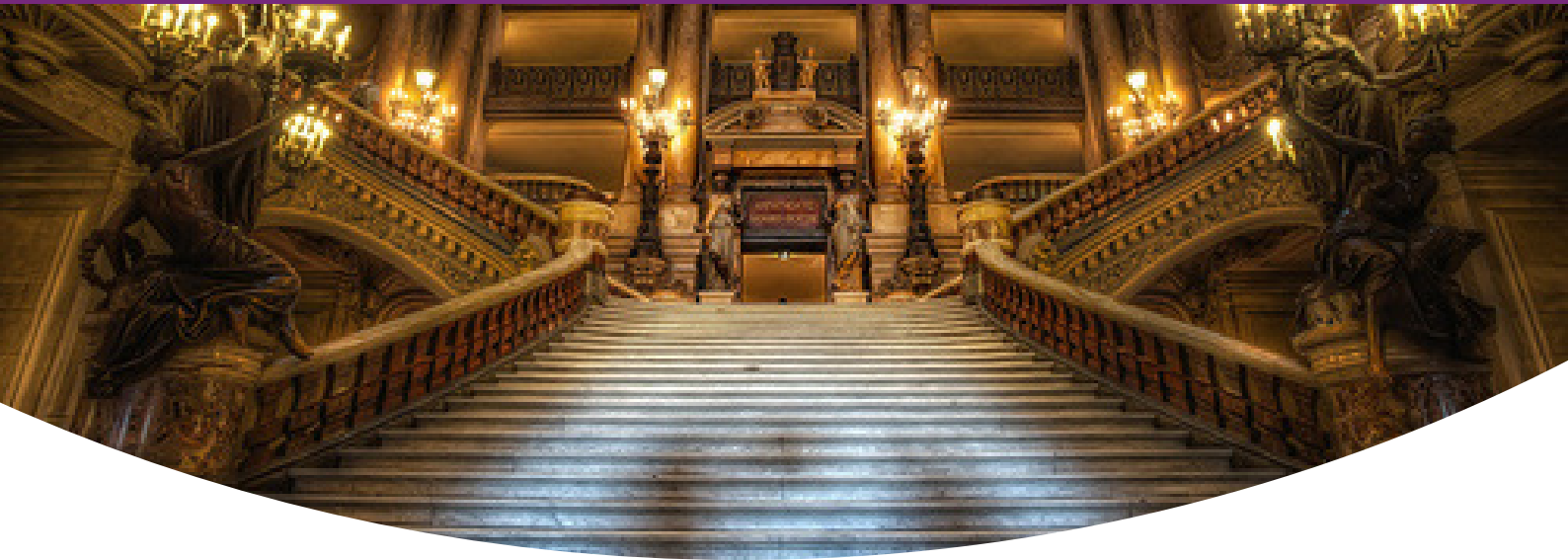
- Details about yourself
- Your favourite colour/food/book/film etc
- Your hobbies and interests
- Your favourite place
- Your biggest fear
- Any information that you would like to share about yourself



Activity Two

First day at Hogwarts

(from Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J.K. Rowling)



Read the following extract

Hagrid raised a gigantic fist and knocked three times on the castle door.

The door swung open at once. A tall, black-haired witch in emerald-green robes stood there. She had a very stern face and Harry's first thought was that this was not someone to cross.

'The firs'-years, Professor McGonagall,' said Hagrid.

'Thank you, Hagrid. I will take them from here.'

She pulled the door wide. The Entrance Hall was so big you could have fitted the whole of the Dursleys' house in it. The stone walls were lit with flaming torches like the ones at Gringotts, the ceiling was too high to make out, and a magnificent marble staircase facing them led to the upper floors.

Now answer these questions

Question:

What four things do we learn about the Entrance Hall at Hogwarts?

1.
2.
3.
4.

Challenge:

How does the author make the Entrance Hall sound impressive?

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Read the following extract

They followed Professor McGonagall across the flagged stone floor. Harry could hear the drone of hundreds of voices from a doorway to the right – the rest of the school must already be here – but Professor McGonagall showed the first-years into a small empty chamber off the hall. They crowded in, standing rather closer together than they would usually have done, peering about nervously.

'Welcome to Hogwarts,' said Professor McGonagall. 'The start-of-term banquet will begin shortly, but before you take your seats in the Great Hall, you will be sorted into your houses. The Sorting is a very important ceremony because, while you are here, your house will be something like your family within Hogwarts. You will have classes with the rest of your house, sleep in your house dormitory and spend free time in your house common room.

'The four houses are called Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin. Each house has its own noble history and each has produced outstanding witches and wizards. While you are at Hogwarts, your triumphs will earn your house points, while any rule-breaking will lose house points. At the end of the year, the house with the most points is awarded the House Cup, a great honour. I hope each of you will be a credit to whichever house becomes yours.

'The Sorting Ceremony will take place in a few minutes in front of the rest of the school. I suggest you all smarten yourselves up as much as you can while you are waiting.'

Her eyes lingered for a moment on Neville's cloak, which was fastened under his left ear, and on Ron's smudged nose. Harry nervously tried to flatten his hair.

'I shall return when we are ready for you,' said Professor McGonagall. 'Please wait quietly.' She left the chamber. Harry swallowed.

'How exactly do they sort us into houses?' he asked Ron.

'Some sort of test, I think. Fred said it hurts a lot, but I think he was joking.'

Harry's heart gave a horrible jolt. A test? In front of the whole school? But he didn't know any magic yet – what on earth would he have to do? He hadn't expected something like this the moment they arrived. He looked around anxiously and saw that everyone else looked terrified too. No one was talking much except Hermione Granger, who was whispering very fast about all the spells she'd learnt and wondering which one she'd need. Harry tried hard not to listen to her. He'd never been more nervous, never, not even when he'd had to take a school report home to the Dursleys saying that he'd somehow turned his teacher's wig blue. He kept his eyes fixed on the door. Any second now, Professor McGonagall would come back and lead him to his doom.

Now complete the activity

Underline the adverb in the sentence below:

Harry nervously tried to flatten his hair.

Can you think of **three other words** that the writer could have used to describe how Harry is feeling at this moment in time?

1.

2.

3.

Explain in your own words why Harry is worried about the Sorting Ceremony.

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Read the following extract

Professor McGonagall had returned.

'Now, form a line,' Professor McGonagall told the first-years, 'and follow me.'

Feeling oddly as though his legs had turned to lead, Harry got into line behind a boy with sandy hair, with Ron behind him, and they walked out of the chamber, back across the hall and through a pair of double doors into the Great Hall.

Harry had never even imagined such a strange and splendid place. It was lit by thousands and thousands of candles which were floating in mid-air over four long tables, where the rest of the students were sitting. These tables were laid with glittering golden plates and goblets. At the top of the Hall was another long table where the teachers were sitting.

Professor McGonagall led the first-years up here, so that they came to a halt in a line facing the other students, with the teachers behind them. The hundreds of faces staring at them looked like pale lanterns in the flickering candlelight. Dotted here and there among the students, the ghosts shone misty silver. Mainly to avoid all the staring eyes, Harry looked upwards and saw a velvety black ceiling dotted with stars. He heard Hermione whisper, 'It's bewitched to look like the sky outside, I read about it in *Hogwarts: A History*.'

It was hard to believe there was a ceiling there at all, and that the Great Hall didn't simply open on to the heavens.



Now answer these questions

1. Which **two adjectives** does the writer use to describe Harry's first impression of the Great Hall?

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2. **What is special** about the way in which the Great Hall is lit?

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3. The writer describes the tableware using the words "glittering golden plates and goblets". **How do these words** make the tableware seem impressive?

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4. **Find a simile** to describe the faces of the other students as they look up at the first-years:

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Activity Three

My first day at Hogwarts

Imagine that you are one of the first years who has arrived at Hogwarts with Harry Potter.

Write a letter home to your family telling them all about your first day.

You could include:

- How it felt to step inside Hogwarts for the first time
- A description of your surroundings
- Details of the people that you met
- Your feelings about the Sorting Ceremony
- What it was like to go through the doors into the Great Hall.

Planning

Words or phrases to **describe my feelings** about starting a new school:

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Words or phrases to **describe the Entrance Hall**:

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Words or phrases to **describe the Great Hall**:

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Words or phrases to **describe what I could hear/sounds**:

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WOW words to use instead of:

big:

nervous:

Template

Now use your ideas to write your letter. Use the template below:

A large rectangular box with a purple border, containing a series of horizontal dotted lines for writing a letter. The lines are arranged in a pattern that suggests a standard letter format: a single line for the recipient's address in the top right corner, a line for the sender's address in the top left corner, a large central area with 18 lines for the main body of the letter, and two lines at the bottom for the sender's name and address.

Activity Five

Through the door into the secret garden

(from *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett)

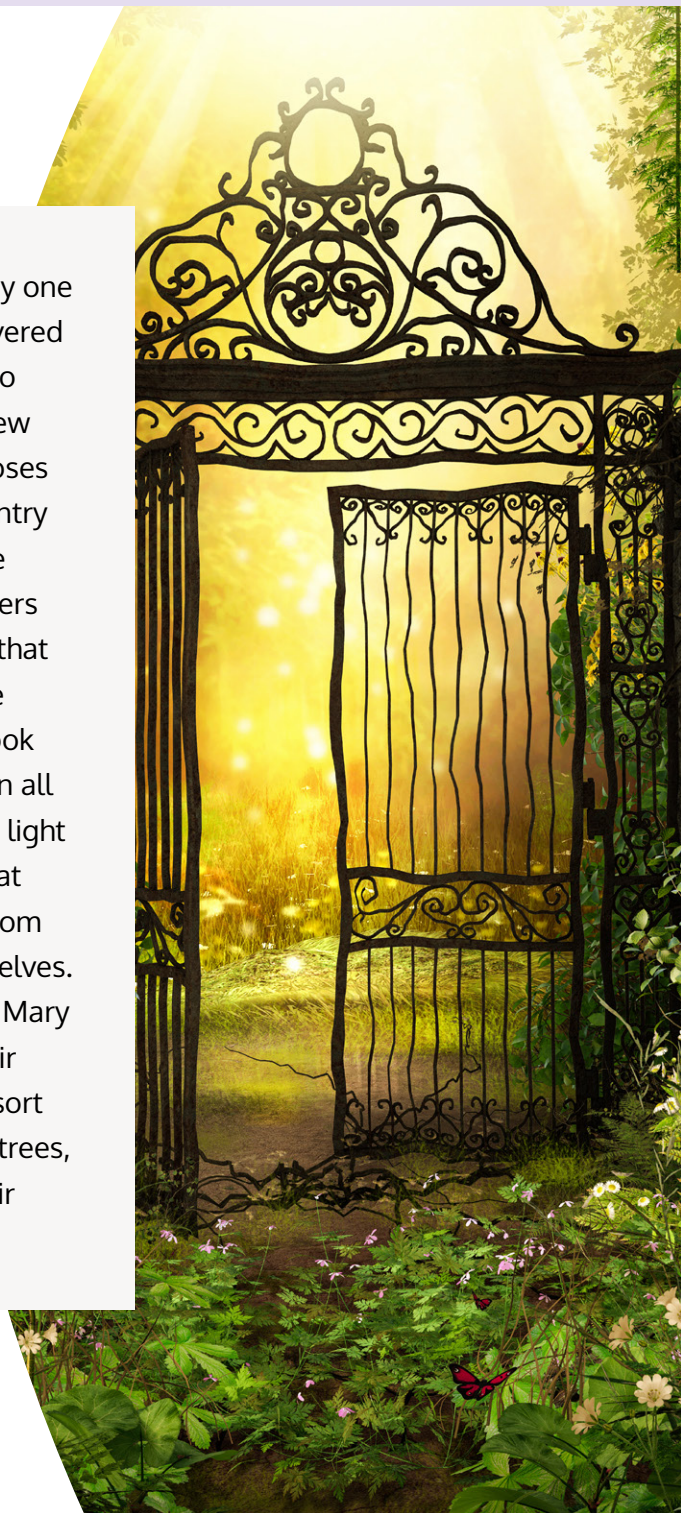
Mary is an orphan who has been sent to live with her Uncle at a big house called Misselthwaite Manor. Just before this extract begins, she has found a key to a hidden garden. This is what she sees when she walks through the door into the garden:

Read the following extract

It was the sweetest, most mysterious-looking place any one could imagine. The high walls which shut it in were covered with the leafless stems of climbing roses which were so thick that they were matted together. Mary Lennox knew they were roses because she had seen a great many roses in India. All the ground was covered with grass of a wintry brown and out of it grew clumps of bushes which were surely rosebushes if they were alive. There were numbers of standard roses which had so spread their branches that they were like little trees. There were other trees in the garden, and one of the things which made the place look strangest and loveliest was that climbing roses had run all over them and swung down long tendrils¹ which made light swaying curtains, and here and there they had caught at each other or at a far-reaching branch and had crept from one tree to another and made lovely bridges of themselves. There were neither leaves nor roses on them now and Mary did not know whether they were dead or alive, but their thin grey or brown branches and sprays looked like a sort of hazy mantle² spreading over everything, walls, and trees, and even brown grass, where they had fallen from their fastenings and run along the ground.

¹ tendrils – thin stem of a climbing plant

² mantle – a cloak or cover



Extract continued...

It was this hazy tangle from tree to tree which made it all look so mysterious. Mary had thought it must be different from other gardens which had not been left all by themselves so long; and indeed it was different from any other place she had ever seen in her life.

"How still it is!" she whispered. "How still!"

Then she waited a moment and listened at the stillness. The robin, who had flown to his treetop, was still as all the rest. He did not even flutter his wings; he sat without stirring, and looked at Mary.

"No wonder it is still," she whispered again. "I am the first person who has spoken in here for ten years."

She moved away from the door, stepping as softly as if she were afraid of awakening someone. She was glad that there was grass under her feet and that her steps made no sounds. She walked under one of the fairy-like grey arches between the trees and looked up at the sprays and tendrils which formed them. "I wonder if they are all quite dead," she said. "Is it all a quite dead garden? I wish it wasn't."

If she had been Ben Weatherstaff she could have told whether the wood was alive by looking at it, but she could only see that there were only grey or brown sprays and branches and none showed any signs of even a tiny leaf-bud anywhere.

But she was inside the wonderful garden and she could come through the door under the ivy any time and she felt as if she had found a world all her own.

Now complete the activities

What flower does Mary think is growing in the garden? **How** does she know what it is?

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What does Mary mean when she says that the garden is "still"?

Why does she think that the garden is like this?

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If you were Mary, how would you be feeling about finding the garden?

Write down 3 adjectives to describe your feelings.

Challenge: **find a quotation** (words) from the extract to support your ideas

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Find and write down **4 superlative adjectives** that are used in this description.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Which **two colours** are used to describe the garden? **Why do you think** that the writer has used these colours? Do they make the garden seem **dull or lively**?

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Activity Seven

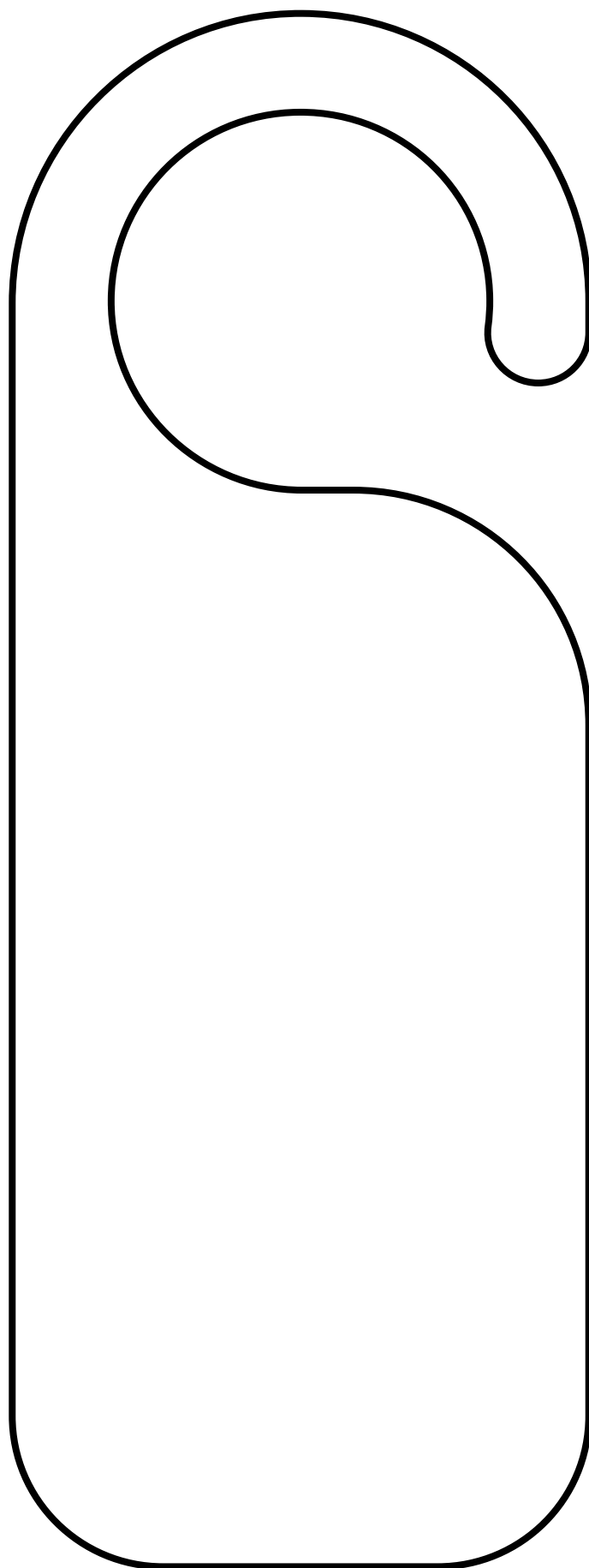
Design a door hanger

Choose a character from your favourite book or a book that you have read recently.
Design a door hanger for their bedroom which reflects their character.

Example



Now create your own



Activity Eight

Who is listening at the door?

In this poem by Walter de la Mare, a traveller on horseback visits a mysterious house. He knocks on the door but there is no answer...

Complete the activity

This poem contains lots of archaic (old fashioned words). Each of the words in bold matches one of the words below. Can you **match the words in bold** to their modern English equivalent? Write your answer in the box next to each word in the poem.

spoke

lived

listening

knocked

biting

worried

chewed

crowding

movement

The Listeners by Walter de la Mare

'Is there anybody there?' said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence **champed** the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor:

And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head:
And he **smote** upon the door again a second time;
'Is there anybody there?' he said.

But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood **perplexed** and still.

But only a host of phantom listeners
That **dwelt** in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:

Stood **thronging** the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.

And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, **cropping** the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;

For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head: —

'Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word,' he said.

Never the least **stir** made the listeners,
Though every word he **spake**
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:

Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

Now answer these questions on the poem

1. Explain what happens in the poem in your own words.

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2. What do you think the Traveller looks like? What sort of person is he or she?

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3. Why do you think the Traveller goes to the house?

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4. Who do you think the listeners are? What do we learn about them?

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5. If you were a character in the poem, would you want to be the Traveller, a listener or the Traveller's horse? Give a reason for your answer.

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Activity Nine

Who would live in a house like this?

The extract below is a description of Bag End, the home of Bilbo Baggins (from *The Hobbit* by J.R. Tolkien).



Read the following extract

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats—the hobbit was fond of visitors. The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill—The Hill, as all the people for many miles round called it—and many little round doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another. No going upstairs for the hobbit: bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries (lots of these), wardrobes (he had whole rooms devoted to clothes), kitchens, dining-rooms, all were on the same floor, and indeed on the same passage. The best rooms were all on the left-hand side (going in), for these were the only ones to have windows, deep-set round windows looking over his garden, and meadows beyond, sloping down to the river.

Complete the activity

These are the front doors to three houses. Who do you think will live in each house?
Write down your ideas about the person in the spaces provided.



This person who lives in this house is:

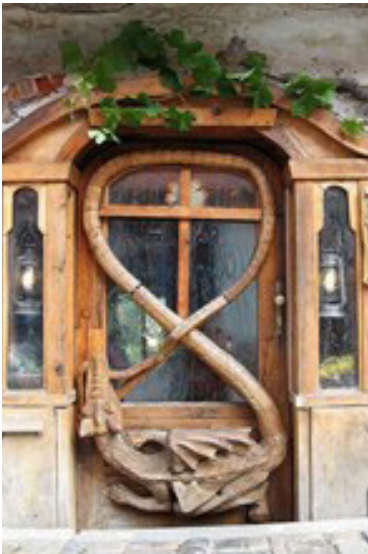
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This person who lives in this house is:

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This person who lives in this house is:

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Activity Ten

The world behind the wardrobe

(from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis).

In this extract from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* Edward finds himself in Narnia for the first time where he meets the White Witch.

Read the following extract

"Lucy! Lu! Where are you? I know you're here."

There was no answer and Edmund noticed that his own voice had a curious sound – not the sound you expect in a cupboard, but a kind of open-air sound. He also noticed that he was unexpectedly cold; and then he saw a light.

"Thank goodness," said Edmund, "the door must have swung open of its own accord." He forgot all about Lucy and went towards the light, which he thought was the open door of the wardrobe. But instead of finding himself stepping out into the spare room he found himself stepping out from the shadow of some thick dark fir trees into an open place in the middle of a wood.

There was crisp, dry snow under his feet and more snow lying on the branches of the trees. Overhead there was pale blue sky, the sort of sky one sees on a fine winter day in the morning. Straight ahead of him he saw between the tree-trunks the sun, just rising, very red and clear. Everything was perfectly still, as if he were the only living creature in that country. There was not even a robin or a squirrel among the trees, and the wood stretched as far as he could see in every direction. He shivered.

He now remembered that he had been looking for Lucy; and also how unpleasant he had been to her about her "imaginary country" which now turned out not to have been imaginary at all. He thought that she must be somewhere quite close and so he shouted, "Lucy! Lucy! I'm here too-Edmund."

There was no answer.

"She's angry about all the things I've been saying lately," thought Edmund. And though he did not like to admit that he had been wrong, he also did not much like being alone in this strange, cold, quiet place; so he shouted again.

"I say, Lu! I'm sorry I didn't believe you. I see now you were right all along. Do come out. Make it Pax."

Still there was no answer.

"Just like a girl," said Edmund to himself, "sulking somewhere, and won't accept an apology."

He looked round him again and decided he did not much like this place, and had almost made up his mind to go home, when he heard, very far off in the wood, a sound of bells. He listened and the sound came nearer and nearer and at last there swept into sight a sledge drawn by two reindeer.

Now answer these questions

You must **answer in full sentences**. Challenge: can you support your ideas with a quotation?

Look again at paragraphs 1-3. In your own words, **write down 3 things** which make Edmund realise that he is not in a normal wardrobe.

1.

2.

3.

Write down 4 things we learn about the setting from paragraph 4.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Read again carefully the paragraph beginning "Just like a girl". Can you **find 3 reasons** that Edmund gives for why Lucy does not answer him?

1.

2.

3.

Read the following extract

The reindeer were about the size of Shetland ponies and their hair was so white that even the snow hardly looked white compared with them; their branching horns were gilded and shone like something on fire when the sunrise caught them. Their harness was of scarlet leather and covered with bells. On the sledge, driving the reindeer, sat a fat dwarf who would have been about three feet high if he had been standing. He was dressed in polar bear's fur and on his head he wore a red hood with a long gold tassel hanging down from its point; his huge beard covered his knees and served him instead of a rug. But behind him, on a much higher seat in the middle of the sledge sat a very different person - a great lady, taller than any woman that Edmund had ever seen. She also was covered in white fur up to her throat and held a long straight golden wand in her right hand and wore a golden crown on her head. Her face was white - not merely pale, but white like snow or paper or icing-sugar, except for her very red mouth. It was a beautiful face in other respects, but proud and cold and stern.

The sledge was a fine sight as it came sweeping towards Edmund with the bells jingling and the dwarf cracking his whip and the snow flying up on each side of it.

"Stop!" said the Lady, and the dwarf pulled the reindeer up so sharp that they almost sat down. Then they recovered themselves and stood champing their bits and blowing. In the frosty air the breath coming out of their nostrils looked like smoke.

"And what, pray, are you?" said the Lady, looking hard at Edmund.

"I'm-I'm-my name's Edmund," said Edmund rather awkwardly. He did not like the way she looked at him.

The Lady frowned, "Is that how you address a Queen?" she asked, looking sterner than ever.



Now answer these questions

You must **answer in full sentences**. Challenge: can you support your ideas with a quotation?

What do we learn about the reindeer which are pulling the sledge?

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Why doesn't the dwarf need a rug to keep him warm?

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What makes the lady seem very different from other women that Edmund has seen?

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Why do you think that the lady is angry with Edmund?

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Activity Eleven

What's behind a door?



Close your eyes and see:

a pearly white door
a tiny gold door
a rainbow coloured door
a dark blue glass door
an arched door
a leaf green door
an icy door
a steel studded door
a furry black door
a magic door
a heart-shaped door

Close your eyes a see
What's behind each door
As you turn the key...

Example

Imagine that you have the chance to unlock each door. What do you think you will see as the door swings open?

This is what you might see as you open the pearly-white door:

I open a pearly white door
And see
A lonely mermaid sitting on a rock
With sunbeams in her hair.

Now complete the activity

I open a **pearly white** door
and see...

.....
.....

I open a **steel studded** door
and see...

.....
.....

I open a **rainbow coloured** door
and see...

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.....

I open a **magic** door
and see...

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I open an **arched** door
and see...

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I open a **heart-shaped** door
and see...

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.....

I open a **leaf green** door
and see...

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I open a _____ door
and see...

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.....

I open an **icy** door
and see...

.....
.....

I open a _____ door
and see...

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.....

The NSG Transition Writing Competition 2022

What do I have to do to enter?

- 1 Complete Activity 11 - What's behind a door?
- 2 Choose your favourite 5 verses from the poem that you created.
- 3 Copy the verses out - either by hand or type them on a Word or GoogleDoc. You can also illustrate your work if you wish.
- 4 Write your name at the end of your work and your new form at NSG (if you know what it will be).
- 5 Email your finished poem to **hjones@nsg.northants.sch.uk** with the subject **NSG Transition Writing Competition 2022**

Alternatively

Post your poem to:

NSG Transition Writing Competition 2022

C/O Mrs H Jones

Northampton School for Girls

Spinney Hill Road

Northampton

NN3 6DG

Closing date: 1st August 2022