

Sheet 8: Analysing Classic Fiction

Worked example:

Read this: 'The fog swirled around the gas lamps like a grey ghost, chilling the very bones of the city.' What does the word 'swirled' suggest about the movement of the fog?

Answer: It suggests the fog is moving in a twisting, winding, or circular way.

• Read this extract: 'Arthur stood outside the iron gates, his coat collar turned up against the biting wind. He felt a shiver of anticipation. The grand house loomed above him, its windows dark and silent, like the eyes of a sleeping giant.'

- What simile does the author use to describe the windows of the house?
- What does the word 'loomed' tell you about the size of the house?
- How does Arthur feel as he stands by the gates? Use one piece of evidence from the text.
- Which word best describes the mood of the extract?

Cheerful Mysterious Funny

• Pip the bookworm says: 'Classic authors often use personification.' Find the phrase where the house is given human-like features.

Self-check: Check your answers against the provided key: look for the simile about the 'sleeping giant' and ensure your mood choice matches the tense atmosphere.

Ready for next: Once you can explain how an author creates a specific mood, you are ready to identify key life events in a biography.