**Lesson 1: Introducing Tom’s Midnight Garden**

**Lesson Objective:** This lesson aims to introduce *Tom’s Midnight Garden* to the students and consider the central themes and motifs used in the text. By the end of the lesson the students should:

1. Understand the context of *Tom’s Midnight Garden* and the effect it has on the book
2. Be able to name at least three central themes of the book and explain the way in which these themes are explored and developed
3. Be able to confidently compare the moral of *Tom’s Midnight Garden* with that of *Wonder,* *Holes* and *War Horse* and to consider and contrast how the authors explore similar themes (i.e. friendship)

**Plan:**

* Begin the class with a general discussion of the book. What did the students enjoy about the book? What did they not enjoy? What was interesting about the way the book was written? Ask the students to note down three things they liked and three things they did not and discuss this as a class
* Remind students of the concept of a semantic field. Brainstorm what would be in the semantic field encompassed within *Tom’s Midnight Garden,* what recurring symbols, themes and motifs can they find in the book (i.e. the passage of time, magic, friendship)? Which of the words they have written down can be described as themes?
* Discuss the context of *Tom’s Midnight Garden.* Play the class the video footage of 1950s school children, and discuss some of the etiquette mentioned in the video. Can they think how this connects to the novel?
* Introduce some information about why Pearce wrote the novel- how does this change the way they see the book? Can *Tom’s Midnight Garden* be accurately described as an elegy for Pearce’s childhood? Why or why not?
* Returning to the brainstorm made at the beginning of the lesson about themes, ask the students to pick one theme and find two different examples within the book where this theme is explored or developed. Demonstrate an example of this with the theme of “loneliness”, using two extracts from the text to highlight the theme’s effect.
* Open up a discussion about the theme of the passage of time in *Tom’s Midnight Garden,* what is Pearce trying to say about the process of aging? What symbols and motifs (i.e. grandfather clock, 13th hour) are used to develop the theme? Write a P.E.E. paragraph on this as a class, and then write an additional one on a different theme of their choice
* What could the moral of *Tom’s Midnight Garden* be? How does the theme of time fit into this? Discuss these questions as a class
* Briefly read the poem based on the novel, and mention how it explores ideas of time and aging in a similar way to Pearce.

**Homework:** ‘What does *Tom’s Midnight Garden* say about the process of growing up?’ OR ‘What does *Tom’s Midnight Garden* say about the passage of time?’. Explain your answer with reference to the text and the wider context of the book, remember to use quotations and language analysis.

**Lesson 2: Exploring Style and Narrative**

**Lesson Objective:** This lesson aims to enable to students to think more broadly about the way in which *Tom’s Midnight Garden* is written. By the end of the lesson the students should:

1. Be able to draw inferences from the text and identify the way in which Pearce uses language, symbols and techniques to explore themes, whilst comparing this to how other writers have interpreted the same themes using her book as inspiration
2. Be able to identify examples of literary techniques within *Tom’s Midnight Garden* and write a P.E.E. paragraph explaining the effect
3. Be able to talk confidently about narration and perspective in *Tom’s Midnight Garden,* and to compare the narrative voice in the bookwith the narrative voice in *War Horse, Holes* and *Wonder*

**Plan:**

* **Open the lesson with the poem that we ended the last lesson with. Now that they have written about the passage of time in *Tom’s Midnight Garden* for homework, do they see this poem any differently? Analyse the images that the poem has lifted from the original novel, what do they think the poet is trying to say? Why does the poet seem to be telling the story from Hatty’s point of view? What effect does this have?**
* **Bring up a list of quotations regarding Hatty and analyse them as a class. What clues were there that something might be awry? How did Pearce write the characters of Tom and Hatty in different ways? Why does Mrs Bartholomew reveal who she is to Tom at the end?**
* **Now, bring up the words used to describe the garden in the novel and discuss the word choice. Why does Pearce write about the garden in the way she does?**
* **Considering this, the students should write a version of the poem from the beginning of the lesson but written from Tom’s perspective. They should consider how, whilst the original poem is very focused on the process of aging, Tom’s relationship with the garden is a different one. They should attempt to follow a similar style and structure as the original**
* **Now consider the fact that the story is written in the 3rd person. How would the narrative voice change if the story was told from Tom’s perspective?**
* **Re-write as a class several more emotive passages from *Tom’s Midnight Garden.* Students should ‘buzz’ in when they have a thought about how to differently present the story from Tom’s perspective (in the 1st person). They should draw up a list of emotive words to help facilitate their thinking about narrative voice**
* **Now, hand out a sheet with literary techniques used in *Tom’s Midnight Garden,* as a finishing activity. Discuss any techniques they might be unfamiliar with. The students should find examples of these techniques, and link each technique they find to one theme (i.e. foreshadowing links to the theme of magic).**
* **Watch the clip from when Tom first discovers the garden in the BBC series. Is this portrayed how they imagined it would be?**

**Homework:** ‘How important is perspective in *Tom’s Midnight Garden*’ OR ‘Is Tom ever really travelling through time?’. Explain your answer with reference to the text and the wider context of the book, remember to use quotations and language analysis.

**Lesson 3: Close Textual Analysis**

**Lesson Objective:** This lesson will aim to make students more comfortable with close textual analysis and how to incorporate it into their essays. By the end of the lesson the students should:

1. Be able to describe the effect of Pearce’s reference of other famous short stories, and identify the ways in which this affects what she is trying to say with *Tom’s Midnight Garden* and our interpretation of the themes of the book
2. Be able to think broadly about symbols and motifs in *Tom’s Midnight Garden* and how they act as the vessels for the larger themes in the text
3. Be able to start thinking about how to write a review, and consider how to debate and review an aspect of *Tom’s Midnight Garden*

**Plan:**

* Start the lesson by thinking about the story of Rip Van Winkle which is mentioned in Chapter 21 of *Tom’s Midnight Garden*. Play the video summarising the story and discuss the themes of Rip Van Winkle and what the story is trying to say
* Bring up the extract in Chapter 21 where Rip Van Winkle is mentioned. Now, open up a debate on the moral of the story. Suggest to the class that the moral is ‘time waits for no-one’ or ‘life goes on’- how can they see this relating to *Tom’s Midnight Garden?*
* The students should now write a P.E.E. paragraph answering the question ‘why does Pearce reference the story of Rip Van Winkle and what does it say about the moral of *her* novel?’
* Talk about treating a text symbolically. What symbols and motifs can help them to do this with *Tom’s Midnight Garden?* Go over how to write effectively about symbols, particularly in reference to where an author drops in references to other texts
* Discuss the question “is *Tom’s Midnight Garden* an uplifting presentation of aging or a depressing one?” and open up a debate on this, telling the students that half of them will argue for one side and half will argue for the other
* Bring up snippets ofreviews of *Tom’s Midnight Garden* and read it as a class. Ask the students to note down any effective adjectives used by the author. Make sure to emphasise where P.E.E. has been used and where themes have been discussed
* Go over how to write a review of a book. What techniques should they use? How much should they summarise the plot? What should the tone of their review be? Put up several helpful pointers on the board of what to include in a book review.
* For the last ten minutes of the lesson, facilitate a wider discussion on what they have learnt from *Tom’s Midnight Garden,* what they think is the most powerful theme or message and why. Did they prefer *Tom’s Midnight Garden, Wonder, Holes* or *War Horse.* Why?

**Homework:** Write a book review of *Tom’s Midnight Garden.* Remember to still reference the text and the wider context of the book, making sure to include a discussion of the themes and following the review writing checklist we created in the lesson.