Summer Holiday Reading 2021

Clockwork

For our reading classes together over the summer holidays, we will be exploring each book in three lessons, with the first offering a general overview, the second delving into the stylistic and narrative elements of the writing and the final lesson offering a closer, more thorough examination of the text itself through the use of close textual analysis and with particular attention paid to literary techniques and structural devices. These lessons are designed to help the students develop new frameworks through which to read and understand literature, equipping them with the vocabulary with which to discuss themes, genre and morals.

*Lesson 1:* **Introduction to *Clockwork***

In lesson 1 we will be starting our introductory work on *Clockwork,* thinking about the central ideas and context of the novel. We will be looking at the genre of the book, thinking about how *Clockwork* is an example of a dark fairy-tale, much like the work of the Brothers Grimm, and thinking about suspense and mystery stories. We will develop a framework of themes to work with, identifying where and how thematic ideas make the reader relate to and empathise with the characters, and where Pullman suggests that we should not pity the characters at all. We will discuss the moral framework of the story, looking at the values it espouses and asking what the writer is trying to say. The class will also be given time to ask any questions they had about the book and to give their opinions on how the story, characters and themes made them feel.

*Lesson 2:* **Exploring Style and Narrative**

In lesson 2 we will dive further into the novel, starting with an analysis of the quote “Tick, tock, tick, tock! Some stories are like that. Once you’ve wound them up, nothing will stop them!”. We will discuss the idea that Pullman is referring to here that we as humans have become mechanical- and look at where this idea comes from, discussing his account of where he came up with the idea and looking at the books he was inspired by. We will also talk about the idea of selling your soul to the devil, completing a short drama activity on this, and look at the fates of the characters who step outside of the moral compass of the book. Finally, we will consider perspective and the students will plan a scene where Karl receives advice from another character in the book and then showcasing this to the rest of the class.