between the lines

A lesson written for every student in the room

FREE LESSON SAMPLER

Frankenstein: Walton's ambition

How does Shelley present Walton as a man driven by ambition?

Lesson 3 of 34 from the scheme of learning

Teacher notes, slides and student pages at all three levels

Written for the AQA specification



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What is in this sampler

This is one complete lesson from our Frankenstein scheme for Literature Paper 1, Section B. It comes exactly as it appears in the full scheme, so you can teach it next week and see how our lessons work.

Teacher notes	Timings with slide numbers, Do Now answers, the exploded quotation, the hinge question and what each answer tells you, the task at three levels, a model and notes on misconceptions and adapting the lesson (next pages).
Slides	The editable PowerPoint deck for Lesson 3, with teacher notes on every slide (separate file).
Student pages	The lesson's pages from the student booklet: one question, with the Securing, Strengthening and Soaring support side by side (at the end of this document).

How every lesson works

Know	Do Now from memory, vocabulary, then the reading. The five Do Now questions build on what students learned in Lessons 1 and 2 of the full scheme.
Apply	Explode one quotation together; a hinge question checks understanding.
Master	One shared task, with Securing, Strengthening and Soaring support; then a model and an exit ticket. Most Master tasks are What–How–Why paragraphs, and some are creative or other forms: in this lesson, a letter.

Three levels of support

Every student answers the same question in every lesson. What changes is the support on the page, so the whole class does the same lesson:

Securing	The most support: a word bank, a choice of quotations, a worked example and sentence starters. For students working towards a grade 4.
Strengthening	Prompts for What, How and Why, a paragraph planner and a checklist. For students working at grades 5 and 6.
Soaring	A debatable statement, prompts to think further and an argument planner. For students aiming at grades 7 to 9.

The names describe the support, never the student. The hinge question shows who might start where, and students move between levels from lesson to lesson.

In the full scheme

- 34 lessons like this one, with editable slides and a teacher handbook (lesson notes, unit map, assessment guide and knowledge bank)
- A student booklet with every lesson and all three levels of support, plus the same lessons as one pack per level
- Six weeks of independent practice homework at three levels
- Four Feedback Loop progress checks with whole-class feedback sheets and improvement tasks

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- An exam-style end-of-unit essay with a teacher guide, level guidance and annotated model answers
- A Soaring stretch booklet for students aiming at the top levels
- A catch-up sheet for every lesson, for students who missed it
- An inclusion guide: pre-teaching, SEND, EAL and pupil premium notes for every lesson
- The revision workbook and the model answer pack, to print for every student
- Every licence for the scheme also includes its 30 Raising Achievement drills for intervention sessions

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Lesson 3: Walton's ambition

SEQUENCE 1: CONTEXT, THE LETTERS AND CHAPTERS 1 TO 4 · 60 MINUTES

How does Shelley present Walton as a man driven by ambition?

By the end of the lesson, students can

- Explain how Walton's dream of the pole shows his ambition
- Analyse the noun phrase "a country of eternal light" and Walton's language of beauty and delight
- Write Margaret's reply to Letter 1, quoting Walton's own words back to him

Lesson at a glance

Time	Phase	What happens	Slides
0–8	Know	Do Now: five quick questions on Lessons 1 and 2. Students self-mark from the answer slide.	2–3
8–20	Know	Pre-teach "ambition", "perpetual", "ardent" and "undiscovered". Read the extract aloud while students follow and underline every word of light and delight.	4–6
20–30	Apply	Explode the quotation together. Think aloud about why Walton asks a question that he already thinks he can answer, then students annotate their copy. Before you reveal any notes, students try the four empty boxes on the first explode slide, on their own or after you model one box.	7–8
30–35	Apply	Hinge question on mini-whiteboards. Use the answers to decide who starts on which level of support.	9–10
35–53	Master	Students write Margaret Saville's reply to her brother's letter, using their level of support in the student booklet. Share the model letter in the last five minutes.	11–12
53–60	Master	Exit ticket. Collect and sort into three piles to plan the start of the next lesson.	13

Do Now answers

1	On what date was Frankenstein first published, and in which city?	1 January 1818, in London
2	What did Byron propose that each of his friends write in the summer of 1816?	A ghost story
3	What did Luigi Galvani make twitch with electric current?	The legs of dead frogs
4	Who is Robert Walton writing to in his letters?	His sister, Margaret Saville
5	What does sublime mean?	Awe mixed with terror at something vast, such as a mountain or a storm

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Vocabulary

ambition	a strong wish to achieve something great, such as fame or discovery
perpetual	never ending
ardent	very eager and passionate
undiscovered	not yet found or explored by anyone

Reading

Letter 1: Walton's dream of the pole

Walton writes to his sister Margaret from St Petersburgh, before he hires a ship. He explains why the North Pole draws him.

> I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight. There, Margaret, the sun is forever visible; its broad disk just skirting the horizon, and diffusing a perpetual splendour. There—for with your leave, my sister, I will put some trust in preceding navigators—there snow and frost are banished; and, sailing over a calm sea, we may be wafted to a land surpassing in wonders and in beauty every region hitherto discovered on the habitable globe. Its productions and features may be without example, as the phenomena of the heavenly bodies undoubtedly are in those undiscovered solitudes. What may not be expected in a country of eternal light? I may there discover the wondrous power which attracts the needle; and may regulate a thousand celestial observations, that require only this voyage to render their seeming eccentricities consistent forever. I shall satiate my ardent curiosity with the sight of a part of the world never before visited, and may tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man.

Mary Shelley, Frankenstein (1831 edition), Letter 1

Word help **wafted**: carried gently · **phenomena**: things that can be seen to happen · **solitudes**: lonely, empty places · **satiate**: to satisfy completely

Explode the quotation

Method
A rhetorical question. Walton asks what "may not be expected" there, as if the answer must be anything wonderful.

Zoom in
The adjective "eternal" means lasting for ever. Walton imagines a place with no night, where "the sun is forever visible".

"a country of eternal light"

Effect
Readers hear a man dreaming, not planning. The pole becomes a paradise, so his hope sounds like a promised land.

Purpose
Shelley begins with an ambitious dreamer. Victor's story, told next, can then read as a warning to him.

Hinge question

Walton asks, "What may not be expected in a country of eternal light?" What does the question suggest?

A. Walton is afraid of what he will find at the pole.

B. Walton is asking his sister for help because he does not know the answer.

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C. Walton is full of hope that wonderful discoveries are waiting. (the right answer)

What the answers tell you

A reads fear into the question: point to “the region of beauty and delight” and ask whether fear is the mood. B takes a rhetorical question as a real one: Walton already believes he knows the answer, so he is not asking for help. These may be your students who start on Securing.

Why the answer is right

Walton asks the question because he expects wonders, and the adjective “eternal” makes the pole sound like a paradise.

Master task: letter

Margaret Saville has read her brother’s first letter. The novel never prints her reply. Write it. Warn him about his ambition, and quote at least two of his own words back to him.

Securing aiming for a 4

A frame for each paragraph, Walton’s words to quote and a word bank.

“a country of eternal light”

“never before visited”

“ardent curiosity”

Strengthening aiming for grades 5 to 6

Prompts for each paragraph and a success checklist.

Open with how Walton’s letter made you feel

Quote his words about light and delight, and answer them

Warn him about danger, and about the men who will follow him

End with a request or a promise you want from him

Soaring aiming for grades 7 to 9

Write Margaret’s reply. Then add a postscript, written after Letter 4 reaches her, in which she repeats the stranger’s question to her brother, “Do you share my madness?”, and says what she thinks it means.

Model letter

My dear Robert,

Your letter made me smile and then made me afraid. You say that the pole is “the region of beauty and delight”, a place where “the sun is forever visible”. Brother, nobody has come back to tell you so. You have wished it, and a wish is not a map.

You ask what may not be expected “in a country of eternal light”. I will tell you: ice, hunger and a ship far from help. Your “ardent curiosity” will not feed a crew or mend a hull. You want to “tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man”, and I ask myself why that matters more to you than the sailors who will follow you there.

Be careful, Robert. Dreams of glory have a way of growing until they swallow the dreamer. Write soon, and tell me that you are safe.

Your loving sister, Margaret

What makes it work

- Quotes five of Walton’s phrases from the extract and answers each one, so the reply is a conversation and not a summary
- Sounds like a sister in a letter: loving, direct and worried
- Warns him about ambition by turning his light and delight into ice and hunger

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