What we already know
- Key elements of narratives – structure, characters, setting
- Description of characters and setting

Stage 8 and 9 English: Short Stories

What's next
- Identifying concepts in a novel
- Identifying concepts in short stories

English Golden Concepts				
Reading: Fluency	Reading: Comprehension	Speaking and Listening	Writing Transcription	Writing Composition

What are short stories?

A short story is a piece of fiction that tells a complete story in a limited number of words. Unlike novels, short stories must be concise, focusing on key characters, a single setting, and a clear plot.

Key features of short stories

✔ A strong hook – An engaging first sentence that grabs the reader.
✔ A single setting – The story takes place in one key location.
✔ Limited characters – Usually 1-3 main characters to keep the focus.
✔ A central conflict – The story revolves around a problem or challenge.
✔ A clear resolution – The problem is solved (or left open-ended).
✔ Show, don't tell – Descriptions reveal emotions and action rather than stating them directly.

How short stories differ from longer stories	
Short Stories	**Novels**
One setting	Many settings
Few characters	Larger cast of characters
Focus on one main event	Multiple storylines/ subplots
Shorter time frame	Events may take place over longer periods of time

Character development in short stories

Writers use actions, thoughts, and dialogue to reveal personality.

- The Protagonist – The main character, often facing a challenge (brave, determined, curious).
- The Antagonist – A person or force working against the protagonist (mysterious, ruthless, unpredictable).
- The Sidekick – A supporting character who helps the protagonist (loyal, funny, clever).

Character Traits & Dialogue:

A brave character: "We have to keep going," Mia whispered. "No matter what."

A nervous character: Tom's voice shook. "Maybe we should

Stage	What Happens?	Example Openers
Hook (Opening)	An engaging start that draws the reader in	*The clock struck midnight. Max held his breath... / No one ever went near the abandoned lighthouse...*
Build-up	Introduce the character and setting; hint at the problem	*Ella traced her fingers over the ancient map. Could the treasure really be here?*
Climax (Problem/Turning Point)	The most exciting moment; the biggest challenge	*The door creaked open, and she realised she was not alone...*
Resolution	The problem is solved (or left as a cliffhanger)	*With one final breath, he leapt across the chasm... / The letter crumbled in her hands. She would never know the truth...*

How can I show off my understanding of language?

Identify a range of language choices in the text and use:

1. Creating a Strong Hook

A short story must start quickly—no long introductions! Here are some great ways to start:

✔ Action: *The waves crashed against the rocks as Sam struggled to hold on.*
✔ Dialogue: *"I don't believe in ghosts," Jake said, stepping into the attic.*
✔ Mystery: *Something was wrong. The door was open, but no one was inside.*

2. Show, Don't Tell

Rather than telling the reader what a character is feeling, show it through actions and description.

Telling: *She was scared.*

Showing: *Her hands trembled as she reached for the handle.*

3. Sentence Variation

Mix short, sharp sentences with longer ones for impact.

Short sentence for tension: *The door slammed shut.*

Longer sentence to build suspense: *For a moment, everything was still, except for the flickering candlelight casting long shadows across the wall.*

4. Creating Mood & Atmosphere

Eerie setting: *The wind howled through the empty streets, rattling the old shop signs.*

Exciting setting: *The market buzzed with energy, the scent of sizzling food filling the air.*