

English

Wider Academic Reading and Literature Reviews

"When you give your opinion about something in English, you are contributing to a wider academic discussion which has been happening for a long time."

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."



Talking and Writing about Reading

Literature Reviews

Reviewing literature is important because it helps you to process all of the ideas within texts. It can also help you to further develop your ideas on a topic and form opinions.

After reading each source in this booklet, try writing a short literature review to build your ideas on the topic and express your thoughts.

Use the template opposite to support you:

Write like an academic...

- *According to the author (name, reference, date), a key idea about this subject is...*
- *They state that...* (list key facts and information from the source which are relevant to your topic).
- *In conclusion, the author says... about the topic. This is a reliable source because...*

Academic Debate

Debating and discussing texts will help you to develop your understanding of a topic but will also help you to engage in academic conversations that have been happening for a long time. Everyone is allowed to have an opinion and it is important that you practise expressing yours.

Use the sentence starters opposite for ideas as to how you could structure your thoughts when taking part in a debate.

Talk like an academic...

1. **Agree, but be specific:** *I agree, and the idea of... is particularly important because...*
2. **Be tentative:** *This could imply, perhaps...*
3. **Make a point and ask a question:** *Have you considered...?*
4. **Disagree respectfully:** *I would disagree with that argument because...*
5. **Build on the ideas of others:** *The notion of... is fascinating, especially when you also consider...*



This booklet contains a variety of different sources to further develop your understanding of the ideas that we study in lessons. When you have read all of the extracts in this booklet, why not try and find some more of your own? There is space at the back to record notes and ideas from any further reading you choose to do.

These are the three sources for you to read, review and discuss to develop your understanding of this topic:

1. 'The ale-soaked origins of the witch's hat' by Danielle Wayda
2. 'The Curse of Macbeth: is it more than superstition?' by Clive Sherlock (Penguin Articles)
3. 'Why Shakespeare is still important today' by Mackenzie Karnig

Read like an academic

Reading academic literature such as articles, blogs and journals can sometimes be difficult, especially at first.

Try following these tips to ensure you understand what you are reading:

- Read **slowly** and do not try to rush.
- Try to **understand as you go** by writing a small **summary** of each paragraph after you have read it.
- Read **out-loud** or read to someone.
- **Talk** about what you have read with someone to help consolidate what you have read.
- Read each source **at least twice** to ensure you fully understand what is being discussed.
- **Don't give up!** Academic reading is hard but the more you do it, the easier it will get and the more you will know and understand.
- Make a note of any **words** that you do not know the meaning of and find out the definition. Use the table opposite to help you with this.

Word	Definition



Source 1 – ‘Bermuda Triangle’

Bermuda Triangle, section of the North Atlantic Ocean off North America in which more than 50 ships and 20 airplanes are said to have mysteriously disappeared. The area, whose boundaries are not universally agreed upon, has a vaguely triangular shape marked by the Atlantic coast of the Florida panhandle (in the United States), Bermuda, and the Greater Antilles.

Reports of unexplained occurrences in the region date to the mid-19th century. Some ships were discovered completely abandoned for no apparent reason; others transmitted no distress signals and were never seen or heard from again. Aircraft have been reported and then vanished, and rescue missions are said to have vanished when flying in the area. However, wreckage has not been found, and some of the theories advanced to explain the repeated mysteries have been fanciful. Although theories of supernatural causes for these disappearances abound, geophysical and environmental factors are most likely responsible. One hypothesis is that pilots failed to account for the agonic line—the place at which there is no need to compensate for magnetic compass variation—as they approached the Bermuda Triangle, resulting in significant navigational error and catastrophe. Another popular theory is that the missing vessels were felled by so-called “rogue waves,” which are massive waves that can reach heights of up to 100 feet (30.5 metres) and would theoretically be powerful enough to destroy all evidence of a ship or airplane. The Bermuda Triangle is located in an area of the Atlantic Ocean where storms from multiple directions can converge, making rogue waves more likely to occur.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “There is no evidence that mysterious disappearances occur with any greater frequency in the Bermuda Triangle than in any other large, well-traveled area of the ocean,” and boaters and fliers continue to venture through the triangle without event.

Source 1 – Literature Review

Write like an academic! Use this space to write a short review of the second source.

- According to the author...
a key idea about this subject is...
- They state that (list key facts and information from the source which are relevant to your topic)...
- In conclusion, the author says...
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Source 1 – Academic Debate Ideas

Use this space to record ideas from the source. You will be contributing and sharing your ideas during your class discussion.



Source 2 – ‘Mary Celeste’

After leaving New York, the *Mary Celeste* battled its way through treacherous seas and howling winds for two weeks. Then, on Nov. 25, the captain entered what would be the last entry in the log. At the time, nothing was amiss.

But when the *Dei Gratia* found the *Mary Celeste* on Dec. 5, there was not a person in sight. When the captain of the *Dei Gratia* boarded the ghost ship, he found three and a half feet of water in the bilge, the lowest point of the ship that sits below the waterline. The cargo was intact, though some of the barrels were empty.

Whats’ more, the ghost ship was still seaworthy, so the crew of the *Dei Gratia* split up and together the two ships sailed to Gibraltar where they could claim salvage rights under maritime law

Why was the ship abandoned? It was perfectly seaworthy. There were six months of food and water aboard. The crew’s belongings were stowed away. A captain would only abandon ship in the direst circumstances, and the circumstances certainly didn’t seem dire. This would remain a mystery for nearly a century and a half.

Some believed that the crew had drunk the alcohol and mutinied. But there was no sign of violence. Some said the ship must have been raided by pirates, but no valuables were missing. Arthur Conan Doyle’s short story on the subject detailed an ex-slave capturing the ship. But where did he, and everyone else, go? Sea monsters and waterspouts were also proposed.

Yet for all of these theories, none of the evidence ever matched. Perhaps the most plausible theory was that the vapors from the alcohol had blown the hatch cover off. Then, fearing fire, the crew abandoned ship. But the hatch cover was securely fastened.

Not even foul play appeared to be at the root of the matter. When the two ships arrived in Gibraltar, the *Dei Gratia* submitted its salvage claim. The admiralty court at first suspected foul play. But after a three-month investigation, they were unable to find any evidence.

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Source 3 – Is the Loch Ness Monster real?

The big question that Scotland has been puzzling over for hundreds of years.

After a huge skeleton was discovered on a Scottish beach in the wake of Storm Ciara, many have speculated that it could belong to Scotland's favourite monster, Nessie. Photos of the mystery carcass, taken on Balmedie Beach in Aberdeen, emerged after the storm had cleared

The Loch Ness monster has been a subject of debate for decades, with countless sightings reported over the years. Here's everything we know for sure about the mythical (?) monster.

Where did the rumours of the Loch Ness Monster start?

While rumours of an enigmatic creature wriggling around in the loch can be traced back all the way to the sixth century, the Loch Ness Monster was brought to global attention in 1933 when an article regarding a "whale-like fish" was published in the Inverness Courier.

That article acknowledged that "Loch Ness has for generations been credited with being the home of a fearsome-looking monster". This was also where the creature gained the famous - and perhaps rather unfair - title of "monster".

Where has Nessie been spotted?

Since the famous 1933 account, there have been numerous high-profile investigations into Nessie, often employing advances in technology to try and prove the creature's existence.

Only a year later, in 1934, came the "Surgeon's Photograph", taken by Robert Kenneth Wilson and published in the Daily Mail. It claims to be the first image ever captured of Nessie's neck and head.

However, later analysis revealed that the scale of the photo was misleading and that the "monster" it depicted would only have been about 2 or 3 feet long. It is now largely agreed to have been an elaborate, and fairly successful hoax.

3. In 1954, sonar readings taken by a fishing boat showed something large keeping pace with it around 500 feet below the surface.

Source 3 – Is the Loch Ness Monster real?

There have been several attempts to capture video footage of Nessie as well, with the most impressive coming from a lab technician in 2007.

A marine biologist at the Loch Ness centre described it as the best footage he'd seen, although he also suggested the creature in it was likely an otter or a seal.

In 2011, a sonar image was taken of a large object which appeared to be following a boat, although a scientist from the National Oceanography Centre later attested that it was probably a bloom of algae and zooplankton.

Finally, in 2014, Apple Maps appeared to capture the image of a large creature lurking just below the surface of the loch. It appeared to be around 30 metres long and while it has never been definitively identified, some suggested it may just have been the wake of a boat.

What sort of creature could Nessie be?

In 1933, it was pointed out that the creature appeared to bear a striking resemblance to the Plesiosaur – an aquatic dinosaur with a long neck which is thought to have gone extinct around 66 million years ago.

Critics have since pointed out that the Plesiosaur was probably a cold-blooded creature which would not take kindly to the chilly waters of Loch Ness. And, if it was warm-blooded, it would require far more food to sustain it than the loch could provide.

It would also need to surface several times a day for air, which would surely lead to far more sightings - although [some have questioned whether](#) it would be able to lift its head out of the water in the first place.

Less exciting theories have ascribed Nessie sightings to various modern animals. Greenland sharks can grow to around 20-feet long and have been known to appear near Scotland. They can survive in fresh water and would happily dine out on the loch's fish.

So the bad news is that they do not prove Loch Ness monster's existence but the good news is that they don't prove Nessie is dead either!

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