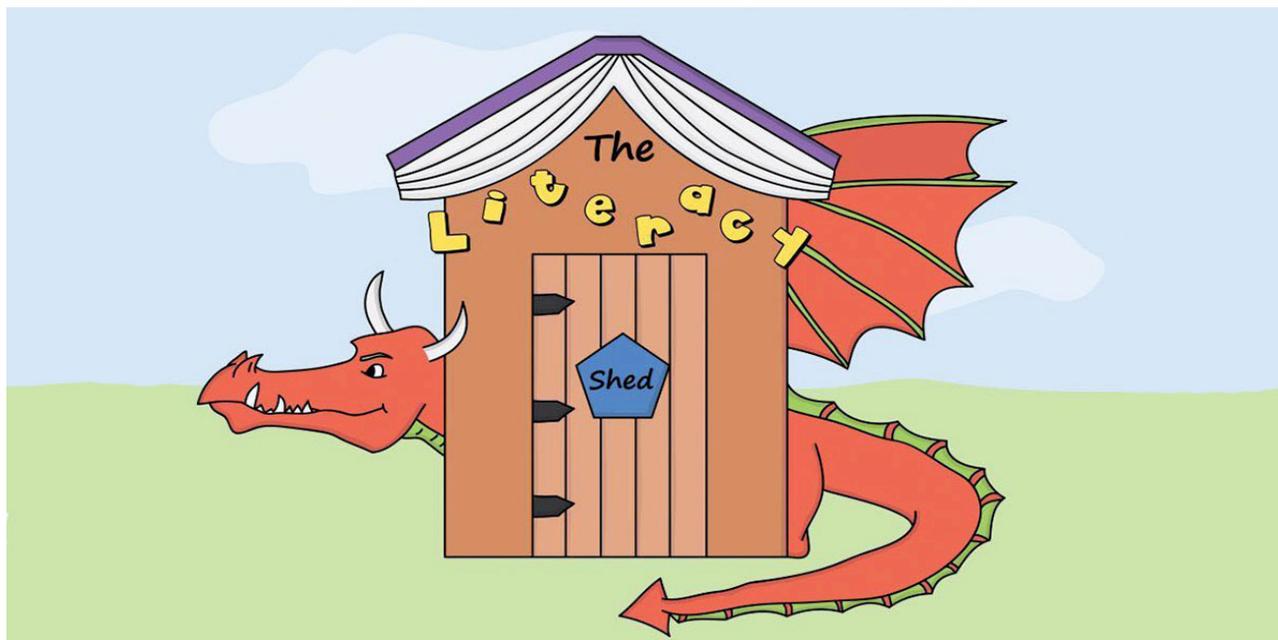


# The Alchemist's Letter



## Activity Pack KS2

This pack contains  
10 mixed activities  
in response to a  
short film clip

# The Alchemist's Letter

## PLEASE NOTE

The Literacy Shed website should ALWAYS be used under the supervision of an adult. There are some clips on the site which are only suitable for use with Year 6 children or KS3. Please ensure that children do not search the website independently.

The activities in this pack are designed to use with the following clip...

<https://www.literacyshed.com/the-almchemists-letter.html>

Other activities to complete after watching the clip:

- Re-watch the clip and write a description of the machinery at work.
- Compare with the pensieve scenes from Harry Potter.
- Create mix and match cards: valuable items that can be created by machines and what must power the machine e.g. valuable item = diamonds / land; power = years from your life / skills you have learnt. Make random pairs and use these to inspire your own story writing.
- Describe the minotaur.
- Create a time capsule of your favourite recent memories.



# The Alchemist's Letter

## Questions to ask:

Watch the opening 45 seconds (up until we see 'The Alchemist's Letter')

- What have we learned up to now?
- What do Alchemists do? (share a dictionary definition)
- Why does the film maker include this section before the titles?
- What is the film going to be about?

Pause the film after 54 seconds when the man looks at the key and sighs.

- When is the story set? How do we know?
- How is the man feeling?

Pause the film after the phrase, 'The more powerful the machine.'

- What relationship between the narrator and the man we can see?
- What is the man's name?
- What has his father left behind?
- Where is his father?
- Why do you think he has left it behind?
- Do you think Veridion has seen his father recently?

Pause the film at 1 min 35 seconds where we see two people sitting by a waterfall.

- What are your most precious memories?
- What do you think the narrators most precious memories could be?
- What does the word precious mean?

Pause the film at 2 min 15 seconds after the phrase, 'She died alone.'

- What are the narrator's most precious memories?
- Why do you think this is?
- Why do you think Veridion's mother died alone?

Pause at 2 mins 43 When the young Veridion throws away the pocket watch. You may want to rewatch that section.

- What does the narrator mean when he says, "because of the creature I was becoming?" We see a visual metaphor of the minotaur. Does the author actually mean he was physically changing?
- Who is sat under the tree with the pink leaves?
- What do you think he is thinking before he throws the watch?
- Why does he throw the watch away?

# The Alchemist's Letter

## Questions continued:

Pause the film after the phrase, "Just as I abandoned you." 3 mins.

- Why was Veridion abandoned?
- Why might his father think Veridion will abandon his daughter?

Pause the film after the word Nicholas at 3 mins 22 secs.

- What is the narrator's name?
- What things matter the most?
- What is the thing that matters the most?
- What is interesting about the way the last section of the letter is written? "Now I understand what matters the most. Love. Your father Nicholas" or "Now I understand what matters the most. Love your father, Nicholas."

Pause the film at 3 mins 30 secs when the machine explodes.

- What has created the gold watch?
- Why do you think machine has exploded?
- Do you think Nicholas ever succeeded in creating gold?

Pause the film at 3min 45 secs when Veridion is looking at the watch.

- What do you think he is thinking now?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What has happened to the machine? Why?

At the end of the film

- Why doesn't Veridion take any of the coins with him?
- Does he take anything with him?
- Why has the laughter been included in the closing credits? What does it show?

*\*Note that there are no answers for these discussion questions.*



# The Alchemist's Letter

## Keep Your Eyes Open

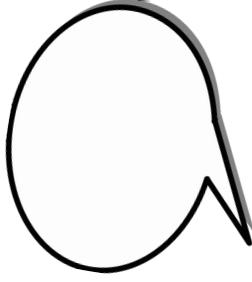
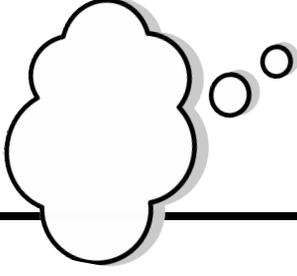
Watch the clip. How many of these things can you spot. Tick them when you see them. You might need to watch the clip more than once.

pocket watch being given to Veridion's mother	sketches / blue prints on wall	white jug	wax seal on letter
arched gate	rising bubbles	skeleton	barrels
crocodile	horse and carriage	books	white birds
Falling Autumn leaves	skull	lighthouse	rays of light through trees

My own observations:



# The Alchemist's Letter



Create a comic strip of the story

# The Alchemist's Letter

## Vocabulary Work:

Dear Veridion, I have fashioned a most incredible device.

What do you think the underlined word means based upon the context above?

---

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Look up the word in the dictionary and explain what it really means.

---

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Write an interesting sentence of your own using the word. \*

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---

Write a question which includes the word. \*

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What type of word do you think it is? (verb / noun / adjective etc.) Why?

---

---

Use the letters from it to make as many new words as you can (each letter may only be used once in each word).

Write the word neatly using three different styles of handwriting.



\*you may wish to change the tense of the word

# The Alchemist's Letter

## Why are memories important?

Consider what The Alchemist's Letter teaches us about the importance of memories. Add some ideas to the table below. Now think about what life would be like if we couldn't store our memories and use this to help you add further ideas.

1	Memories are important because they give us a sense of identity. In other words, they make us who we are and help us to understand ourselves.
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

help us to make better choices;

brings alive people we have lost

connects us with others

bring us joy

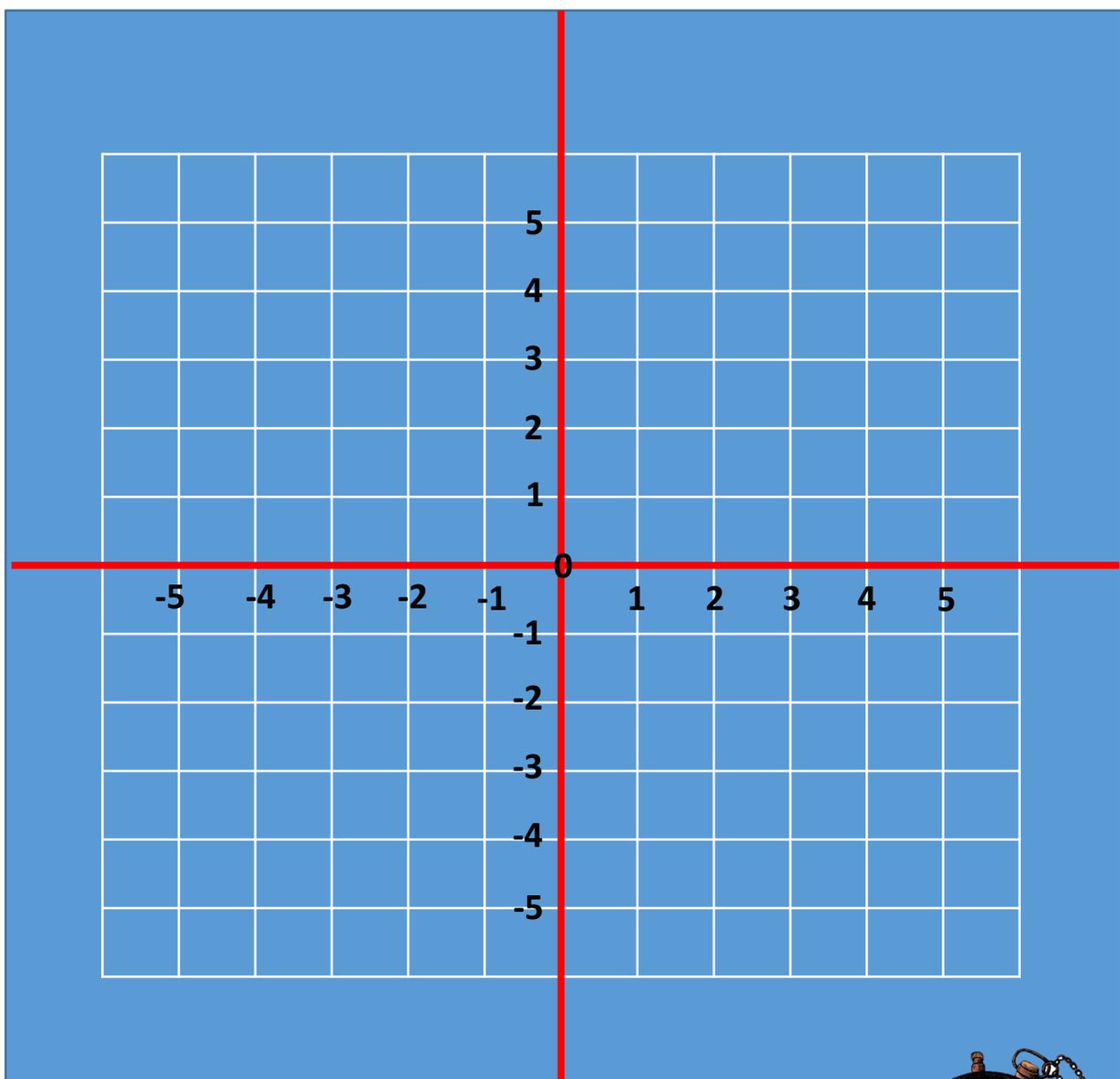
learning and developing



# The Alchemist's Letter

**Coordinate shape builder:** Plot the coordinates below on this chart, then join them in order. What shape do they make? The first number in each pair shows how many squares to count across from 0. The second shows how many to count up or down.

(0, -5), (-1, -5), (-1, 2), (-2, 2), (-2, 5), (2, 5), (2, 2), (1, 2),  
(1, -2), (3, -2), (3, -3), (1, -3), (1, -4), (3, -4), (3, -5), (0, -5)



# The Alchemist's Letter

## Pirate Setting Description.

*My eye stung immediately from the bitter-sweet feel of alcohol in the air. **Rum**. A **silvery, sharpened shard** of glass reflected **a dagger of light** towards me as I nervously shifted my position. A chandelier, **which hung carelessly** from the uneven ceiling, sent the light in indiscriminate directions **like the flying of terrified fireflies**. Two once-colourful feathers lay gathering dust under a perch; their dye absorbed away into the shadowy staleness of the room. The **darkness was a deathly cloak**. To the left I noticed a **forlorn flag folded** over a driftwood stool. A large jacket, **as black as the depth of night**, had been dropped haphazardly to the floor beside a makeshift bed.*

*A **soft singing sound** came from the wind as it swirled through the **shattered shutters**. Then **a roar like thunder** boomed and shook the room as one shutter fell from its hinges to the sodden ground. The air was **as damp as a cushion** left out in the rain.*

*Peering to the right, I shuddered to see four dulled swords and a space where one more had once lived. I backed away feeling the golden grains of sand rise between my toes.*

Single word sentence

Simile

Metaphor

Alliteration

Personification

Look carefully at how these devices have been used in the pirate description.

**Imagine that sometime after Veridion left, you were walking through the woods and noticed that the cottage door was swinging open. This tempted you to take a look inside. Write your own setting description on the next page.**

**Try to use some of the above devices in your writing.**



# The Alchemist's Letter

## Word Streams

Look at this word stream. Each new word has just one letter changed from the previous word:

gold  
good  
hood  
hook  
took  
tool  
fool  
foal  
coal  
coat  
boat  
bolt  
belt  
bent  
went

How many words can you include in your own lists beginning with the starting words below?

watch

love



# The Alchemist's Letter

## Code breaking:

Use the table below to help you find the three missing words to the Dr Seuss quote below.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
U	V	W	X	Y	Z				
21	22	23	24	25	26				

Sometimes you will never know the <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
of a <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, until it becomes  
a <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

(Dr Seuss)

1

$$\begin{aligned}37 - 15 &= \\9 \div 9 &= \\36 \div 3 &= \\58 - 37 &= \\100 \div 20 &= \end{aligned}$$

2

$$\begin{aligned}7 + 6 &= \\3 \times 5 &= \\130 \div 10 &= \\80 \div 16 &= \\7 \times 2 &= \\100 \div 4 &= \end{aligned}$$

3

$$\begin{aligned}39 \div 3 &= \\60 \div 12 &= \\99 - 86 &= \\75 \div 5 &= \\3 \times 6 &= \\5^2 &= \end{aligned}$$

# The Alchemist's Letter

My most valuable memory:

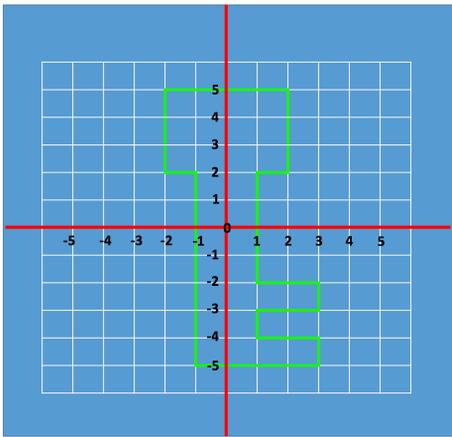
Describe, in detail, one of your most valuable memories. Can you use any of the descriptive devices (from the setting description work) to bring it to life?



# The Alchemist's Letter

## Answer Page

### Coordinate Shape Builder: [A key](#)



### Code Breaking:

*Sometimes you will never know the **value** of a **moment** until it becomes a **memory**. (Dr Seuss)*