

Historical Creative Writing at Langham Dome

Recognise different hooks used in creative writing

Use one of these hooks to develop creative writing

Combine the use of creative writing hooks with historical research

Your task is to write a short story based in Langham Dome in the 1940s. Choose one of the following hooks to start your piece of creative writing. Your story needs to be historically accurate. Use the resources at the dome and on the website to find out about the people who lived and worked there and the role of the dome in the 1940s.

The curiosity / puzzling hook – this immediately makes you ask questions of the story: who, what, when, where, why, how?

The direct address hook – you are spoken to directly and feel involved from the start. To do this, the writer must use what's called the 'second-person address', using you. This form of address is quite rare in writing.

The atmospheric hook – this is highly descriptive, and could evoke any variety of moods. A writer could describe setting, atmosphere or character in such a detailed and evocative way that the reader is immediately engaged.

The visual hook – appeals to our sense of sight. It's similar to the atmospheric hook, but it emphasises the visual – the reader can see very clearly the action that's being described.

The comic hook – this appeals to your sense of humour. A witty or humorous sentence makes the reader feel at ease and invested in the story.

The direct speech hook – this immediately plunges the reader into the world of the characters and events by drawing the reader's attention to dialogue.

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Study the examples of hooks below. See if you can identify which type of hook it is. Use the hooks provided as inspiration for your own piece of creative writing about events at Langham Dome in the 1940s.

'Lyra and her daemon moved through the darkening Hall, taking care to keep to one side, out of sight of the kitchen.'

Northern Lights - Philip Pullman

'I have a stone that looks like a snake: all curled up. It's my most precious thing. I've had it since I was born, you see. Do you ever think about being born?'

The Snake-stone - Berlie Doherty

"Where's Papa going with that axe?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

'A cold, wet day in December. The worst kind of day for the back lands. The clouds were so low they seemed to trail their mists in the treetops and already, at half past three it was dark within the forest.'

The Giant Under the Snow - John Gordon

'Our classroom looked amazing. Lots of silver tinsel, beautiful lights, stars.'

A Northern Childhood - George Layton

When James Simpson woke up one morning, he found he was a girl. He was standing, staring at himself in the mirror, quite baffled, when his mother swept in.

'Why don't you wear this pretty pink dress?' she said.

Bill's New Frock - Anne Fine

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