

Text selected by student for assessment: Radio Talk

Learning outcomes in focus

Students should be able to:

W4. Write competently in a range of text forms, for example letter, report, multi-modal text, review, blog, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose for different audiences

W7. Respond imaginatively in writing to their texts showing a critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, tone, images

R6. Read their texts for understanding and appreciation of character, setting, story and action: to explore how and why characters develop, and to recognise the importance of setting and plot structure

Teaching and learning context

This task arose from 'Book Club' run in conjunction with the weekly library class for second years. Students selected a novel; formed into groups of three/four based on this selection; read and discussed the novel and formulated their own discussion questions. Time was also afforded for silent reading and or pair/choral reading. Upon completion of the novel, each group did a book project. The format of the book project was devised and negotiated between group members. Each member took the lead in the preparation of one aspect of the project.

Student responses generated from 'Book Club' included a series of quiz questions and answers, designing alternative book covers, comic strips, oral presentations reviewing the book, writing a poem linked to a key character, book reviews, drama scripts based on key moments, radio talks, interviews and hot seating a character.

Task

Each group member creates a text, in a genre of our choice, responding to the novel.

Features of Quality

Genre awareness and control/creativity

Writing competence and word choices

Awareness of and shaping for receiver/audience

* Students choose two texts from their collection to submit for assessment.

Good morning listeners and welcome to 'Book Club'. I am your host, Joe Blogs here on Radio One. Today, I will be reviewing the book 'The Maze Runner' by John Dashner. It is the first book in the 'Maze Runner' trilogy and it is a real page turner. It is currently number one on 'The New York Times' best seller list and I highly recommend it to teenagers who enjoy sci-fi books such as 'The Hunger Games'.

Prepare to be intrigued listeners. 'The Maze Runner' is set in a post-apocalyptic sci-fi world. The characters live in 'The Glade' a large meadow surrounded by the towering walls of the maze. In 'The Glade' fifty boys have set up an organised civilisation with jobs and rules, like a microcosm of modern society. The maze is an ever changing labyrinth of tall walls covered in ivy that open up every morning and close every night.

Suspense is created through the many twists and turns in the plot. The central protagonist, sixteen year old Thomas wakes up in 'The Glade', with no personal memory besides his name. Outside 'The Glade' is the maze, a labyrinth of high walls that house Grievors. The Grievors are villainous characters, described as large lethal monsters of metal and flesh. They only come out at night, so during the day a group of the bravest and fastest boys go out into the maze to solve and map the maze which they realise is constantly changing in a confusing pattern. Thomas is a determined and courageous character who quickly asserts a leadership role becoming a runner. I felt that the most appealing facet of the 'Maze Runner' was the infusion of mystery and intrigue. It compelled me to read on. Join me after this short commercial break to unlock the shroud of mystery surrounding the maze.

Welcome back listeners to Radio One, I am discussing the much acclaimed John Dashner book 'The Maze Runner' on today's 'Book Club'. The apocalyptic world of Gladers and Grievors may well represent good versus evil. But who will triumph? The fate of the Gladers, despite the bravery and tenacity of Thomas, Alby, Minho and Newt seems doomed as key moments of crisis and complication arise. The greatest antagonists of all are the Grievors, monstrous creatures lurking in the night.

Gally is an angry and hostile Glader who strives to prevent Thomas from leading the Gladers. The arrival of the first girl is met with suspicion. Teresa is initially distrusted and held captive. The supplies and food stop coming and the doors of the maze stop closing at night which allows the grieverers attack the gladers at night. This is an ominous key moment of crisis. It triggers a chain of events which leads to the death of many Gladers and sparks urgency among the Gladers who now must escape.

The reader is left guessing as to what secrets the maze holds and sympathises with the predicament of the Gladers, who are forced to find a way to navigate and escape the dangerous maze. The clock is ticking listeners, the protective walls no longer close at night. Thomas steps up to the challenge and impresses the other gladers immediately when he becomes the first person to survive a night in the maze and to kill a Griever. With Teresa's help he figures out that the maze is actually a code. I personally enjoyed the special bond between Thomas and Teresa and their ability to communicate telepathically. Will they decipher the code in time? Will 'The Maze Runner' be fast enough?

To answer these questions, you can pick up a copy of the book at your local bookstore, retailing at €11.95. I highly recommend 'The Maze Runner' by John Dashner to all our avid sci-fi teenage readers. If you enjoyed 'The Hunger Games' then this is a must read for you. The apocalyptic world of the book resonates strongly with real life. 'The Maze Runner' touches on universal themes; good versus evil, courage in the face of adversity, teamwork and tenacity.

Thank you all for tuning in to this morning's 'Book Club' programme. I will be back on air next week, same time on Radio One with another recommended read.

Features of quality - teacher annotations and level of achievement

Teacher annotations:

FQ1. Genre awareness and control/creativity

The student's writing showed an understanding and control of the chosen genre - a radio talk. The talk also demonstrates a critical appreciation for the genre of the book being reviewed and its target audience of sci-fi readers.

FQ2. Writing competence and word choices

The student's writing is consistently competent with good use of rhetorical questions and effective word choices well suited to the purpose of the text – however, at times the colloquial language we would expect of a radio talk is not evident.

FQ3. Awareness of and shaping for receiver/ audience

The work is clearly shaped with the audience of listeners in mind, as evidenced in the opening address, taking a commercial break and reminding listeners to tune in next week. The voice of a radio book reviewer is sustained with a strong personal response dimension. However, the plot summary is overly detailed at times, and could be more succinct in order to maintain the listener's interest and engagement.

Level of achievement:

Best fit on balance judgement =



Above expectations

This example represents one text from the student's Collection of Texts. The student selected this and one other text to submit for assessment. Looking at a number of examples, teachers will see a variety of different text types, in a variety of genres.

More examples will be added over time at curriculumonline.ie

Features of Quality:

Exceptional

The student's text shows creativity and command of the chosen genre.
The writing is highly competent, marked by original ideas, and imaginative word choices are perfectly suited to the purpose of the text.
The work is fully shaped for its intended receiver/ audience.

Above expectations

The student's text shows very good control of the chosen genre.
The writing is consistently competent, and effective word choices are very well matched to the purpose of the text.
The work is clearly shaped with the receiver/audience in mind.

In line with expectations

The student's text shows good awareness of the chosen genre.
The writing is generally competent, and word choices match the purpose of the text well.
Content and development of ideas reveal consistent awareness of the receiver/audience.

Yet to meet expectations

The student's text shows little awareness of the chosen genre.
The writing lacks competence, and word choices may be inappropriate to the intended purpose of the text.
Content and development of ideas reveal little awareness of a receiver/audience.

The annotations capture observations by the student's teacher, using the features of quality, with a view to establishing the level of achievement this text reflects. The annotations and judgement were confirmed by the Quality Assurance group, consisting of practicing English teachers and representatives of the Inspectorate, the SEC and JCT.