

Making Predictions



BEFORE READING

Instructions: ask the class to make predictions based on the front cover.

1 Explain the idea of 'enigma' in media and ask how the artist has succeeded in creating enigma in this cover.

Enigma – A question in a text/image that is not immediately answered and creates interest for the audience. It is used to draw the reader/watcher in and make them want to find out more – a puzzle that the audience/reader has to solve.

2 Ask the students:

What does the use of colour on the front cover suggest? Why/How?

Can you comment on the use of colour and font in the title?

Can you comment on the use of the quotation at the bottom of the cover? (Students should refer to use of imperative, direct address, fact that John Connolly not explained suggests famous enough to need no introduction.)

3 Back cover

Ask students to comment on the back cover – expect them to refer to:

- UNESCO logo and why they think this has been included
- images and colour carried through on back
- how text is broken into small easily digested segments
- how blurb layout and images and colour codes carried from the front cover are eye-catching, guide reader through text.

4 Ask the students to read the back cover text closely and comment on:

- How interest is created for the reader?
- What clues are there to the target audience?
- What clues there are to genre?
(refer to characters and snippets of plot, subject matter)
- Why the TV comedian has not been named?
- What effect does the longer quotation from John Connolly have?

(Possible answers: strong endorsement promises a fun read but also introduces a serious note, reference to Connolly's own successful novels. Readers or parents of readers who admire his work may be influenced to buy).

Chapter Headings

Print resource #1 and distribute to class. Ask students:

- What tone or atmosphere they think is suggested by different chapter headings (fun/funny – sad, scary, dramatic, etc.)?
- Which one/s stand out/appeal to them? Why?

Students may write their ideas in the blank column.

Divide the class into small groups and ask them to try and predict what they think will happen based on the chapter headings. They should pick out some (not all) chapter headings that catch their attention and suggest some kind of action to them.

1. Yeti Another Bad Thing
2. Inspector Clueless
3. We're No Angels
4. Peeping Tom
5. Thand Thuckth
6. Poetry Thuckth Too
7. Hair Frighteners
8. Ha-Lucy-nations
9. Insomnia
10. Clean Crazy
11. Fatso and Pratso
12. Saint Philip
13. Blind Man's Bluff
14. The Silent Treatment
15. Lunch Hero
16. Think Positive
17. Homecoming
18. The Midas Touch – *Not*
19. Secrets and Lies
20. ASS
21. Pillow Talk
22. Desperate Measures
23. My Life Is Not An Action Movie
24. Rules is Rules
25. Mrs Angry
26. Fairground Attraction
27. Fever Pitch
28. Doctor, Doctor!
29. Operation Sneak
30. The Best Medicine
31. A Shining Moment
32. Yeti Another Day

Now read Chapter 1 aloud and repeat the exercise. Have their predictions changed? How/why? This is a good opportunity to review the concept of foreshadowing.

Dive In!



Think – Pair – Share

Divide the class into pairs. Look at chapter one again and ask students to think about Philip Wright and his mum then discuss with their partner:

- What kind of person do you think Philip Wright is going to be – why? (NOTE: They should come up with some evidence to support this. Possible answers: self-centred, funny, caring, anxious).
- What do we learn about his relationship with his mum at this stage? (Possible answers: they are close but not sentimental; Philip is used to helping her and being involved in her activities; no other parent/ sibling is mentioned. Mum's annoyance at him is playful, etc.).
- What evidence is there that there might actually be something wrong with mum? (Ask students to predict what it might be.)
- List the characters introduced in chapter one:
The Yeti – Ang – The Goddess – Mum – Harry Hill... The writer has chosen to introduce us to all these people in chapter one – can you think why?



Philip's Fibs



Print resource #2 and distribute to class.

While Philip doesn't really lie, he does tend to exaggerate things. Can you find examples of this? Why do you think he does this? (Possible answers: embarrassment, protecting someone, etc.). Do other characters ever do this? If so, who, when and why?

Speaking and listening Game: Would I Lie to You?

Instructions: ask students to pick two incidents from their lives – one real and one made up – and write them down. They will tell these stories by exaggeration. Both incidents should be slightly hard to believe. Example:

- 1 One time I didn't hand my homework in because my mother baked it in the oven.
- 2 Once I was so hungry I ate a raw onion with sugar sprinkled over it.

Each student reads out the two statements – both should be exaggerated and a little ridiculous.

The rest of the class will ask them questions about the incidents to try and establish which is true.

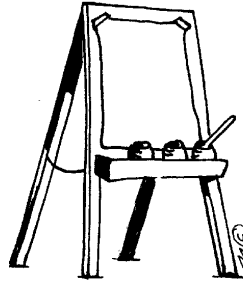
Teacher should time this or limit the number of questions each 'liar' is asked. (3 mins.)

Teacher asks for show of hands to decide which is the true one. Student reveals the truth. Winner is the best liar.

In large classes this is best done in teams/panels.

Differentiation: in rich culturally diverse classrooms where students have ESOL referrals this task is fun because the student can choose a fact/lie about their country (parents' birth country) about customs, food, weather, school etc and still have fun relating this in less complex language.

Character Sketches



Using resource #3, make a list of all the adjectives you would use to describe each of the following characters:

Ang The Yeti Philip Lucy Mum Suzi

Do any of these words fit?

Angry	Faithful	Funny	Loyal	Helpful	Kind	Emotional	Shy
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Ask students to pick one character to study in depth.

Example using the character of Lucy:

Philip thinks Lucy doesn't like him very much except when she hands him his broken glasses in chapter 5; she does really seem like 'The Goddess' he makes her out to be. However, that changes in Chapter 12 – what do we learn about Lucy in that chapter?

Use PEE to support your answer

Possible answers:

Point	Evidence	Explanation
Lucy is thoughtful towards .	In chapter 5 Lucy gives Philip his glasses after The Yeti Bullies him.	This shows that Lucy has more depth to her than Philip realises. She sees that he has had a difficult experience and tries to help.
Lucy is shy with Philip.	Chapter 5 '(Lucy) sort of smiled, reached out her hand to me and said, 'Here, you dropped these.'	I think the fact that she doesn't say much to Philip when she hands over the classes suggest she may be shy. This is reinforced by the fact that she does not seem confident enough to smile at him outright. The writer does this to show us that there is more to Lucy than Philip realises.
Lucy is generous	In chapter 12

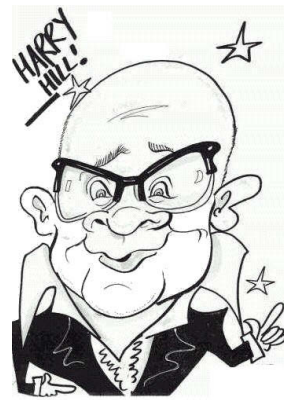
FAMILY FUN DAY FLYER

Philip helps Susie and his mum organise a family fun day which they plan in chapter 26 'Fairground Attraction' and which takes place in chapter 30 'The Best Medicine'.

Design a leaflet advertising the event.

- ✓ Be persuasive
- ✓ Use short paragraphs
- ✓ Bullet points
- ✓ Different fonts and bold/italic for emphasis
- ✓ Information about date, time and venue
- ✓ Colours that you associate with the charity or that you think will be eye catching
- ✓ Images – of events and interests
- ✓ Say how money raised will be spent
- ✓ Say if there is an entrance fee etc

Remember – it is Harry Hill themed!



List all the events – features that Philip's event promises. Keep focused on what your leaflet is trying to do – persuade people to come along and raise funds for a good cause. You might use language that is persuasive and positive, you might use slightly emotive language to remind people how worthy the cause is. (You might even make them feel a little guilty or sad in order to encourage them to come along and donate money. Above all you should let them know they are going to have a good time).

Ask someone else to read your work for you and encourage them to make suggestions as to how you might improve. Ask them to do it like this:

WWW- what went well... get them to say what they liked.

EBI – even better if... suggest something that might make your review really stand out.

Book Review The Best Medicine



You have been asked to write a book review of *The Best Medicine* for your school's website. You can use the following structure to help you plan and write your review.

Section 1

Introduce the book and the author – be clear. Offer some information about the author and how Harry Hill came to be involved in the book. Keep this short, to the point and try and find some interesting facts – you want your audience to read on. You could say things like whether or not it is a debut novel or not, autobiographical or not, etc. Use resource #4 to help you.

Section 2

Explain what the book is about and very briefly summarise the story – don't tell it all or you will spoil it for the reader. Keep this brief to try and keep your reader interested.

Section 3

Mention about the main characters in the book... Philip, Ang, etc. Explain their role and what you think of the presentation of these characters. Which character is your favourite, and why? You could also mention minor characters like Mrs Chihuahua and The Meerkats to interest readers.

Section 4

In this final section you should give your opinion of the book. Say whether you enjoyed it or not. Give examples from the book – you can't just say it was 'great' or it was 'boring' – you have to back up your points. Mention any praise it has been given (J. Connolly, Harry Hill, etc.).

Offer a recommendation, for example, 'If you liked (name a book/author or genre) then you will love *The Best Medicine*. Suggest an age range for the book, but don't limit it too strictly – lots of adults like reading this kind of book too and older readers may be put off if you make it too young.

Proofreading Tips

As you read over your review look for opportunities to improve.

Could you use more ambitious vocabulary? Use a thesaurus to add at least three words to your review (Philip's mother and teacher will love you!).

Check the spelling of any words about which you are uncertain.

Can you add in extra details at any point? Perhaps there is more to say about a character.

Maybe you could use a quotation from the novel.

Is your writing interesting to read?

Biddable Philip



Biddable = obedient, pliable, ready to do as your told

In chapter 28 *Doctor, Doctor!* Philips says,

What I really wanted to do was climb up on Mum's bed and lie there beside her but the big BOLD-font sign (Times New Roman, point size a million and forty-two) telling relatives *NOT* to lie on the beds put me off.

I will never be a hero. Heroes don't heed signs like that. Heroes just plough on and do something heroic. Not me, I am a very obedient person. Biddable, Granda Joe used to always say. But just then, I would not be bidden. (p. 144).

What do you think – is Philip is a hero type or not?

Back up your answers using examples and quotations from the book.

Dear Harry Hill...



1. Throughout the novel, Philip writes letters to his comic hero Harry Hill, but he is sketchy with the details so Harry Hill sometimes has to figure out what is going on. Write your own letter to Harry Hill asking him to help Philip and explaining briefly what is going on.
2. Harry Hill is a great supporter of charity and has been known to cover his famous bald head with a crazy wig for a good cause. Write a letter to Harry Hill asking for his support for a charity of your choice.

Make sure you state the name and nature of your chosen charity – explaining the good work it does.

Say who benefits

Clearly state how you would like Harry Hill to help

Say why you have chosen to ask him



Address your letters to Harry Hill, PO Box 2, London L11 2HH, England

Memory Poems

In chapter 31 'A Shining Moment', Philip's class read Seamus Heaney's poem 'When all the others were away at Mass'. Read the poem now – a copy can be found online. In the first part of the poem Seamus Heaney evokes memories of his mother.

After you have read and discussed the poem, ask the students to think of someone close to them. Ask them to try and think of all the things you like about them or a special day they spent with them. It doesn't have to be a big event – sometimes the small things are best, like Heaney's memory of peeling spuds or the boy in our example below who remembered fixing his bike with his dad.

Get students to brainstorm all 5 senses (plus emotions for feel) - all the things they remember associating with the person.

Read the examples below (both done by school students). Then distribute resource #5.

Explain how to fill out the form. NOTE the poem only works when the students write the whole thing out themselves. Poems can be read aloud and or displayed on walls. Used as verses within gift/birthday/Christmas/memory cards.

Remembering

<p>I see _____ (3 nouns with or without adjectives/simile)</p> <p>I hear _____ (2 nouns/verbs)</p> <p>I taste _____ (2 foods associated with person/place)</p> <p>I smell _____ (1-2 smells associated with person/place)</p> <p>I touch _____ (1 or 2 nouns/adjectives person or possession)</p> <p>I feel _____ (1 emotion)</p> <p>I remember _____ (name of person remembered)</p> <p>Students may wish to change the order of smell and taste lines They may wish to describe the event with the person and sometimes add in explanations as the students have done in the samples</p>	<p>Examples</p> <p>I see knitting, sensible shoes, green eyes like glass</p> <p>I hear kettle boiling, teacups rattling</p> <p>I taste soda bread and homemade chips</p> <p>I smell French perfume I cannot pronounce</p> <p>I touch fake fur coat and wrinkled hands</p> <p>I feel happy</p> <p>I remember Granny</p> <p>I see hammer and spanner and mess</p> <p>I hear clanking and grumbling and 'at last!'</p> <p>I smell grease and sweat and cigarette smoke</p> <p>I taste Lucozade and Tayto - our reward</p> <p>I touch oil stained overalls and tired shoulders</p> <p>I feel useful</p> <p>I remember Dad fix my bike</p>
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The Best Medicine Extreme Word Search

for solutions see resource #6

H S S P D Z T M S Y R O L Z V L X O S H
E O S Q F H H V K W V C E W D P T K Y G
W W K N E G R N Q T R G S C I I H N N Q
T D F Y R A S L B M J Q P Y D B A R C W
O H E Y A R G S R M O O C F J U R J T F
E T E S J Q C L C B P U B X O E R A D S
I M F M T W K Q D E L M O Z U K Y U P E
V C G T E N Y M R S C H I H U A H U A A
U R R M R E L P S G A V Q D P P I A B A
X H W C Q Q R E O Y G I W X A P L V F D
N Q G L H F D K A H Y F N K U B L X N S
T O R I C D J E A L D K R X W A O P H R
H R K M O N D W Y T Z M O P Y Y P L Q M
P D E G L X O S K Q S A Q Y I D D F H F
F P E F A D N Y R Y X V Z H C R P L B Z
K H I D Q G P A M A A Q R Z E N F A A H
T O J L D U P D O X V T S Z E B X E G I
T W M B I V U N K R E L O B Q R O N H K
Y Z M Z J H S U O W P S V W M M A G P P
N I C C J C P F V V K K X X N J M D F E

ANG
FUN DAY
HARRY HILL
MRS CHIHUAHUA
MRS GRAY
PHILIP
THE GODDESS LUCY
THE MEERKATS
THE YETI

Tips:

There are no spaces between parts of names so Harry Hill is HARRYHILL. Words go diagonally, vertically and horizontally.

Chapter Headings

Chapter title	Predictions
1. Yeti Another Bad Thing 2. Inspector Clueless 3. We're No Angels 4. Peeping Tom 5. Thand Thuckth 6. Poetry Thuckth Too 7. Hair Frighteners 8. Ha-Lucy-nations 9. Insomnia 10. Clean Crazy 11. Fatso and Pratso 12. Saint Philip 13. Blind Man's Bluff 14. The Silent Treatment 15. Lunch Hero 16. Think Positive 17. Homecoming 18. The Midas Touch – <i>Not</i> 19. Secrets and Lies 20. ASS 21. Pillow Talks 22. Desperate Measures 23. My Life Is Not An Action Movie 24. Rules is Rules 25. Mrs Angry 26. Fairground Attraction 27. Fever Pitch 28. Doctor, Doctor! 29. Operation Sneak 30. The Best Medicine 31. A Shining Moment 32. Yeti Another Day	

Would I Lie To You? Making Up Your Own Stories

Instructions: Think of one truth and one lie and write them down. Remember to choose something that sounds a bit daft and maybe a bit hard to believe. THIS IS THE ONLY BIT THAT YOU WILL READ OUT.

The other boxes are only there for you to get your story straight in advance– don't read these bits out or you'll give the game away – you have to make it seem like you are remembering both the real and the made up part.

One true thing about me	One made up thing about me
The Truth – e.g. <i>My mum once met a spaceman in Easons.</i>	The Lie – e.g. <i>I once gave Dr Who the directions to Kilkenny.</i>
When it happened	When it happened
Where it happened	Where it happened
Why it happened	Why it happened
Who was with me	Who was with me
Additional information	Additional information

Resource #4

Excerpt from

THE IRISH NEWS 6 June 2016 by Jenny Lee

THEY say laughter is the best medicine and for Belfast writer and lecturer Christine Hamill, it was the humour of Harry Hill that helped both herself and her young son through her breast cancer journey. It also served as inspiration for her young fiction novel, *The Best Medicine*.

"One Saturday night shortly after my breast cancer surgery I was in kitchen struggling to make the dinner when I heard my son laughing hysterically in the living room. I peeped and saw that he was watching Harry Hill on TV and I joined him. I was laughing so much I forgot I was miserable for half an hour. After that, Harry Hill was regular viewing for us. It was such a relief and respite to be laughing. And somehow the seed of the idea for this book was planted."

It was another year until Christine started writing *The Best Medicine*. "I'd been listening to my son and his friends talking about teachers, life and school and I realised all the complicated things they had to cope with in the first years at secondary school. Add in a sick parent and that's a lot of stuff to deal with."

Although not autobiographical, Christine admits her own experience of her cancer journey did influence the book.

The Best Medicine tenderly explores Philip's hilarious and touching attempts to cope with his mother's embarrassing diagnosis. Through it all, Philip is writing letters to his hero, the comedian Harry Hill, looking for advice. Christine gained permission through Harry Hill's agent for the comic to be included in the novel and on the book cover. And just last month she was thrilled to receive a letter from the man himself.

"Dear Christine, Thank you so much for sending me a copy of your wonderful book. I'm flattered and thrilled that you thought to include me... and very pleased... that my old shows did you a little bit of good. Long may you continue," wrote Hill – who studied medicine before embarking on a career in comedy.

On a more serious note, she hopes *The Best Medicine* "gives permission" to children coping with a sick parent "to keep on living and laughing".

"Life goes on for a child even as it stands still for the sick parent. Children can feel guilty for getting on with their lives and having fun at a time like that. But of course they shouldn't. I wanted to show how this boy got on with his life and I wanted to say that is OK," she adds.

Christine, who grew up in Co Tyrone, published her first book *B is for Breast Cancer* in 2014. The non-fiction book was an insider's guide to the emotional and physical challenges faced by breast cancer patients presented in an A-Z format offering bite-sized chunks of help and hope. *The Best Medicine* is her first novel and her first book for young readers.

Memory Poems Scaffold

Remembering

I see _____ (3 nouns with or without adjectives)

I hear _____ (2 nouns/verbs)

I taste _____ (2 foods associated with that person)

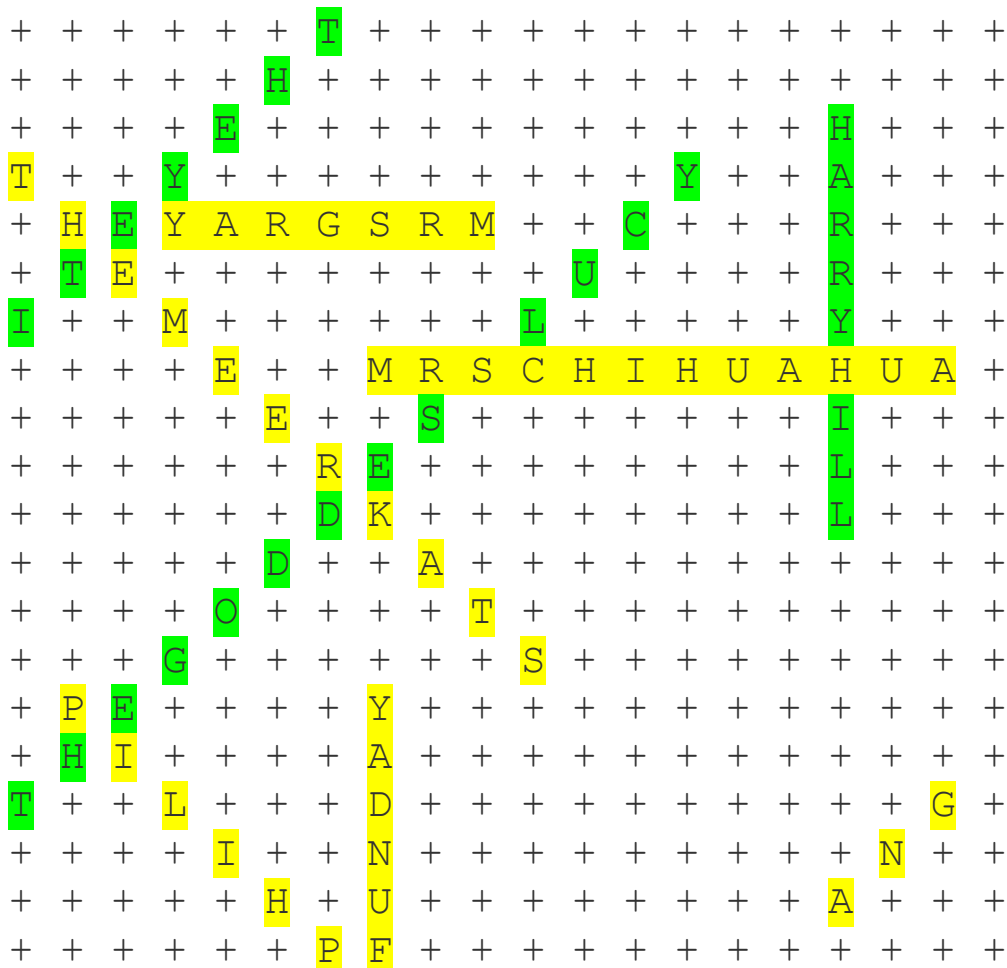
I smell _____ (1 or 2 smells associated with person/their home)

I touch _____ (one or two nouns with adjectives person or possession)

I feel _____ (1 emotion)

I remember _____ (name of person remembered)

The Best Medicine Word Search Solution



(Over, Down, Direction)

ANG (17,19,NE)

FUN DAY (8,20,N)

HARRY HILL (17,3,S)

MRS CHIHUAHUA (8,8,E)

MRS GRAY (10,5,W)

PHILIP (7,20,NW)

THE GODDESS LUCY (1,17,NE)

THE MEERKATS (1,4,SE)

THE YETI (7,1,SW)