

Cool Room 3

Post Reading Activities

1. Metaphor

In the story 'Cool Room 3', the poppy is used as a metaphor twice.

- Identify in the text how the poppy is used as a metaphor to describe a person and a metamorphosis.
- Identify in the text how the poppy is used as a metaphor for fear and destruction.

How significant is Max's occupation when considering the metaphors above?



Cool Room 3

Post Reading Activities

2. In Memory

1. What theme links the following quotes?

It is almost as hard to imagine the past as to guess the future.
(*anonymous*)

Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden.
(*T.S Elliot: 'Burnt Norton' from 'Four Quartets'*)

Praising what is lost
Makes the remembrance dear
(*William Shakespeare: 'All's Well That Ends Well'*)

They spend their time mostly looking forward to the past
(*John Osborne: 'Look Back Anger'*)

O! call back yesterday, bid time return.
(*William Shakespeare: 'Richard II'*)

2. Now find three sections from 'Cool Room 3' that use the same theme that links the quotes.

3. Why is the story called 'Cool Room 3'? Do you think that the presence of the current occupant of Cool Room 3 in any way influenced what Max Gruber did that day?



Cool Room 3

Post Reading Activities

3. Language Point

In the story, the author uses a number of devices for dramatic effect. One of these is where a sentence is 'fronted' by a clause indicating time (this could be composed of adverbs, prepositions or nouns):

Moments later his wife Rita hissed something he couldn't quite make out

In the years following the birth of the two children, Rita had gradually shed her outer layers of youthful brightness and warmth

Shortly afterwards his mobile went.

Abruptly the waves of voices separated into individual words and phrases

All of a sudden Max heard what could only be his own voice reverberating inside his head

As he listened he pictured terrifying scenarios

After getting back into the car he drove more slowly

Even before he rounded the last hairpin bend Max could tell there was no-one at the chalet.

Coasting towards his house, Max noticed there were no lights on, despite the darkness.

1. Turn the sentences above into less dramatic versions. An example is given.

1. His wife Rita hissed something moments later he couldn't quite make out.

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

2. Which of the following sentences from the story can be changed in the same way to increase the dramatic effect? Can you say why the author chose *not* to do so?

Her skull had begun to show through her skin, constantly reminding him of the bodies in the chapel of rest;

Rita reached for the bottle of Henniez mineral water in the holder and, turning in her seat so he couldn't see her face, handed it to Anna.

The lady looked so much like his own mother, dead now for ten years

He was beginning to feel hot again; the sweat was pouring off him.

3. How many more examples of 'fronting' can you find in the text in just 5 minutes?

Cool Room 3

Post Reading Activities

4. Hyperfiction

To use this part of the kit you need to access the webpage http://www.wordpowered.org/cool_room/cool_room_text.html. Here you will find the story that you have just read, but with a difference. At four points you have a hyperlink, each of which will either take you to an alternative version of the story at that stage, or invite you to develop your own version by voyaging into a parallel universe or thinking about the story from another person's point of view.

Your teacher has been invited to send us the best alternative narratives built from the suggestions. We will publish the best on a special webpage dedicated to students' work.

