

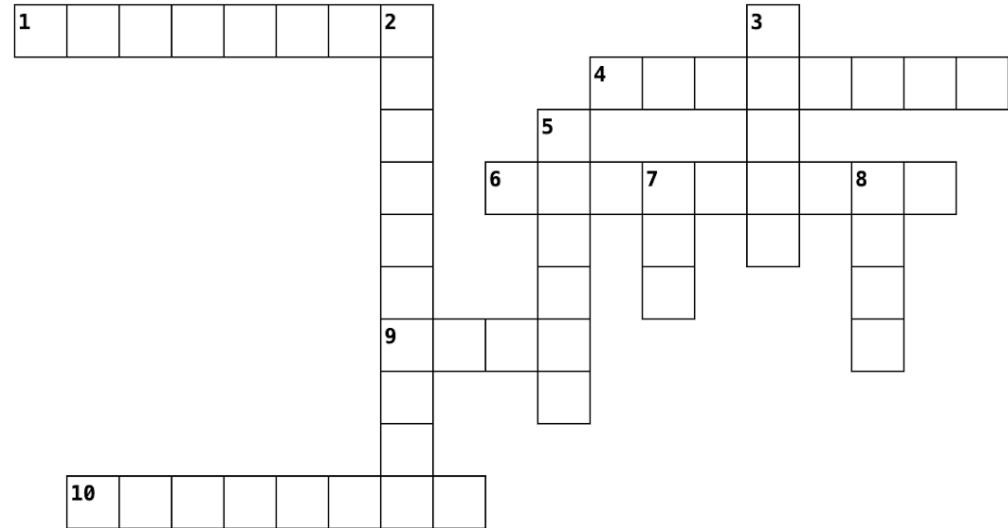
Classroom Pack

1. Vocabulary Exercises
2. Multiple Choice
3. Written Expression
4. Oral Expression
5. Culture
6. Theme



1. Vocabulary Exercises

PART A : Complete the crossword using the clues for help



Across

1. Someone who brings something into a country illegally
4. Very wet, soaking
6. The remains of a broken ship
9. The rising and falling of the sea
10. Refusing to work as a form of protest

Down

2. A surprising, important discovery
3. The noise you make while sleeping
5. To shake from cold or fear
7. A place where people go to share drinks and
8. A piece of evidence

PART B : Complete the sentences with the missing words:

Hip Flask, Cargo, Wharf, Shanty, Gossip

1. I won't let you drive, I saw you having a drink from your _____ earlier.
2. We will meet at the _____ tomorrow and start the protest!
3. You're supposed to be on strike - if I see you moving any _____ I'll be furious.
4. Work goes a lot faster when you sing a little _____.
5. You shouldn't listen to _____ like that, it's not reliable.



2. Multiple Choice

You have now discovered the plot of the play "Fish and Ships" and its different protagonists. Let's see what you can remember. Read the sentences and mark the correct answer.

1. Who is the first character to mention the "Ghost Ship"?

- A. Mike O'Neill
- B. Lorcan
- C. Chief Batista
- D. Mary Callaghan

2. What was Patrick O'Leary's role on the island?

- A. Chief of Police
- B. Pub Owner
- C. Fisherman and union leader
- D. Port manager

3. Why does Chief Batista send Mike to Great Island?

- A. He requested a holiday
- B. She believes he's the best for the job
- C. No one else was available
- D. He volunteered to investigate

4. What does Mary Callaghan do on the island?

- A. She owns the local pub
- B. She manages the fishing company
- C. She is the mayor
- D. She controls the port and boat traffic

5. What strange mistake does Mike make during his investigation?

- A. He arrests the wrong person immediately
- B. He decides to wear Patrick's coat
- C. He thinks the Ghost Ship is a whale
- D. He tries to swim to France on purpose

6. Who is Lisa Harris?

- A. A reporter
- B. A sailor
- C. The manager of the Fishermen Isle Company
- D. Mary's sister

7. What does the "FIC" note in Patrick's cabin actually stand for?

- A. Fish Investigation Code
- B. French Intelligence Committee
- C. Fishermen Isle Company
- D. Federal Irish Command

8. What is the suspected connection between Patrick's death and the sea?

- A. He drowned while fishing
- B. He was killed by a rival fisherman
- C. He was taken by the Ghost Ship
- D. He fell overboard during a storm

9. What secret does the pub owner hint at?

- A. Patrick was a spy
- B. Sean and Patrick were enemies for years
- C. There was a love triangle involving Patrick
- D. Mary is secretly Patrick's daughter

10. What does the Ghost Ship turn out to be?

- A. A supernatural legend
- B. A British navy vessel
- C. A hallucination
- D. A real French smuggling boat

11. What object provides the key clue to solving the mystery?

- A. A red scarf
- B. A ripped fishing net
- C. Patrick's notebook
- D. A bottle of Guinness

12. At the end, who is arrested for their involvement in the crime?

- A. Sean Mac Tiernan
- B. Mary Callaghan
- C. Lisa Harris
- D. Mike O'Neill



3. Written Expression

Message in a bottle

Since the dawn of time, humans have had a fascination with the sea and we have used floating structures to transport things over vast distances. Over time, these floating structures have gotten bigger and bigger and now include sophisticated technology, but the smallest and simplest is the message in a bottle.

Messages can be sent in bottles for almost any reason. Perhaps a sailor is shipwrecked and needs someone to rescue them. Huge organisations like armed forces and coastguards have used them to monitor currents or distribute propaganda. In an island nation like the UK, before email was invented, a message in a bottle was often sent just for fun. Someone would write down information about themselves, maybe a fun fact, a joke or story and their postal address, and throw it into the sea. If someone picked it up and wrote back, you made a friend. In some cases people even ended up getting married after writing to each other for years

Activity:

Try writing a message in a bottle. You might be a smuggler or a pirate on a secret island, a bored tourist on a cruise ship or a Romeo or Juliet looking for love on a distant shore. You could be anyone on earth and say anything you like, but you need the other person to know who you are, where and when you are writing it (so they can write back), why you are writing the message and what they should do when they receive it. Fold your message up - or put it in a bottle! - and put all the messages together. Take turns to 'receive' a message, by taking one out and reading it in front of the class.

Extension:

A letter should never go unanswered! Write a response (as yourself or your character from the first letter) and 'send' it back to them. Do you decide to meet up? Do you like them? Did they need something from you in your original message and, if so, were you able to give it to them? You could even get together in groups - 'chains' of recipients - and write a script showing what would happen if you all met in the same room.



4. Oral Expression

The sea is home to many strange creatures and curious phenomena. Examples of these include the colossal squid, the blobfish, fata morgana, freak waves, cross seas, waterspouts, saint mungo's fire and many, many more. With so much bizarre activity in the seas, it's not hard to see how ghost stories develop and for every ghost story, there's always a rational explanation... isn't there?



Activity :

Get into pairs and choose one of these strange phenomena. You can pick one from the list, choose one you already know, or find a new one from the hundreds of mysterious stories out there.

One of you will play a scientist and the other one will play a sailor having a discussion about this phenomenon. You can use facts, eyewitness accounts, information, stories, pictures, legends... anything you like to support your case, but you must convince the rest of the class you are right.

At the end, have a vote.

Does science have the answers or are ghost stories more real than we might like to believe?



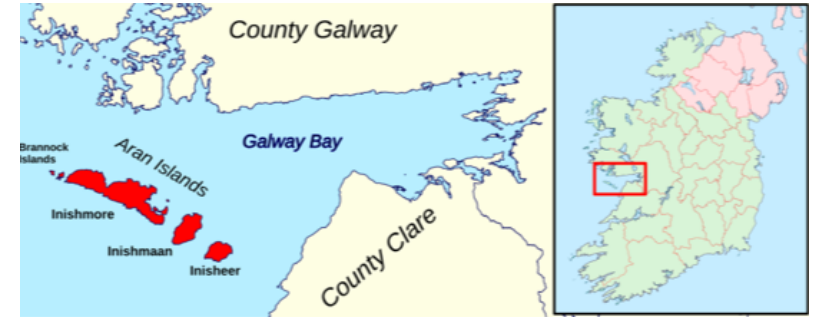
5. Culture

Setting

Our story takes place on Great Island, a fictional island. Although Great Island doesn't exist, it easily could, as there are many islands just like it in real life. Irish islands include Toraigh (the most remote), Skellig Michael (where *Star Wars* was filmed) and the Aran Islands (near Galway). The Aran Islands are a lot like Great Island, so let's find out what life is like there.

The Aran Islands

The Aran Islands are three small islands off the west coast of Ireland: Inis Mór (the largest), Inis Meáin, and Inis Oírr (the smallest). Around 1,200 people live there in total. The islands are known for their stone walls, strong winds, fishing traditions, and Irish-speaking communities.



Life on the Aran Islands is quiet and simple—but also hard. The weather can be harsh, and the sea can cut people off from the mainland. Many young people leave to find work or study elsewhere. Still, the islanders are proud of their heritage. They celebrate traditional music, Gaelic sports, and storytelling

There is a primary school on each island and one secondary school on Inis Mór. People use ferries or small planes to travel. The islands depend on fishing, farming, and tourism. Visitors come from all over the world to see the cliffs, the ruins of Dún Aonghasa, and the famous knitted Aran jumpers.

Watch this video about the Aran Islands for more information:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2ZyvhsxTZY>

Scan the QR code to access the link directly:



Fish and Ships - Classroom Pack

Vocabulary Box

Word

Meaning

Mainland	The main part of a country
Gaelic sports	Traditional Irish sports including Gaelic football and hurling
Harsh	Difficult, severe
Knitted	Made of interlocking loops of wool using special needles

Example Sentence

Ferries take people to the mainland every day.

My mum wanted me to play Gaelic football, but I always preferred hurling

The winters on the islands are very harsh.

He knitted his jumper by hand.

Activities

Comprehension Questions

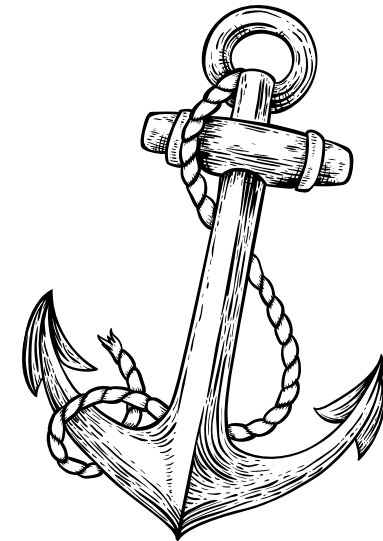
1. What are the names of the three Aran Islands?
2. What are some jobs people do on the islands?
3. Why do young people sometimes leave the islands?

True/False

- The Aran Islands are near Dublin.
- People speak Irish on the islands.
- There are no schools on the islands.

Speaking Prompt

Would you like to live on an island like Inis Mór? Why or why not? Try and write a short speech to convince someone of your point of view. If you would like to live there, imagine you live on the mainland and are trying to convince someone to move there with you. If not, imagine you are trying to leave and persuading someone it is the right decision. What might you say to them? How would your exposure to culture, your social life and your economic situation change if you made that decision?



6. Theme

Social Justice

Although “Fish and Ships” is a comedy, it has important themes of justice and social unrest. When we think of collective action, we often imagine large demonstrations in city centres, but there are many real examples of protests in rural areas which have created social change.

Opinions on public protest can vary depending on the place, time and cause being protested. Protesting carries risks but it is an important part of democracy and can create huge changes. Many things we now consider normal, including women’s rights and worker’s rights, were gained through protest.

We will now look at some real examples of social movements in rural areas.

Isolated island communities can face unique problems. Transport to the mainland is expensive. Tourists buy up homes, making it hard for locals to find places to live. Fishing rules limit what small fishermen can catch, even while large commercial boats take more. Internet access and healthcare can be limited. These issues can lead to frustration and action.



Across history, island and rural communities have come together to fight for social justice. In the 1970s, people in West Cork and on nearby islands protested for better ferry services and safer roads. In Scotland’s Outer Hebrides, communities bought land back from absentee landlords to protect their culture. In Newfoundland, Canada, fishing communities resisted the collapse of the cod industry and demanded government support.



Vocabulary Box

Word

Protest
Corrupt
Injustice
Community-owned

Meaning

To show strong disagreement publicly
Dishonest or illegal in power
Unfair treatment
Owned and run by the local people

Example Sentence

The villagers held a protest at the ferry dock.
The mayor was corrupt and took money secretly.
They fought against social injustice.
The island became a community-owned enterprise.

Activities

Discussion Questions

- What are some problems people on small islands might face?
- Is it easier or harder to solve problems in a small community? Why?
- What are examples of social justice in your own country?

Critical Thinking Prompt

In our story, someone wants to change the island—but they do something wrong to do it.
Can a bad action ever be justified if the goal is good?



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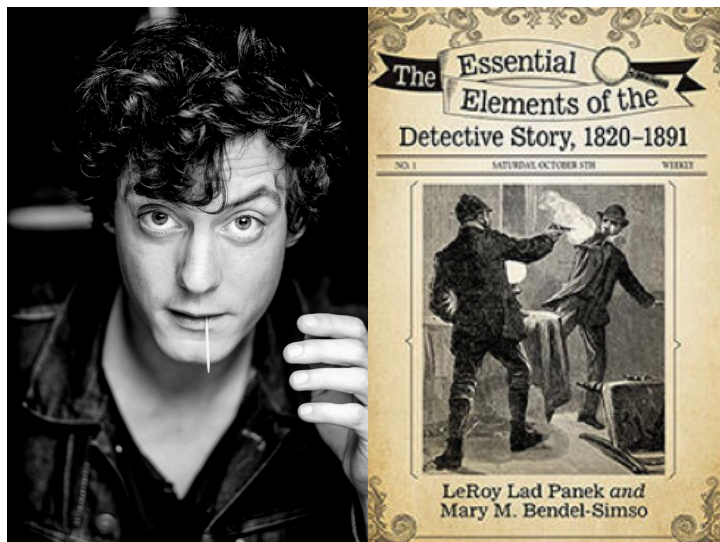
Research/Extension (Optional)

- Look up the story of the Buyout of the Isle of Eigg in Scotland. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-40258975>
- Compare: How is the Isle of Eigg similar to the Aran Islands and how is it different? How has their quality of life changed since the buyout and how effectively do you think it has addressed the problems they were trying to solve?



Inspiration and Genre - Detective story

Although "Fish and Ships" is a detective story, it includes elements of other genres as well. We might say it was a mystery, a 'murder mystery', and a comedy. While these genre elements can seem random, many of them emerge from the themes, setting and inspiration for the play. Island communities can be hard to police, making them a good place to set a detective story. When we talk about social justice, we have to think about right and wrong, which is naturally linked to policing. Finally, many strange stories and unexplained events happen in the ocean - we even have a phrase in English "stranger things happen at sea". Because our story is set on an island, it is natural to have a mystery or supernatural element.



The Author, *Loïc Petit*, wrote this about his inspiration for the piece: "The play is of course a spiritual successor to Pickles' 2016-17 show "On the Docks", written by *Xavier Hock*. Outside of that, major art inspiration remains the detective novels of Agatha Christie or Arthur Conan Doyle. The French franchise OSS117 for Mike's characters. A bit of Scooby doo for the spooky atmosphere. Shutter Island for the isolated island theme. And the French art of demonstrations and strikes for the background story". We're now going to have a closer look at some of these sources of inspiration.

Challenge: We used a phrase earlier "stranger things have happened at sea". Here it is in the context of a conversation.

Alice: Did you hear that Alex quit his job and moved to a different country? I think he was involved in something criminal and had to escape the police.

Bob: Alex?? Doing something criminal?? That could never happen.

Alice: Stranger things have happened at sea.

What do you think the idiom means? Try to come up with a definition and confirm it with your teacher.

Once you have agreed on a definition, try to use it in a sentence.



A. Agatha Christie – The Queen of Crime



Agatha Christie (1890–1976) was a famous British writer. She wrote more than 60 detective novels. Her most famous characters are **Hercule Poirot**, a smart Belgian detective with a moustache, and **Miss Marple**, a kind but clever old lady. Christie's stories usually take place in small villages, on boats, or in big houses. A murder happens, and then a detective must find out who did it. There are always many suspects—and many secrets.

Christie's most famous books include *Murder on the Orient Express* and *And Then There Were None*. Her stories are full of mystery, clues, and surprises. She is one of the best-selling authors in the world.

The play's mystery story was inspired by Agatha Christie's style: a small group of people trapped in one place, a strange death, and a smart investigator trying to solve the crime.

B. OSS 117 – The French Spy Parody

It started in the 1950s as a serious spy story, like James Bond. But in the 2000s, it became a comedy.

The new OSS 117 films star actor Jean Dujardin. He plays a French spy named **Hubert Bonisseur de La Bath**. He looks cool in a suit, but he is actually rude, silly, and always wrong! The movies make fun of old spy stories, showing how outdated and foolish the hero is.

The films are full of 1960s style, old-fashioned jokes, and silly action scenes. They mix mystery and comedy.

In the play, Mike is inspired by OSS 117. He wears nice clothes and tries to act cool, but he says silly things and often misunderstands what's going on.

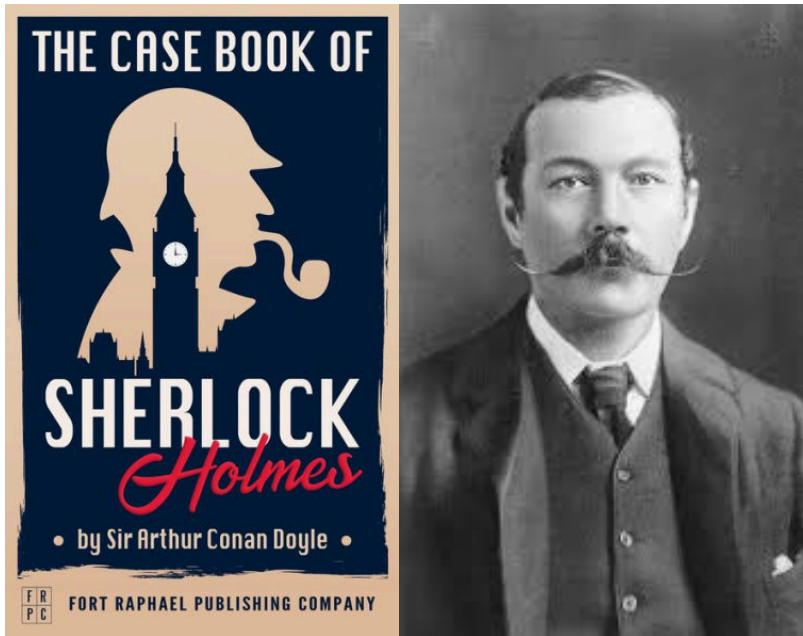


Discussion Prompt:

- Why do people like funny spy characters like OSS 117?
- Do you think that Mike and Hubert are bad at their jobs?



C. Arthur Conan Doyle – The Creator of Sherlock Holmes



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) was a British writer and doctor. He created the famous detective Sherlock Holmes and his friend Dr. Watson. Holmes is very intelligent and uses logic to solve crimes.

Conan Doyle's stories often begin with a strange case. Holmes looks at small details—like mud on shoes or a missing hat—and uses them to find the truth.

Many of his stories are set in London, but some take place in the countryside or in spooky houses. His most famous story is *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which has a dark, ghostly mystery on a foggy moor.

In the play, the detective character is inspired by Sherlock Holmes. He is clever and observant—but also funny and a bit dramatic.

Scan the QR code to access the link directly:



Challenge: Sherlock Holmes was famous for making ridiculously complicated deductions from tiny pieces of evidence. As Conan Doyle wrote more stories, the deductions became more and more complicated and the evidence smaller and smaller. This is a feature in all Sherlock Holmes stories and it has been copied and parodied ever since. Here is an example of the kinds of deductions Sherlock Holmes would make: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=so8cKliKq7U>.

Try writing your own Sherlock-Holmes style deductions. Pick an object in the room and write a detailed description of it. For each point of description, try to make a 'deduction' about the object's owner. Who are they, what do they do and why do they have that object.

These can be serious, like in the novels, or silly - remember, Sherlock has been parodied many times.



D. Scooby-Doo – Mystery with a Laugh



Scooby-Doo is an American cartoon about a group of teenagers and their talking dog, Scooby-Doo. Together, they solve spooky mysteries. A typical episode starts with a strange ghost or monster. The group investigates, follows clues, and finally discovers the truth—it's never a real ghost, just someone in a costume!

The group drives a colorful van called **the Mystery Machine**. Each character has a different role: Velma is smart, Fred is the leader, Daphne is stylish and brave, and Shaggy and Scooby are funny and scared.

Scooby-Doo mixes humour and mystery. Kids love it because it's exciting but not too scary. The play also has a spooky island, strange sounds, and some silly characters—just like Scooby-Doo! But in the end, we ask: is the danger real, or just a trick?

Discussion Prompt:

Do you believe in ghosts? If so, do you think they are good or bad?

E. Shutter Island – A Dark Mystery in an Isolated Place

Shutter Island is a mystery film made in 2010. It stars Leonardo DiCaprio as a detective named Teddy Daniels. He travels to a hospital on an island to find a missing patient. But the island is strange. There are secrets, and the weather is stormy.

The movie is serious and psychological. It makes the audience ask: Who is telling the truth? Can we trust what we see? Is the detective imagining things?

The island feels cut off from the world. There is no escape. This adds to the feeling of fear and confusion.

In the play, the setting is also a lonely island. There's a storm, strange people, and secrets. The audience doesn't know what's real or who to trust—just like in Shutter Island.

Questions:

1. Why is the island important in Shutter Island?
2. What makes the movie feel scary or confusing?
3. Do you think the play uses the same kind of mystery?

