

LITERATURE – 6A

Count Dracula invites a young lawyer – Jonathan Harker – to Transylvania because he wants to buy property in England. In this extract, Jonathan is in a town called Bistritz, on his way to Dracula's castle.

START THINKING ...

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions:

- How do you imagine people travelled to foreign countries 200 years ago?
- Why do you think there are so many books and films about vampires?
- Would you spend a night alone in an old castle? Why/why not?

DRACULA (1897) Bram Stoker

It was on the dark side of **twilight** when we got to Bistritz, which is a very interesting old place. Being practically on the frontier—because the Borgo Pass leads from it into Bukovina—it has had a very **stormy** existence, and it certainly shows signs of it. Fifty years ago a series of great fires took place, which made terrible **havoc** on five separate occasions. [...]

Count Dracula had directed me to go to the Golden Krone Hotel, which I found, to my great delight, to be thoroughly old-fashioned, for of course I wanted to see all I could of the ways of the country. I was evidently expected, for when I got near the door I found a **cheery**-looking elderly woman in the usual **peasant** dress. When I came close she bowed and said, 'The Herr Englishman?'

'Yes,' I said, 'Jonathan Harker.'

She smiled, and gave some message to an elderly man in white shirtsleeves, who had followed her to the door. He went, but immediately returned with a letter:

15 'My friend.—Welcome to the Carpathians. I am anxiously expecting you. Sleep well tonight. At the Borgo Pass my carriage will await you and will bring you to me. I trust that your journey from London has been a happy one, and that you will enjoy your stay in my beautiful land. Your friend, Dracula.'

4 May—I found that my **landlord** had got a letter from the Count, telling him to secure the best place on the coach for me; but on making inquiries as to details he seemed somewhat **reticent**, and pretended that he could not understand my 20 German. This could not be true, because up to then he had understood it perfectly; at least, he answered my questions exactly as if he did. He and his wife looked at each other in a frightened sort of way. He **mumbled** that the money had been sent in a letter, and that was all he knew. When I asked him if he knew Count Dracula, and could tell me anything of his castle, both he and his wife crossed themselves, and, saying that they knew nothing at all, simply refused to speak further. It was so near the time of starting that I had no time to ask anyone else, for it was all very mysterious and not by 21 any means comforting.



Glossary

twilight	period just before it becomes completely dark in the evening
stormy	violent/dramatic
havoc	confusion, without order
cheery	happy
peasant	a poor, country person
landlord	a person paid for the use of a room
reticent	not saying much
mumbled	speak in an unclear, quiet way

2 6A.1 Read the text and listen.

3 Read the text again. Choose option a or b to complete the sentence.

- 1 Harker seems to find Bistritz interesting because of
a. ...the geographical location.
b. ...its history.
- 2 Harker knew he was expected because
a. ...the woman was happy to see him.
b. ...the woman guessed his name.

4 READ BETWEEN THE LINES Match a character (1-4) to things they do in the text (a-g).

- 1 Harker
 - 2 Dracula
 - 3 The elderly lady
 - 4 The elderly man
- a Was not communicative
 - b Wanted more information
 - c Seems superstitious
 - d Speaks a foreign language
 - e Made travel arrangements
 - f Gave an instruction
 - g Is proud of their country

5 VOCABULARY Below are sentences with words from the glossary. Match a word from the box to each sentence. 'S' means it is a synonym of a word - it has a similar meaning; 'A' means it is an antonym of the word - it has the opposite meaning.

dawn (A) | happy (S) | talkative (A) | mutters (S)
 chaos (S) | nobleman (A)

- 1 The locations of gothic tales are not usually *cheery* places.
- 2 Writers often use *twilight* as a time suggesting mystery and change.
- 3 A character who *mumbles* is often hiding a secret.
- 4 A very *reticent* character in a story is a way of giving us important information.
- 5 There are moments in the story when Dracula causes *havoc* in the town.
- 6 In this kind of story, a *peasant* is usually superstitious.

6 ROLE PLAY Look at the text again and notice the behaviour of the old lady and the man.


Write down reasons why they think it is a bad idea for Harker to go to Dracula's castle. Use your ideas to continue the dialogue.

Man: He wants to go to Dracula's castle. The Count sent me money for his journey.

Woman: Oh no, to the castle! He's in terrible danger.

7 LISTENING  6A.2 Listen to the extract and answer the questions.

- 1 What tells us that the old lady is upset and worried?
- 2 How does Harker react to the old lady?
- 3 What does the reaction of other people tell us?

8  6A.2 Listen again and complete the gaps with ONE word.

- 1 Harker is able to _____ what the old lady says by asking her a lot of questions.
- 2 When Harker says the date is 4th May the old lady _____ her head.
- 3 Harker tried to _____ the old lady but it was no use.
- 4 The old lady asks Harker twice does he _____ what _____ it is?
- 5 Harker got on the coach before the _____.
- 6 People sitting on the bench looked at Harker with _____.

WRITING A letter

In *Dracula*, Jonathan keeps a diary describing his journey and the people he meets. Imagine he decides to write a short letter to his fiancée, Mina, to tell her about his journey and Bistritz.

- Look at the text and decide which information to include in the letter.
- Think about what Jonathan will say about these things and what order to put them in.
- Think about how to begin and end the letter and how many paragraphs you will need.

9 WRITING Write the letter in no more than 100 words.

THINK LITERATURE

Stories are more dramatic when characters do not realize they are in danger. Other characters see they are, and we, as readers, know they are in danger. This creates tension and expectation because we watch them 'walk into' trouble! They ignore warnings.

10 In the following dialogues, write B's responses. B is sure there is no danger at all.

- 1 A: They say there is a ghost in the tower.
B:
- 2 A: You hear terrible noises at night!
B:
- 3 A: Don't drink anything he gives you!
B:
- 4 A: He is never seen in the daytime, only at night.
B: