

Gangsta Rap

Benjamin Zephaniah

Introduction

New Windmills titles are supported by a 15-lesson study scheme including medium- and short-term lesson plans, and Student, Teacher and OHT resource sheets. These resources help students to engage with the novel and assist in your planning for close study of a novel.

Each set of resources includes a series of self-contained lessons which can be used to supplement your own teaching plans, or to provide extra support for specific teaching points. Each activity is individually mapped against the Framework and Assessment objectives. There are also guided reading and reading journal activities, plus suggestions for further study areas including speaking and listening, writing, reading and drama activities. If your students have enjoyed reading this novel, there are ideas for other New Windmills they may like to read for pleasure.

Resources for Gangsta Rap:

- Synopsis
- Activate prior learning
- Activity sheets
 - Student sheets
 - OHTs
 - Teacher's notes
- Reading journal
 - General reading journal
 - *Gangsta Rap* reading journal prompts
- Further study areas
- Reading for pleasure

Activities by Alan Pearce and Mike Royston

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Synopsis

Ray is a fifteen-year-old who has lost interest in school and is frequently in trouble. Things are no better at home, as he argues with his younger sister and parents. His problems seem to be escalating when he is permanently excluded from school, and he joins his two previously excluded friends Prem and Tyrone wandering the streets. The three boys have their love of hip-hop music in common and have an apparently unrealistic dream of forming a hip-hop band of their own.

Opportunities are presented to the boys when they agree to attend a Social Inclusion Project, where the curriculum is designed to meet their particular interests. With their natural talent, extreme focus, and the help of the owner of the local music shop, the boys form the Positive Negatives, produce their first CD and plan a national tour.

Unfortunately, as the band becomes more popular it is embroiled in gang warfare with another London hip-hop band, the Western Alliance, which ultimately results in the death of Ray's girlfriend. Ray obtains a pistol and plans to shoot the leader of the Western Alliance. His plan is thwarted by Prem and Tyrone and the two bands suddenly realise that the violence between the two bands has been manipulated by a third party. The novel concludes when the owner of both bands' record companies is arrested for stirring up the violence to increase record sales.

Activate prior learning

The novel is based on the violent underworld of rap music, and closely follows the real life story of the rap artist Tupac Shakur. However, the novel espouses a philosophy of peace and friendship – the hip-hop way. Most students will know something about rap music and contemporary rap artists, but keying *Tupac Shakur* or *rap artists* into online newspaper search engines reveals a number of newspaper reports on gang warfare, shootings, and corruption. It would be helpful to listen to some rap lyrics, although the teacher will need to screen this activity carefully as the language used in rap lyrics, and their subject matter, are often unsavoury.

1

Music questionnaire

Name: _____ Date: _____

What are your favourite kinds of music?**What are your least favourite kinds of music?****What is special about the music you most enjoy?**

2

Choices for research

Name: _____ Date: _____

Using the Internet, research one of the styles of music and one of the singers/songwriters listed below.

Style of music	Singer/Songwriter
• Rock'n'Roll	• Elvis Presley
• Punk	• Sid Vicious
• Reggae	• Bob Marley
• Heavy Metal	• Kurt Cobain
• Rap	• Tupac Shakur

3**Five questions about Ray in Chapters 1–5**

- 1** Look at the way Ray speaks to his father and mother in Chapters 1 and 3. What is your opinion of this?
- 2** In Chapter 2, Ray is taken by Mr Harrison to the head teacher, who permanently excludes him. Do you think Mr Harrison and the head are justified in what they do?
- 3** In Chapter 3, Ray leaves home. Do you support his decision to do so?
- 4** How does Ray speak to and treat the girls he meets in the park in Chapter 4? What do you think the girls feel about this?
- 5** In Chapter 5, the newspaper report says: 'An excluded child is most likely to be a teenage boy'. Is this true, in your experience? If so, what do you think are the reasons for it?

4

First impressions of Ray and his relationships

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use the table below to record your first impressions of Ray and his relationships.

Ray at home with his family	Ray at school with classmates & teachers	Ray out of school with friends and other teenagers

5**Ten qualities of a head teacher**

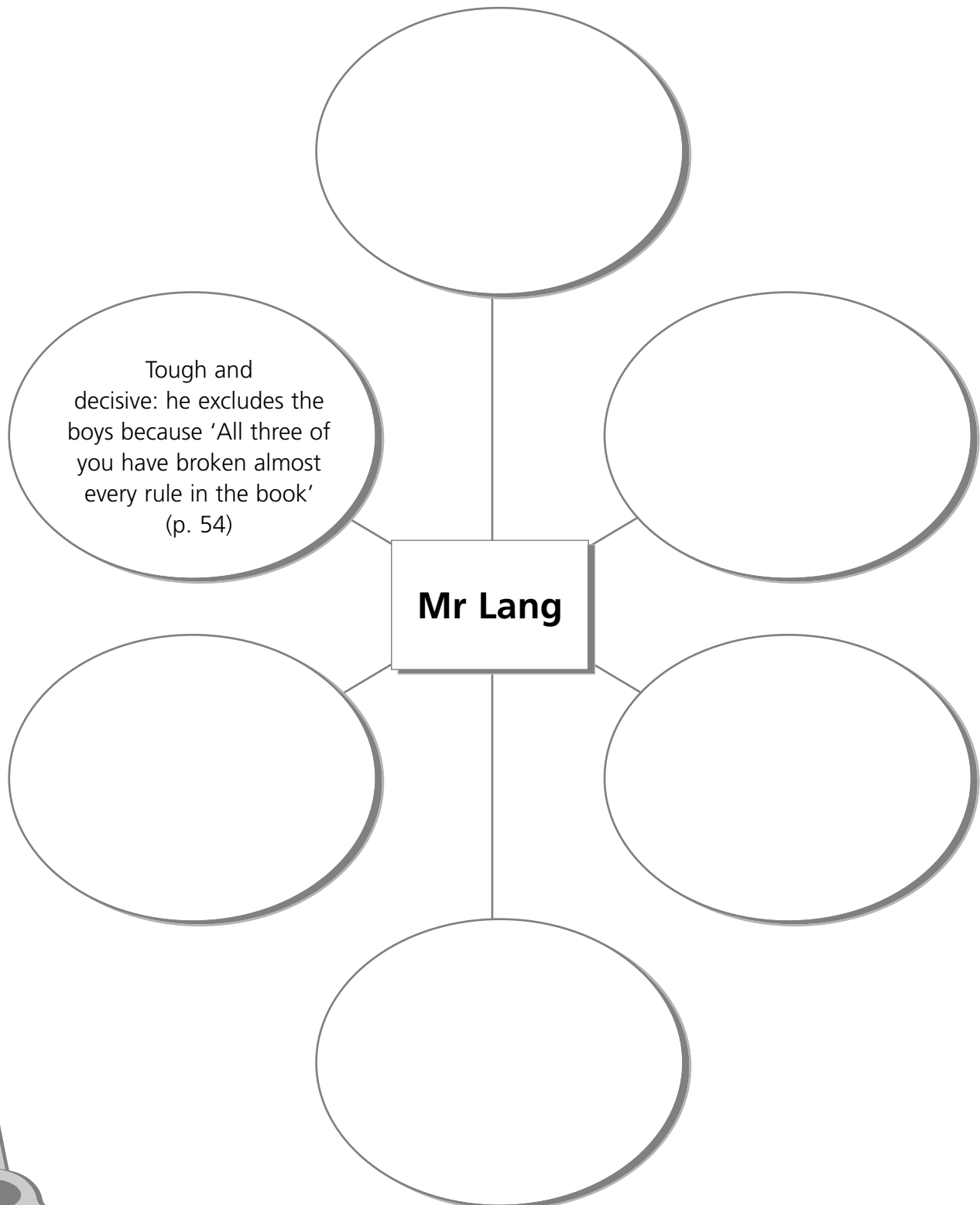
- Someone who is a very strict disciplinarian
- Someone who knows the students by name
- Someone who can talk to students on their own level
- Someone of whom teaching staff are afraid
- Someone who is good at communicating with parents
- Someone who keeps up to date with modern music
- Someone who excludes students if they break school rules
- Someone who dresses casually
- Someone who is lenient about lapses in behaviour
- Someone who personally follows up any major problems with students

6

What kind of head teacher is Mr Lang?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write down your opinions of Mr Lang in the spider diagram below.



7

Analysis of *The Mix Mag* music review

Name: _____ Date: _____

Complete the table below with at least two more entries in each column.

Facts	Opinions	Emotive language/ Exaggeration and its effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The album is called <i>Collective Security</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recording is of a very high quality: 'the production is polished to perfection' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> '... it seems as if the whole world has agreed'. This implies that absolutely everyone has heard the album and thinks it's outstanding

8

Positivity Assessment Report (opening section)

Ray joined the Positivity Social Inclusion Project after being permanently excluded from his mainstream school. He had a history of short-term exclusions, and his head teacher, Mr Lang, felt there was no alternative to removing him from the school for the sake of other students and several of his teachers. Ray was frequently abusive and on several occasions had become physically violent.

His attitude to school attendance and to study was also very negative. For example, he regularly disrupted classes and rarely, if ever, produced homework. In summary, Mr Lang reported that Ray had 'broken every rule in the book'.

When he first came to the Positivity special unit, Ray ...

9

Resident's complaints chart

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use the prompts below to prepare a class role-play.

- I dislike rap music because ...
- I dislike pop music concerts and 'gigs' because ...
- I dislike young people going round in gangs because ...
- I object to the way young people speak nowadays because ...
- I object to pop singers and 'rappers' earning a lot of money because ...

'And another thing...' (add further complaints below)

-
-
-
-
-

10**Character-gram for Yinka**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Complete the character-gram for Yinka using evidence from Chapters 17 and 18.





The story of Positive Negatives

Name: _____ Date: _____

Put yourself in the role of a member of Positive Negatives. Use the table below to record the things that happened to you while you were in the band.

Positives	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">forming the band allowed us to find a purpose in life after we were excluded from school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">being in the band led us into a lot of violence, especially in our battle with the Western Alliance

12

Two passages about hip-hop music

Name: _____ Date: _____

Summarise the points made by Ray and Marga Man in the extracts below.

Passage 1: Ray (page 169)

'... you say the soldier is defending the country even though he might be fighting thousands of miles away. But look at us, we are here, walking the streets where we live and when we defend ourselves we're called violent. Watch us as we circulate from day to day. When we meet and greet we say peace, because hip-hop is about peace, we keep saying peace because we want to live in peace. But hip-hop is also about defending the self, it's not about invading other people's land, it is not about being a hero, it is simply about self-preservation, the right to defend one's self, you know what I'm saying?'

Passage 2: Marga Man (pages 218–19)

'Hip-hop comes from de angry streets, it goes into de recording studio, and den it goes back on de streets. It is created by real people for real people, without de people dis music means nothing. Dis is de music dat record companies can't control because it is de music of de soul, dis music is hated by politicians because dis music is powerful but it seeks no vote. De media people hate di music because it is not created for television programmes and it is not created by men in suits. Lately yu may have heard de media people talking whole heap a nonsense about hip-hop ...

... de music yu are about to hear is about unity, unity of all people against boredom and conformity. De music you are about to hear is de music of resistance, de music you are about to hear may have come out of de East End but it is for de people of de north, south, east and west.'

13 The Guns

Name: _____ Date: _____

Annotate the poem below, highlighting any lines or phrases that can link to *Gangsta Rap*.

Notes

Those twisted irons that men have made
 Bring murder to our streets,
 And when the makers have been paid
 They blame our hip-hop beats,
 Their factories make bits of death
 With much great legal cover,
 And our poor parents hold their breath
 As big youth kill each other.

Some die where they once danced with dreams
 And great futures ahead,
 Some live as they kill us it seems
 And laugh when we are dead,
 When men on top see weaknesses
 Those men will push us further,
 And they care not how bleak it is
 They make money from murder.

We're not faultless or innocent.
 We have responsibilities,
 We helped to make those guns present
 To destroy our communities,
 We must wake up and not be used
 The death dance has to stop,
 And when our beats are not abused
 We'll dance to true hip-hop.

Teacher's notes referred to in the short-term lesson plans

Lesson 1

Group display presentations

- The basic principle is that each group is responsible for assembling its own display presentation. *You* aren't. Make clear that you will conduct a formal assessment of each presentation. Tell students in advance what your success criteria will be.
- Allow a 60-minute lesson for collating and assembling the presentations and for other groups to read/see them.
- Each group's chairperson should liaise with you in advance about the materials they need: sugar paper, A4 sheets, adhesive, scissors, wall space, etc, plus whatever they bring in themselves.
- If groups wish to get together to do some assembling before the nominated lesson, allow them to – as long as it is not in an English (or other!) lesson. Experience suggests that many will be keen to do this out of school or in lunch-breaks etc.

Lesson 2

Some methods of presenting the talk

- A straightforward talk without visual material. Speakers should be free to seat their group audience as they wish: this *does* make a difference.
- A talk with visual aids that can be held up or attached to a flip-chart, the board etc. (Set a strict time limit for students who opt for this to 'set up', otherwise it goes on forever.)
- A power-point presentation if the classroom has an interactive whiteboard. But select your students carefully!

NB There will be no time for playing any music, whatever method of presentation is chosen.

Rehearsing for the talk: good advice

- Prepare index cards with key words or phrases on them: do *not* read from a pre-written 'script'.
- Speak more slowly than in normal conversation.
- Vary your tone of voice (factual, jokey, serious etc.) to match what you are saying. Put emphasis on key words. Practise intonation.
- Eye-contact with your audience is vital. Practise it at home: use a parent.

Lesson 3

Suggested passages to illustrate Ray's behaviour and attitudes

- Chapter 1** argument with his father, from “What the hell do you two think you are doing?” (page 1) to ‘Ray left the room, ... slamming the door behind him’ (page 4).
- Chapter 1** conflict with Mr Harrison and the headteacher, from “So, Ray, I take it you know all there is to know about the Roman Empire?” (page 4) to ‘Ray slammed the door behind him ... and the headteacher jumped’ (page 6).
- Chapter 4** Ray with the girls in the park, from “This is it”, Ray shouted’ (page 40) to “You’re in trouble,” she said in a low voice as she passed Prem’ (page 42).
- Chapter 4** Ray in custody at the police station, from ‘An hour had passed without anyone showing up’ (page 44) to the end of the chapter.

Lesson 4

Guided reading on a passage from Chapter 6 and a passage from Chapter 9

Chapter 6, from the top of page 54: ‘I want to drop the formality and just have a chat...’ to the end of the page: ‘I promise you, I’ll do anything to help you, within reason.’

- 1 What reason does Mr Lang have for excluding the boys. Do you think this is fair?
- 2 How do Ray, Tyrone and Prem react to being told they are excluded? Do you admire them for this?
- 3 What does Mr Lang say about the boys’ intelligence? Do you think he is right?
- 4 What tone of voice do you think Mr Lang uses when talking to the boys? What does this tell you about him?
- 5 When Mr Lang says he will do anything he can to help the boys, do you think he means it? Give a reason for what you think.

Chapter 9, from page 83: “I told you it would be fine, but this is outstanding,” said Mr Lang’ to page 84: “Tell me more,” Mr Lang said, turning his attention to the boys.’

- 1 Why is Mr Lang ‘thoroughly delighted’ with the boys? What does this tell you about him?
- 2 Are the boys pleased that Mr Lang congratulates them? How do they behave in a different way from when they were told they were excluded in Chapter 6?
- 3 Why does Mr Lang show an interest in the CD the boys have just recorded? Do you think his interest is sincere?
- 4 What tone of voice do you think Mr Lang uses when talking to the boys? Do you think it is genuine?
- 5 How does Mr Lang speak to Mrs Sharma? Do you think he understands why she is worried about Prem’s future?

Lesson 5

Guided reading questions on two passages from Chapter 10

Passage 1 (pages 97–99)

- 1 Say what *sounds* are described in this passage. How do they help you 'get inside' the atmosphere of the gig?
- 2 Do you like the way Marga Man speaks? What kind of character do you think he is?
- 3 What does the writer tell you about the way the boys are feeling before they go on stage? Do you think this is realistic?
- 4 The writer says, 'Without seeing the crowd, the boys could feel the excitement.' Why could they, do you think?
- 5 Imagine you were in the band. What do you think it would be like when you stepped out onto the stage?

Passage 2 (pages 101–102)

- 1 The writer says 'The boys ... strutted up and down it [the stage]'. What does this tell you about how they were feeling?
- 2 The writer says 'Non-verbal communication took over'. What do you think this means? What does it tell you about how the boys were rapping?
- 3 How did the boys feel when they got back to the dressing room?
- 4 Imagine the scene outside the Rex after the gig. Say what you think it would be like.
- 5 Imagine the after-show party at Marga Man's music shop. Say what you think it would be like.

Lesson 8

Some characteristics of a 'disgusted' letter to a newspaper

The letter is likely to:

- use emotive language ('hooligans', 'thugs', 'layabouts')
- compare the state of things nowadays with the past, always favouring the latter ('In my day ...', 'Everything seems to have gone to pot since ...')
- use some sarcasm
- use rhetorical questions, which are often then answered ('What's going to happen if ...? I'll tell you what's going to happen')
- use conditionals to begin sentences ('If this is what things are coming to, heaven help ...')
- over-use exclamation marks
- use a strongly-worded opening and (in particular) closing sentence.

Lesson 9

Guided reading questions on two passages about Yinka in Chapter 17

Passage 1, from page 153: 'They walked down the road towards Stratford' to page 155: 'Yinka shook her head.'

- 1 What do you find out about Yinka's family background?
- 2 What does Yinka think about *Collective Security*, the band's first album?
- 3 Yinka tells Ray, 'breaking things is not that difficult'. What criticism of the band's music is she making?
- 4 How do you know from this passage that Yinka thinks deeply about things?
- 5 At the end of this passage, what does Yinka tell Ray she believes in? Do you admire her for her beliefs?

Passage 2, from page 155: 'They walked for another half an hour' to page 159: 'Hey, forget the burger.'

- 1 The writer says 'Ray became captivated by her [Yinka's] mind.' Why do you think Ray felt like this?
- 2 What does Yinka tell Ray about her father's business troubles? What has this helped her decide to do with *her* life?
- 3 Ray wants to sleep with Yinka on their first date. How does she react to this? Do you respect her for it?
- 4 What evidence can you find that Yinka is a warm person with a good sense of humour?
- 5 Sum up your feelings about Yinka. Ray likes her a lot. Do you?

Lesson 10

Checklist of some characteristics of journalistic writing

Draw students' attention to these five features:

- **Headlines** Look at how they make a strong impression on the reader: Dynamic verbs? Word-play? Alliteration? Bias? Provocative language?
- **First paragraphs** Look at how they incorporate answers to the 'wh' questions: Brevity? Conciseness? 'The heart of the matter'? Factually orientated? Use of proper nouns?
- **Interviews** Look at how they add detail and human interest to the story: The power of direct speech? Edited version of what interviewees said to suit the story's angle? Emotive language? Two interviewees set against each other to represent opposing viewpoints? The 'aah' factor?
- **Language** Look for: exaggeration, emotiveness, opinion presented as fact, strong use of adjectives/adverbs, short sentences
- **Presentational devices** Look for: Photo-sensationalism? Aggressive typography? Function of sub-heads? Juxtaposition of visuals with printed text? Misleading captions to photographs?

14

Reading journal

This reading journal is designed to help you record your thoughts about the book you are reading. It is not intended to include only polished pieces of writing, but rather a collection of your developing responses to a text. To become a better reader, it helps to write an entry at the end of each reading session in class or at home, noting:

- the strategies you have been using as you read, e.g. reading backwards and forwards, skimming, inferring
- your responses to what happens/what characters do and say, and ask what the writer has done to make you feel this way
- the questions in your mind as you read, e.g. what you are wondering about at the moment
- the themes and patterns that you notice in the plot or the language used
- similarities and connections to other books you have read
- parts of the book (words, lines) that you have enjoyed
- how what happens in the book relates to your own experiences and feelings.

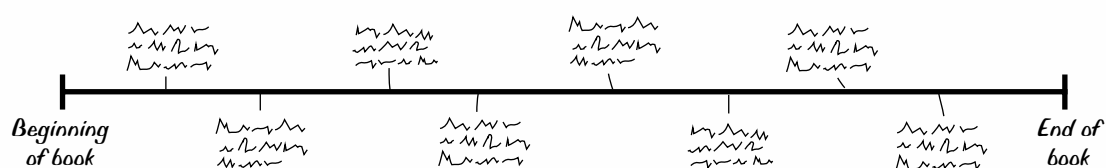
The notes you make will be useful to look back on, especially before writing about the book. For example, it will show how the author has made a character change and affected your feelings about him/her as the book progresses.

Before starting to read ...

Ask yourself:

- What can I tell about the book from its front cover and the blurb on the back cover?
- Have I read any other books by this writer? What were they about?

It is often useful to make a very brief timeline like the one below to track the main events, changes in narrator, scenes and characters. When you write about the book in the future, this time-chart will remind you where things that happen are described.



While reading ...

Ask yourself:

- What does the opening tell me about the themes and ideas, characters and setting of the book?
- In what ways does the writer grab my attention?
- How many points of view on events am I given?
- What would I like to ask the author if I met him/her?

14**Reading journal (*continued*)**

Name: _____

Year: _____

Text title: _____ Text type: _____

Author: _____

Date started: _____ Date finished: _____



Reading journal (continued)

As soon as you have finished reading a book ...

Ask yourself:

- Can I sum up the main idea of the text in three sentences?
- Which characters have changed and why? Which have stayed the same?
- Who would I recommend this book to and why?

Award a book rating (between 1 and 5 stars, where ★ = poor and ★★★★★ = excellent).

--

Write a review below summarising your thoughts about the book.

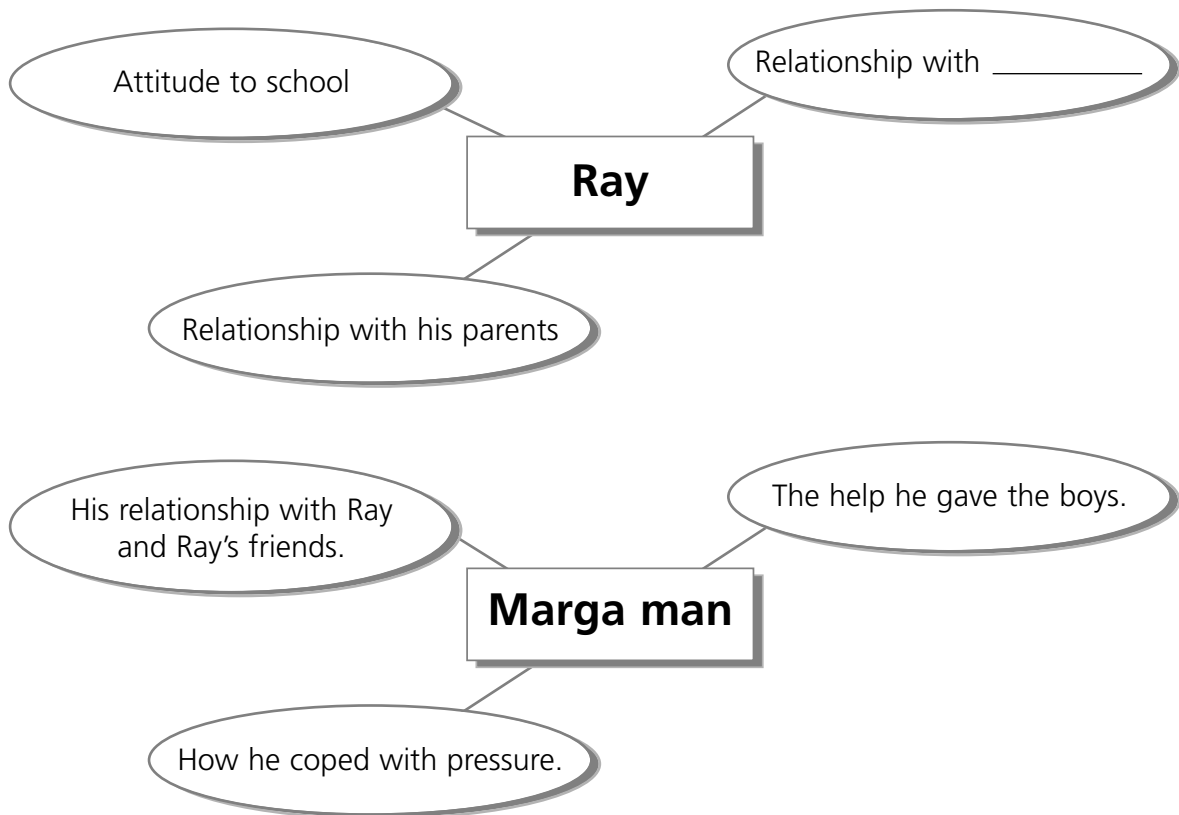
This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

15

Gangsta Rap reading journal prompts

Chapters 1–3

- After reading the first two chapters, write down four questions you hope will be answered by the end of the novel.
- Make a list of five examples of modern teenage slang that appear in the first three chapters of *Gangsta Rap*.
- Start adding your own thoughts to these mind maps. Develop the mind maps as you read on with the novel. By the end of the novel these maps will record what you know about the two characters, and how you have responded to them.



Chapters 4–6

Summarise the attitude Ray and his friends have towards girls. How do you feel about their attitude?

Chapter 7

Mr Lang said that when the boys started at The Positivity Centre their lessons would be adapted to their own interests. Give some examples of how their lessons were adapted to their interests.

15

Gangsta Rap reading journal prompts *(continued)*

Chapter 8

What do we learn about Ray's personality from his behaviour during the meeting with the record company?

Chapter 9

The three boys' mothers were unhappy about the boys forming a rap band. Make a list of the things that are said by the boys and Marga man to make each of the mothers happy.

Chapter 10

Make a few notes about your impressions of the lyrics of Positive Negatives' *War Cry*. For example, can you answer the following questions?

- Does the rap have a rhyming scheme?
- Do all of the lines have the same number of syllables?
- What examples of informal language are there?
- What teen slang is used?
- What issues does the band mention in this rap?

Chapter 12

The band members and Marga Man have been receiving unusual telephone calls. Make some predictions now:

- Who might be making the telephone calls?
- Why are these threatening telephone calls being made?
- What do you think will happen because of the telephone calls?

Chapters 13–15

See if you can answer the following questions:

- 1 What was the name of the West London youth who was shot?
- 2 Outside what nightclub did the murder take place?
- 3 What happened to Marga Man's shop?
- 4 What big suggestion did Skelly have for Positive Negatives?

15

Gangsta Rap reading journal prompts (continued)

Chapter 17

- Yinka and Ray have a very interesting conversation. Make a list of four interesting things that Yinka says.
- Add Yinka to Ray's mind map that you started after reading the first three chapters of *Gangsta Rap*.

Chapter 18

At the press conference Positive Negatives are asked a number of questions about hip-hop and rap. In about eighty words see if you can summarise what hip-hop is.

Chapter 21

All the way through the novel Ray has said that he lives his life by the hip-hop philosophy. So, why is his behaviour in this chapter particularly unusual? Why do you think Ray chose to respond to his problems in this way?

Chapter 22

In Chapter 22 four newspapers write about Positive Negatives. Make a list of the four newspapers and what each newspaper says about the band. In the final column of the table say whether you think each newspaper has been fair in its reporting.

Newspaper	What the newspaper said	Do you think the newspaper was fair?

Chapters 23 and 24

- How do you think the members of Positive Negatives might have felt when they heard that Reel Steel had been arrested for having a firearm?
- Where was the gig mentioned in Chapter 24 to be held?
- Why did Ray want to cancel the gig?
- How did Dragon and the rest of the Western Alliance manage to get backstage after the gig?

15

Gangsta Rap reading journal prompts (continued)**Chapter 25**

- At what stage in Chapter 25 did you work out what had been happening to Positive Negatives and the Western Alliance?
- What happened to Sam in Chapter 25?
- What was the name of the owner of the telephone that had been used to make all of the telephone calls to the Western Alliance and Positive Negatives?

Chapter 26

In one paragraph, explain *what* had been happening to the Western Alliance and Positive Negatives, *who* had been involved, and *why* it had been happening.

Whole Novel

Write a brief review of *Gangsta Rap* that could be placed in a school magazine. In your review say whether you think this is a good book for teenagers to read. Mention what you think are the strengths of the novel.

Further study areas

The following activities provide opportunities for creating interesting and stimulating activities.

Writing to imagine, explore and entertain: Imagine Ray's life five or ten years after the end of the book. He may or may not be a rap star. Describe 'A Day in the Life of Ray'.
(Writing to imagine: Yr7 Wr6; Yr8 Wr7; Yr9 Wr5)

Drama-focused Speaking & Listening: Marga Man goes to see Sinclair, 'The Messenger', while he is awaiting trial. Act out their meeting.
(Drama: Yr7 S&L16; Yr8 S&L15; Yr9 S&L12)

Independent research/information writing: Research the extent of street crime and violence in your area. You can get a snapshot of this by reading the local newspaper for a week. The police and neighbourhood watch groups are normally willing to supply some information. Produce an information leaflet based on your findings for distribution in the community.
(Writing to inform: Yr7 R5, Wr11; Yr8 R1, Wr10; Yr9 R2, Wr9)

Author's craft: Write down five questions you would like to put to Benjamin Zephaniah about why he wrote *Gangsta Rap* and the way he chose to tell the story. Either: (a) invent his replies to your questions Or: (b) visit his website and post your questions there. Expect a reply.
(Author's craft: Yr7 R15; Yr8 R10; Yr9 R18)

Group discussion: Imagine that a major film company is keen to make a big-budget film of *Gangsta Rap*, to go on general release in cinemas throughout the country. Give your opinion about whether it would make good 'box office' or not.
(Group discussion: Yr7 S&L1; Yr8 S&L10; Yr9 S&L9)

Reading for pleasure

This contemporary novel is about teenagers trying to succeed in tough circumstances: exclusion from school, difficult family relationships and violence. If students have enjoyed reading this novel, they may also enjoy *Face* by Benjamin Zephaniah, another gritty portrayal of life for a teenager dealing with prejudice, drugs and disfigurement; and *Refugee Boy* by Benjamin Zephaniah, the story of a young asylum seeker in England. They may also enjoy *Heathrow Nights* by Jan Mark, which deals with the themes of family relationships and getting into trouble at school.

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 1****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:****Lesson aims:**

Students' own knowledge of contemporary music

- 1 To describe and explain personal likes and dislikes
- 2 To present information in a clear, attractive way to their peers
- 3 To work cooperatively in a group, contributing to discussion and planning

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Previous experience of justifying personal opinions
- Familiarity with conventions of answering a questionnaire

Book activity:

Preparation: Activity 1 – Conducting a group survey of students' tastes in music and presenting the results imaginatively

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L1, S&L10, Wr11, Wr18**Year 8:** S&L1, S&L11, Wr1, Wr10**Year 9:** S&L1, S&L5, Wr4, Wr12**Assessment Foci:**

Wr2, Wr3

Starter:

(10 minutes) Brainstorm with the class their favourite music albums, singers and styles. Write these on the board. As yet, allow no discussion. Explain that the aim is to get a snapshot of the class's musical tastes.

Introduction:

(15 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 1 – a personal questionnaire on which students will (i) record their likes and dislikes (ii) explain their 'likes'. Emphasise that 'Explain' – column 3 of the questionnaire – is important. It asks students to consider how certain styles of music are associated with particular kinds of dress, attitudes, behaviour and so on, e.g. grunge, rap, punk.

Then have them fill in their questionnaires individually and in silence: swapping opinions and explanations comes later.

Development:

(30 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. For 15 minutes, encourage 'open' group discussion based on the questionnaire, especially column 3. Reiterate the need to explain opinions carefully, and to listen attentively to others' explanations.

Begin the next 15 minutes by setting each group the same task: to present their group's likes and dislikes *along with reasons and explanations*, for other groups to read. This will be mostly done for homework, so decisions must be made now about: (i) method and style of presentation (ii) use of graphs, charts, photographic cut-outs, etc. (iii) use of ICT for part or all of the presentation. A chairperson should lead the planning and ensure that everyone is clear about the contribution they will make. This includes a short written piece from everyone, justifying their personal preferences.

Plenary:

(5 minutes) Groups should double-check what each member will produce before the lesson you nominate for collating/assembling/displaying their presentations. (It is best to pick a lesson about a week ahead: advice on this can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 16).

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

Students complete their contribution as far as possible by themselves.

Resources required: Student Sheet 1, Teacher's Notes page 16**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 2****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:**

Information drawn from the Internet

Lesson aims:

- 1 To use the Internet to locate and retrieve information
- 2 To select, collate and edit information on screen
- 3 To prepare to deliver a short talk to a peer audience

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Experience of using an Internet search engine
- Some experience of on-screen editing

Book activity:

Preparation: Activity 2 – Researching information in preparation for delivering a formal talk

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** R1, R2, R5, Wr1**Year 8:** R1, R2, R4, Wr1**Year 9:** R1, R2, R4, Wr1**Assessment Foci:**

R2, R3, R7, Wr3

*Note: This lesson depends on students having access to ICT facilities for the full 60 minutes.***Starter:**

(20 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 2 – a ‘Style of Music’ and ‘Singer/Songwriter’ list. This will be the focus for students’ use of the Internet to draw down information. Ask them to choose to research one of the styles of music and one of the singers/songwriters listed. They then use a search engine to locate relevant information.

At this stage, tell them they need to *select* their information they will use for the task you can now set: presenting a five-minute talk to others in the class about *either* their chosen style of music *or* their chosen singer/songwriter. This will take place in a future lesson.

**Introduction/
Development:**

(30 minutes) Ask students to work individually on screen, using appropriate strategies to select and collate the information they want: highlighting, deleting, merging, cutting and pasting, etc. Keep emphasising that the information is for a five-minute talk. Many students will want to preserve too much of what they have found. They need to be ruthless editors! Support any students who find this difficult. At the end of this stage, students print out their edited information.

Plenary:

(10 minutes) Nominate a specific lesson, probably about a week ahead, for students to present their talks. Explain that they will present to a small group, not to the whole class. Briefly outline the methods they can choose – see the Teacher’s Notes, page 16. End by setting the homework below.

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

Students plan their talk by organising and ordering information from their print-out. They also need to rehearse at home before the nominated lesson. Advice for doing so can be found in the Teacher’s Notes, page 16.

Resources required: Student Sheet 2, Teacher’s Notes page 16**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 3****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapters 1–5

- Lesson aims:**
- 1 To identify key character traits of Ray
 - 2 To appreciate some of the ways the writer presents a central character to us
 - 3 To write a text-based account of Ray's character / behaviour and formulate a personal view of him

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Pre-reading of Chapters 1–5
- Some understanding that a 'character' is a construct of the writer's imagination rather than a 'real' person

Book activity:

Exploration: Activity 1 – Describing and commenting on the way Ray is presented in Chapters 1–5.

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L1, S&L5, R12, R16, Wr18, Wr19**Year 8:** S&L1, S&L7, R4, R5, Wr16, Wr17**Year 9:** S&L2, S&L5, R5, R11, Wr9, Wr17**Assessment Foci:**

R3, R6, Wr3

Starter:

(15 minutes) Display OHT 3 on an OHP – five questions for the whole class about Ray as he is presented in Chapters 1–5. These questions are not descriptive: they are designed to elicit students' opinions about the way Ray behaves. Make this clear, then take responses from the class. Encourage alternative points of view. End by asking students whether or not they find Ray an attractive figure, and why.

Introduction:

(25 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Distribute Student Sheet 4 – 'First impressions of Ray and his relationships'. Ask students to use the three headings on the sheet to discuss, and then make bullet-point notes about, their impressions of Ray. It will help to focus their discussion if you direct them to three events in which he plays a central part. Suggested choices can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 17. As they make entries on their sheets, all students should add page references to illustrate their ideas.

Development:

(15 minutes) Ask students in whole-class discussion to share and compare the impressions they have noted. Steer the discussion towards the way Benjamin Zephaniah has chosen to present Ray to us. Make the point strongly that he does not exist in 'real life': the writer shapes the reader's response to a character he has invented for a particular purpose. End by asking students what they think this purpose might be.

Plenary:

(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework below. Emphasise that, as in the lesson, the focus will be on (i) how the writer shapes our response (ii) the personal view that students have formed of Ray.

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

Ask students to: Write an account of Ray's character and behaviour as Benjamin Zephaniah presents them in Chapters 1–5. Say what view of Ray you think the writer wants us to take. Back up your opinions with specific reference to the text, including some quotation.

Resources required: OHT 3, Teacher's Notes page 17**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 4****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapters 6 and 9

Lesson aims:

- 1 To exchange opinions with others, justifying them with reasoned argument
- 2 To reach a balanced personal view about a complex character
- 3 To write a discursive essay reviewing both sides of a question

Prior learning/knowledge:

- Pre-reading of Chapters 6 and 9
- Some experience of arguing a case both in discussion and in writing

Book activity: Exploration: Activity 2 – Formulating a personal view of Mr Lang, the boys' head teacher, based on Chapters 6 and 9

Framework Objectives:

Year 7: S&L1, S&L5, R6, R12, Wr2, Wr19

Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R3, R5, Wr3, Wr16

Year 9: S&L5, S&L7, R6, R11, Wr1, Wr6

Assessment Foci:

R1, R2, Wr3, Wr4

Starter: (15 minutes) Display OHT 5 on an OHP – a list of ten qualities students might expect to find in a head teacher. Work briskly through the list. Ask students to grade each quality as follows:

- 1 = an excellent quality
- 2 = necessary, perhaps, but not an attractive quality
- 3 = a quality no head teacher should have.

End by asking students to apply the completed/graded list to Mr Lang in Chapters 6 and 9. How does he rate as a head teacher?

Introduction: (20 minutes) In pairs, ask students to scan Chapters 6 and 9 and make brief notes about (i) why Mr Lang excludes the three boys from his school in Chapter 6 (ii) his plan to move them elsewhere and his reasons for doing so in Chapter 6 (iii) his attitude towards their plans for the future in Chapter 9. Students will use these notes during the Development stage.

Development: (20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Distribute Student Sheet 6 – a spider diagram for students to record their impressions of what kind of head teacher Mr Lang is. The groups have to fill it in, adding page references to illustrate what they decide. Support groups who find difficulty in locating relevant material and reaching decisions based on it. Two passages for guided reading, together with prompt questions, can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 17.

Plenary: (5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework below. Emphasise that the task requires students to (i) put forward a personal opinion, which may differ from that expressed by others during this lesson (ii) use quotation from the text to explain and justify the opinion they have reached.

Homework/Follow-on: Ask students to consider this comment about Mr Lang from one teenage reader of *Gangsta Rap*: 'He's just bothered about getting three trouble-makers out of his precious school. He doesn't care about them as individuals – he's only pretending to.' For homework students write a discursive essay saying how far they agree with this judgement. They should use precise text reference and some quotation to help them do so.

Resources required: OHT 5, Student Sheet 6, Teacher's Notes page 17

Personal teaching notes:

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 5****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapter 10

Lesson aims:

- 1 To analyse the descriptive qualities of two passages from Chapter 10
- 2 To examine the writer's use of paragraph forms and sentence structures to engage the reader
- 3 To write to describe in a recreative/empathetic way

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Pre-reading of Chapter 10
- Previous experience of writing in role

Book activity:

Exploration: Activity 3 – Writing in role a description of the band's set 'live at the Rex'

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L5, R8, R12, Wr5, Wr6**Year 8:** S&L5, R4, R7, Wr5, Wr6**Year 9:** S&L2, R12, Wr5, Wr6**Assessment Foci:**

R4, R5, Wr1, Wr5

Starter:

(20 minutes) As a class, share reading aloud the passage from Chapter 10 beginning 'When they arrived back at the Rex' (page 97) down to 'Then the band began to rap, starting altogether on the chorus' (page 99). Without prompting them too much, ask students to comment on the effectiveness of this passage as a piece of description: Fast pace? Language choice and imagery? Description intercut with direct speech? Use of rap vernacular? End by telling students the task to which this lesson leads: putting themselves in the place of one of the band members and writing a personal account of playing at the Rex.

Introduction:

(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Direct them to the passage in Chapter 10 beginning, 'And so the beats continued...' (page 101) and ending '... everyone wanted to talk to the boys' (page 102). They should consider, and make their own brief notes about, how Benjamin Zephaniah makes this episode exciting to read. Instruct them to look closely at (i) the way paragraphs begin (ii) the length of paragraphs (iii) the variety of sentence structures (iv) the pace of the whole passage. Bullet-point these success criteria on the board. Support groups who find difficulty in commenting on the *structures* of writing. A list of guided reading questions for weaker students can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 18.

Development:

(15 minutes) In whole-class discussion, take feedback from the groups. Hold the focus on the writer's paragraph- and sentence-structures. Highlight the way this keeps the narrative moving briskly and prevents the description from becoming monotonous/boring.

Plenary:

(5 minutes) Set up the homework below. Emphasise that you will assess students' work mainly on the basis of how well they carry into their writing what they have learned in this lesson.

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

Students write an account of the set at the Rex from the viewpoint of Ray, Tyrone or Prem. If they wish, they can do this in personal diary form.

Resources required: Teacher's Notes, page 18**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 6****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapter 11

Lesson aims:

- 1 To analyse the style and language of the music review in Chapter 11
- 2 To distinguish between (i) fact and opinion (ii) plain and emotive language in a media text
- 3 To write a personal review of a recent music album for a teenage audience

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Pre-reading of Chapter 11
- Some familiarity with the conventions of printed media reviews

Book activity:

Exploration: Activity 4 – Analysing the style and language of a music review and writing a personal review in a similar vein

Framework Objectives:

Year 7: S&L1, S&L5, R7, R10, Wr18, Wr19

Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R6, R8, Wr13, Wr18

Year 9: S&L1, S&L5, R4, R8, Wr7, Wr11

Assessment Foci:

R3, R6, Wr2, Wr3

Starter:

(15 minutes) As a class, students listen to you read aloud the review of the band's first album in *The Mix Mag*. Ask them to discuss whether, on the basis of this review, they would buy *Collective Security*. Encourage alternative viewpoints. Then widen the discussion to address the question: what makes a good review?

Introduction:

(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Distribute Student Sheet 7 – a chart for analysing the *Mix Mag* review with three columns, headed: 'Facts'; 'Opinions'; 'Emotive language/Exaggeration and its effects'. One entry has already been made in each column. Check that students understand why. Then ask them in their groups to make at least two more entries in each column. Work with groups who find difficulty in (i) distinguishing between fact and opinion (ii) understanding the concept of emotive language.

Development:

(20 minutes) In whole-class discussion, take feedback from the groups. Ensure that the ability to separate fact from opinion and recognise the effects of emotive language is secure. Then steer discussion towards (i) the purposes of a music/film/book review (ii) why it is important to have in mind a clear idea of audience when reviewing (iii) what the ideal balance between fact and opinion might be in a review.

Plenary:

(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework below. Emphasise that in writing it, students should draw substantially on the work they have done in this lesson.

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

Students write a review of their favourite album of the moment for a teenage music magazine. It should be about 150 words long.

Resources required: Student Sheet 7**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 7****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapters 7–13

Lesson aims:

- 1 To review the development of a character over time
- 2 To analyse the style and structure of a typical school/PRU assessment report
- 3 To write in role a formal report for an adult audience

Prior learning/ knowledge:

- Pre-reading of Chapters 7–13
- Some awareness of the notion of formality in writing

Book activity:

Exploration: Activity 5 – Planning and writing an assessment report from the Positivity Project

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L5, S&L12, R7, R13, Wr10, Wr12**Year 8:** S&L10, S&L11, R8, R10, Wr10, Wr17**Year 9:** S&L1, S&L7, R6, R11, Wr9, Wr15**Assessment Foci:**

R3, R5, Wr2, Wr5

Starter:

(15 minutes) Brainstorm with the class **(i)** the reasons why Ray was transferred from his school to Positivity **(ii)** how and why his attitude to learning improved dramatically during his time there **(iii)** which people helped him the most. End by asking students to compare Ray as he is at the end of Chapter 13 with the way he was in Chapters 1–5.

Introduction:

(20 minutes) Display OHT 8 on an OHP – the opening of an assessment report that might have been written about Ray before he left Positivity. Through shared reading, analyse the following aspects of its style and structure: **(i)** how the topic of the opening paragraph is developed over six sentences **(ii)** the report's tone and register **(iii)** the report's style and language **(iv)** the use of cohesive devices. Emphasise that this is a *formal* piece of writing. Encourage students to consider and define what 'formal' means. Bullet-point on the board some key characteristics of 'formality' in writing.

Development:

(15 minutes) Set students their writing task, to be started now and completed for homework: to produce a four-paragraph assessment report for *either* Tyrone *or* Prem, written by Sam as they leave Positivity. List on the board the topics of these four paragraphs, which students should copy:

- 1 Why Tyrone/Prem came to Positivity in the first place.
- 2 What progress they have made compared with their progress at school.
- 3 Why they have made progress.
- 4 What their future prospects are.

Students then begin drafting their reports.

Plenary:

(10 minutes) Ask the class to state *four* aspects of structure and style they will incorporate into the final version of their report. Make it clear that these should be drawn from work done during this lesson.

Homework/ Follow-on:

Using the persona of Sam, students write the Positivity assessment report for either Tyrone or Prem in an appropriately formal style.

Resources required: OHT 8**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 8****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:**

Chapter 16 and earlier parts of the book

Lesson aims:

- 1 To use skim-reading and back-tracking to locate information from the text for a particular purpose
- 2 To participate in a class role-play, articulating clear opinions based on parts of the text
- 3 To write in role a letter to the editor of a newspaper

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Pre-reading of Chapter 16
- Some experience of role-play

Book activity:

Exploration: Activity 6 – Planning and writing a letter of complaint about the band to a local newspaper

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L11, S&L17, R7, R10, Wr15, Wr16**Year 8:** S&L12, S&L14, R4, R5, Wr7, Wr13**Year 9:** S&L11, S&L12, R3, Wr13, Wr17**Assessment Foci:**

R2, R5, Wr4, Wr7

Starter:

(15 minutes) Read aloud to the class the newspaper report that comprises Chapter 16. Brainstorm some of the 'controversial' things the band members have done in the course of the book so far. Ask students why some older people, unsympathetic to rap culture, might be outraged by their music, behaviour, attitudes, lifestyle, etc.

Introduction:

(25 minutes) Organise a class role-play. All students will play the parts of Stratford and Newham residents who are strongly critical of Positive Negatives and the bad publicity they have brought to the area. They hold a public meeting in Newham town hall to voice their complaints.

Students spend ten minutes preparing for this. To help them, distribute Student Sheet 9 – a 'complaints chart' on which they list briefly points they will raise at the public meeting. Ask them to work on this in pairs.

Then hold the class role-play. It should last 10–15 minutes. You should take charge of the meeting and try to speak up for the Positive Negatives' right to lead the lifestyle they choose.

**Development/
Plenary:**

(20 minutes) Set students the written task to be started now and finished for homework: writing a letter to the editor of *The Newham Echo* from an older person prejudiced against the boys and their band. Material for this will be drawn from the role-play. It should begin by referring to the newspaper report in Chapter 16.

Include in this stage brief coverage of the form and style of a typical 'disgusted' letter to be found in newspaper correspondence columns. A checklist can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 18.

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

In role as an angry resident, students write a letter to the editor of *The Newham Echo*, criticising the boys. The letter should be strongly worded but not abusive.

Resources required: Student Sheet 9, Teacher's Notes page 18**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 9****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapters 17 and 18

Lesson aims:

- 1 To make diagrammatic notes for a pre-determined purpose
- 2 To rehearse the PEE method of character analysis
- 3 To write an appreciation of character in the form of a newspaper obituary

Prior learning/knowledge:

- Pre-reading of Chapters 17 and 18
- Some experience of using the PEE method to profile a character in fiction

Book activity: Exploration: Activity 7 – Writing a character profile of Yinka

Framework Objectives:

Year 7: S&L1, S&L12, R12, Wr2, Wr10

Year 8: S&L7, S&L10, R3, R4, Wr1, Wr16

Year 9: S&L2, S&L5, R3, R6, Wr9, Wr16

Assessment Foci:

R2, R6, Wr2, Wr7

Starter: (20 minutes) In pairs, ask students to discuss and jot down notes about the impressions they have formed of Yinka's character. Remind them that 'character' means 'personality'. Allow ten minutes for this, then take feedback. Bullet-point a list of responses on the board.

Introduction: (25 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Distribute Student Sheet 10 – a partly-completed character-gram for Yinka. The groups' task is to fill in the remaining four segments of this, together with page references, to illustrate the points they agree on. Work with groups who find difficulty in (i) distinguishing between what Yinka does/says and the kind of personality she has (ii) locating textual evidence. Suggestions for group reading with weaker students can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 19.

Development: (10 minutes) Briefly discuss with the class (i) why Ray is first attracted to Yinka (ii) how and why this attraction quickly turns to love (iii) how Yinka makes a big difference to Ray's behaviour and his attitude towards the band's music. Students should make brief notes on their Sheet during this discussion.

Plenary: (5 minutes) Set up the homework task below. Tell students they will be writing in a formal style for an audience of adults.

Homework/Follow-on: Students write an appreciation of Yinka's character in the form of a newspaper obituary that will include brief details of her death. They should write about 200 words.

Resources required: Student Sheet 10, Teacher's Notes page 19

Personal teaching notes:

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 10****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:**

Lesson coverage: Chapter 18 and local newspaper reports

Lesson aims:

- 1 To examine the structural and stylistic conventions of a 'dramatic' (but not tabloid) newspaper report
- 2 To make diagrammatic notes for the purpose of planning
- 3 To write a front-page story for a local newspaper

Prior learning/ knowledge:

- Pre-reading of Chapter 18
- Some familiarity with the conventions of journalistic writing

Book activity: Exploration: Activity 8 – Planning and writing a 'dramatic' newspaper report about the street violence at Stratford Broadway referred to in Chapter 18

Framework Objectives:

Year 7: S&L1, R4, R8, Wr1, Wr10, Wr11

Year 8: S&L7, R3, R6, Wr1, Wr2, Wr7

Year 9: S&L6, R2, R3, Wr4, Wr9, Wr12

Assessment Foci:

R4, R7, Wr1, Wr6

Starter: (20 minutes) Read with students one or two crime reports from a local newspaper. Analyse and discuss their structural and stylistic conventions, e.g. use of **(i)** headlines **(ii)** first paragraphs **(iii)** interviews **(iv)** language **(v)** presentational devices. A checklist of key points about journalistic writing can be found in the Teacher's Notes, page 19.

Introduction/ Development: (30 minutes) In pairs, students share reading aloud the passage in Chapter 18, 'Marga Man had hired a small hall near the music shop ...' (page 180) to the end of the chapter. They then make a flow-diagram to show the order of events. Model for them what their flow-diagram could look like, and explain why it is a useful note-making strategy for planning the newspaper report they will go on to write.

After 15 minutes, take feedback from the pairs. Create a class flow-diagram on the board which comprehensively covers the main events it will be necessary to include in the story.

Plenary: (10 minutes) Set the written homework task below. Emphasise that the newspaper report should be dramatic but not written in an out-and-out tabloid style. Discuss: **(i)** possible headlines **(ii)** who to interview **(iii)** the 'angle' a local journalist might choose for the story **(iv)** the use of presentational devices.

Homework/ Follow-on: Students draft and write a front-page story for the *Stratford Echo* about the incidents at Stratford Broadway. This should include interviews with two people who were involved. If possible, students should produce their final version on computer, making full use of presentational devices.

Resources required: One or two photocopied examples of crime stories from a local newspaper; Teacher's Notes page 19

Personal teaching notes:

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 11****60 minutes**

Class:	Date:	Period:
Lesson coverage: Lesson aims:	Chapter 10 pages 99–101, and Chapters 19–21 1 To analyse the content, style and structure of a typical rap 2 To collect information about a character’s experiences by skimming and back-tracking through the text 3 To write and perform a rap	
Prior learning/ knowledge:	● Pre-reading of Chapters 19–21 ● Some familiarity with raps	
Book activity:	Exploration: Activity 9 – Analysing the conventions of the rap printed on pages 99–101 and writing a similar rap in role as Ray	
Framework Objectives: Year 7: S&L16, S&L19, R14, R16, Wr8, Wr9 Year 8: S&L6, S&L16, R5, R16, Wr6, Wr9 Year 9: S&L11, R6, Wr6, Wr8	Assessment Foci: R5, R7, Wr1, Wr7	
Starter:	(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. They read and perform the Positive Negatives’ rap on pages 99–101 of Chapter 10. Instruct groups that they should (i) divide up the rap between them before they perform it (three different individual contributions and a chorus) (ii) concentrate on establishing a strong, fast-moving rhythm during their performance.	
Introduction:	(20 minutes) In class discussion, consider first the content of the Positive Negatives’ rap. What are its themes? What ‘messages’ does it convey? Students could compare its subject-matter with other raps they know. Move the discussion on to the rap’s style and structure. How do the rhythm and rhyme-scheme work to accentuate the themes? How does the language reflect the kind of world in which the band members live?	
Development:	(15 minutes) Ask students individually to put themselves in Ray’s place at the end of Chapter 21. They should make brief notes on the events he has been involved in during Chapters 19–21, e.g. the aftermath of the street violence at Stratford Broadway; his interrogation by the police in Chapter 19; Yinka’s death; the decision of Yinka’s family to take her body to Africa for burial. Emphasise that Ray is full of strong feelings – grief, anger, bitterness, despair. Students should begin planning the rap we are told he writes in Chapter 21, incorporating the deepest of these feelings.	
Plenary:	(5 minutes) Set up the homework below. Emphasise that this is a serious task: rap is Ray’s poetry. Instruct students that they will perform their rap to others in the class in a future lesson.	
Homework/ Follow-on:	Students write Ray’s rap.	
Resources required:	(optional) A recording of a contemporary rap to play during the Introduction or Development stage	
Personal teaching notes:		

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 12****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** Chapters 25 and 26 and earlier parts of the story

Lesson aims:

- 1 To read inferentially
- 2 To take part in a role-play (in pairs) and show empathy with an important character in the book
- 3 To write in role to inform, explain and persuade

Prior learning/ knowledge:

- Pre-reading of Chapters 25 and 26
- Experience of combining explanatory and persuasive writing

Book activity:

Exploration: Activity 10 – Describing the part played in the story by ‘The Messenger’ and judging the extent/seriousness of his crimes

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L15, S&L16, R8, R10, Wr15, Wr16**Year 8:** S&L14, S&L16, R6, R7, Wr2, Wr13**Year 9:** S&L11, S&L12, R1, R2, Wr1, Wr13**Assessment Foci:**

R3, R6, Wr3, Wr7

Starter:

(15 minutes) Read aloud to the class the Channel Six news report about Duncan Sinclair, ‘The Messenger’, in Chapter 26. Ask students in pairs to compile a quick list of allegations against Sinclair. Take brief feedback to establish class agreement about the crimes Sinclair stands accused of.

Introduction:

(25 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. They should review Sinclair’s role in the story under four headings, listed on the board:

- 1 Exactly who is Sinclair and what is his background? (see Chapter 25, page 245)
- 2 What has he been doing ‘behind the scenes’ throughout the book?
- 3 Why has he been in a position to do this?
- 4 Why does Detective Sergeant Horne describe him as ‘evil, depraved and sinister’?

Take feedback from the groups. Establish class agreement about Sinclair’s criminal machinations and motives. What does the class consider to be his most serious crime?

Development:

(10 minutes) Students work in pairs. **A** role-plays Sinclair, **B** role-plays Det Sgt Horne. **B** interrogates **A** about how he has, allegedly, used the rival rap bands to serve his own ends, i.e. to make a fortune. **A** has to admit to some of the charges but defends/excuses himself against others. Remind the pairs before they begin that Sinclair is both clever and devious. Then conduct the role-plays.

Plenary:

(10 minutes) Ask all students to put themselves in Sinclair’s place as he awaits trial. He decides to write a ‘confession’ but in it to make as many excuses for what he has done as will stand up in court. Ask students to consider: What will he say? Who will he try to pass the blame to? What view of the two rap bands will he put forward? End this question-and-answer session by setting the homework below.

Homework/ Follow-on:

Students write Sinclair’s confession, using the first person. They should bear in mind that (i) he is an educated man who will present his ‘case’ plausibly (ii) he will lie about anything he thinks he can get away with.

Resources required: None**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 13****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** The whole novel

- Lesson aims:**
- 1 To relate the band's name, Positive Negatives, to the main events and themes of the novel
 - 2 To participate in a role-play (whole class), putting forward and justifying opinions
 - 3 To write a formal literature essay, drawing specific evidence from the text to support their points

Prior learning/ knowledge:

- Reading the whole novel
- Experience of the conventions of a literature essay

Book activity:

Inspiration: Activity 1 – Using the band's name to chart the ups and downs of their story and writing a literature essay on this topic

Framework Objectives:**Year 7:** S&L12, S&L14, R4, R5, Wr11, Wr19**Year 8:** S&L12, S&L14, R5, R10, Wr17, Wr18**Year 9:** S&L9, S&L12, R2, R5, Wr16, Wr17**Assessment Foci:**

R2, R6, Wr3, Wr4, Wr6

Starter:

(20 minutes) Put the class in role as members of Positive Negatives. Distribute Student Sheet 11 – a table on which they will record the 'positive' and 'negative' things that happened to them while they were in the band. They should make three or four entries.

Divide the class into small groups to discuss and write points to be entered in the table. Support groups who find difficulty in (i) recalling clearly the events of the story (ii) distinguishing between the band's 'up' and 'down' times.

Introduction/ Development:

(30 minutes) Divide the class into two. One half represents the Positive side of the band's experiences; the other half represents the Negative. Students use their completed tables and their knowledge of the whole book to take part in a role-play discussion: 'As band members, what were our best times, and why? What were our worst times, and why?'

Orchestrate the discussion so that representatives from each half of the class speak in turn. Encourage them to go into detail; prompt them to recall events in the story fully rather than vaguely. Encourage everyone in the class to speak. This should be an informal discussion (though you will need to control it with tactful firmness). Keep reminding students to remain in role as Ray, Tyrone and Prem.

Plenary:

(10 minutes) Link the work of this lesson to the essay-writing task students will do for homework. Instruct them to write the literature essay in a conventional third-person style, in formal language. Their tables can be used as an essay plan. End by setting the homework below.

Homework/ Follow-on:

Students write a literature essay with the following title: Show how the band's name, Positive Negatives, accurately reflects the ups and downs of their story. On the whole, do you think their experiences are more 'positive' than 'negative' or the other way round? Quote evidence from the text to back up the points you make.

Resources required: Student Sheet 11**Personal teaching notes:**

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 14****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:**

Lesson coverage: The whole novel, with the focus on a passage from Chapter 18 (page 169) and a passage from Chapter 24 (pages 218–19)

Lesson aims:

- 1 To read intensively in order to deduce and summarise characters' opinions
- 2 To arrive at a personal point of view through participating in discussion and argument
- 3 To relate events in the book to the realities of 'teen culture'

**Prior learning/
knowledge:**

- Reading the whole novel
- Experience of finding personal relevance in literature

Book activity:

Inspiration: Activity 2 – Considering claims made in the book for rap music as a force for good and formulating a personal opinion on this matter

Framework Objectives:

Year 7: S&L1, S&L12, R7, R9, Wr15, Wr16

Year 8: S&L5, S&L16, R5, R7, Wr13, Wr14

Year 9: S&L7, S&L9, R4, R6, Wr13, Wr14

Assessment Foci:

R1, R6, R7, Wr3

**Starter/
Introduction:**

(30 minutes) Display OHT 12 on an OHP and distribute Student Sheet 12, a copy of the OHT. They reproduce two passages from the book which make strong claims for rap/hip-hop music as a force for good and a 'Philosophy'.

In pairs, ask students to spend 15 minutes summarising on paper (i) Ray's claims for hip-hop (ii) Marga Man's claims for hip-hop.

Then take feedback from the pairs. Spend a further 15 minutes compiling a class list of *at least five separate points* made by Ray and Marga Man. Write this – or have student volunteers write it – on the board.

Development:

(20 minutes) Leave the class list displayed. Divide the class into small groups. They have a single task: to compare in discussion the claims made by Ray and Marga Man with the picture of rap culture presented in the book as a whole. You may need to challenge students to question whether there are differences between the writer's viewpoint and that of his characters. Support the groups who most clearly need this kind of intervention.

Plenary:

(10 minutes) Chair a class summary of the group discussions. Ask students who found a mismatch between the rhetoric of Ray/Marga Man and the book's picture of rap culture to explain why. Invite students who reached an opposite conclusion to justify it. You might end the lesson by expressing your *own* view.

**Homework/
Follow-on:**

Students could develop the work done in this lesson to address the question: 'Is contemporary music anything more than a form of entertainment?' If this option is taken, negotiate with students the approach they want to take to exploring the topic.

Resources required: OHT 12, Student Sheet 12

Personal teaching notes:

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah**Lesson 15****60 minutes****Class:****Date:****Period:****Lesson coverage:** The whole novel and the poem on page 253

- Lesson aims:**
- 1 To analyse the poem's style and structure, particularly the writer's use of metaphor
 - 2 To relate the poem's themes to the events, characters and ideas in the book
 - 3 To write an account of the links between the poem and the book as a whole

Prior learning/ knowledge:

- Reading of whole novel
- Experience of analysing style in poetry

Book activity: Inspiration: Activity 3 – Analysing 'The Guns' and relating its themes to those of *Gangsta Rap*

Framework Objectives:

Year 7: S&L12, S&L13, R7, R8, Wr18, Wr19

Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R5, R16, Wr17, Wr18

Year 9: S&L2, S&L5, R6, R16, Wr16, Wr17

Assessment Foci:

R4, R5, Wr3, Wr4

Starter: (20 minutes) Read aloud Benjamin Zephaniah's poem, printed as an epilogue to the novel. Then distribute Student Sheet 13 – a copy of the poem with space for note-taking in the right margin. Ask students in pairs to annotate the poem by highlighting any lines or phrases they can link, in terms of events or themes, to *Gangsta Rap*. They should make brief notes in the space provided, saying what these links are. A few words will suffice for each annotation.

Introduction: (15 minutes) Take feedback from the pairs. How close are the links between the poem and the novel? During this stage, clarify with students any parts of the poem they have found obscure/puzzling. End by bullet-pointing on the board three or four of the clearest links the class agrees on. Students should make sure these are noted on their Sheets.

Development: (15 minutes) In whole-class discussion, turn the focus to Benjamin Zephaniah's use of metaphor in his poem. Discuss with the class (i) the meaning of the metaphors (ii) their effectiveness or otherwise.

Plenary: (10 minutes) End by asking the class to glance back at the Positive Negatives' rap on pages 99–101. How is it different in style, structure and effect from the poem? Which do students prefer: the poem or the rap? Why?

Homework/ Follow-on: If this option is taken, students write an account of how the last four lines of 'The Guns' and *Gangsta Rap* as a whole convey a similar message. They should use reference and quotation to support their ideas.

Resources required: Student Sheet 13

Personal teaching notes:

Medium-term study plan for *Gangsta Rap* by Benjamin Zephaniah

Coverage	Objectives and lesson outcomes	Assessment Foci	Framework Objectives
Week of study: 1 Reading through the novel: Chapters 1–7			
Lesson 1 ● Students' own knowledge of contemporary music	● describing and explaining personal likes and dislikes ● presenting written and visual information to an audience of peers ● working collaboratively in a group, contributing to discussion and planning	Wr2, Wr3	Year 7: S&L1, S&L10, Wr11, Wr18 Year 8: S&L1, S&L11, Wr1, Wr10 Year 9: S&L1, S&L5, Wr4, Wr12
Lesson 2 ● Information drawn from the internet	● using the internet to locate and retrieve information ● selecting, collating and editing information on screen ● preparing to deliver a short talk to peers	R2, R3, R7, Wr3	Year 7: R1, R2, R5, Wr1 Year 8: R1, R2, R4, Wr1 Year 9: R1, R2, R4, Wr1
Lesson 3+ ● Chapters 1–5	● identifying key character traits of a main character ● analysing the author's presentation of character ● formulating a personal view of a character in writing	R3, R6, Wr3	Year 7: S&L1, S&L5, R12, R16, Wr18, Wr19 Year 8: S&L1, S&L7, R4, R5, Wr16, Wr17 Year 9: S&L2, S&L5, R5, R11, Wr9, Wr17
Week of study: 2 Reading through the novel: Chapters 8–13			
Lesson 4 ● Chapters 6 and 9	● exchanging opinions in talk, using reasoned arguments ● achieving a balanced view of a complex character ● writing a discursive essay reviewing both sides of a question	R1, R2, Wr3, Wr4	Year 7: S&L1, S&L5, R6, R12, Wr2, Wr19 Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R3, R5, Wr3, Wr16 Year 9: S&L5, S&L7, R6, R11, Wr1, Wr6
Lesson 5+ ● Chapter 10	● analysing the descriptive qualities of two passages ● examining the author's use of paragraph forms and sentence structures ● writing to describe in an empathetic/recreative way	R4, R5, Wr1, Wr5	Year 7: S&L5, R8, R12, Wr5, Wr6 Year 8: S&L5, R4, R7, Wr5, Wr6 Year 9: S&L2, R12, Wr5, Wr6
Lesson 6 ● Chapter 11	● analysing the style and language of a music review ● distinguishing fact from opinion in a media text and responding to emotive language ● writing a review of a music album for a teenage audience	R3, R6, Wr2, Wr3	Year 7: S&L1, S&L5, R7, R10, Wr18, Wr19 Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R6, R8, Wr13, Wr18 Year 9: S&L1, S&L5, R4, R8, Wr7, Wr11

+ Denotes suggested written homework where this is integral to the learning achieved in the lesson.
Other homework / follow-on options are given in the short-term lesson plans to maximise teacher choice.

Medium-term study plan for *Gangsta Rap* by Benjamin Zephaniah

Coverage	Objectives and lesson outcomes	Assessment Foci	Framework Objectives
Week of study: 3	Reading through the novel: Chapters 14–20		
Lesson 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 7–13 ● reviewing the development of a character over time ● analysing the style and language of an assessment report ● writing in role a formal report for an adult audience 	R3, R5, Wr2, Wr5	Year 7: S&L5, S&L12, R7, R13, Wr10, Wr12 Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R8, R10, Wr10, Wr17 Year 9: S&L1, S&L7, R6, R11, Wr9, Wr15
Lesson 8+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 16 + earlier parts of the book ● locating information in a text by skimming and back tracking ● expressing opinions through participating in role play ● writing in role a letter to a newspaper 	R2, R5, W4, W7	Year 7: S&L11, S&L17, R7, R10, Wr15, Wr16 Year 8: S&L12, S&L14, R4, R5, Wr7, Wr13 Year 9: S&L11, S&L12, R3, Wr13, Wr17
Lesson 9+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 17 and 18 ● making diagrammatic notes for a pre-determined purpose ● using the PEE method of character analysis ● writing an appreciation of a character in the form of a newspaper obituary 	R2, R6, W2, W7	Year 7: S&L1, S&L12, R12, Wr2, Wr10 Year 8: S&L7, S&L10, R3, R4, Wr1, Wr16 Year 9: S&L2, S&L5, R3, R6, Wr9, Wr16
Week of study: 4	Reading through the novel: Chapters 21–26		
Lesson 10+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 18 and local newspaper reports ● examining the conventions of journalistic writing ● making diagrammatic notes for planning ● writing a front-page newspaper story 	R4, R7, Wr1, Wr3, Wr6	Year 7: S&L1, R4, R8, Wr1, Wr10, Wr11 Year 8: S&L7, R3, R6, Wr1, Wr2, Wr7 Year 9: S&L6, R2, R3, Wr4, Wr9, Wr12
Lesson 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 19–21 ● analysing the content and style of a typical rap ● collecting information by skimming and back tracking through the text ● writing and performing a rap 	R5, R7, Wr1, Wr7	Year 7: S&L16, S&L19, R14, R16, Wr8, Wr9 Year 8: S&L6, S&L16, R5, R16, Wr6, Wr9 Year 9: S&L11, R6, Wr6, Wr8
Lesson 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 25 and 26 ● reading inferentially ● empathising with a character through role play ● writing in role to inform, explain and persuade 	R3, R6, Wr3, Wr7	Year 7: S&L15, S&L16, R8, R10, Wr15, Wr16 Year 8: S&L14, S&L16, R6, R7, Wr2, Wr13 Year 9: S&L11, S&L12, R1, R2, Wr1, Wr13

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 Other homework/follow-on options are given in the short-term lesson plans to maximise teacher choice.

Medium-term study plan for *Gangsta Rap* by Benjamin Zephaniah

	Coverage	Objectives and lesson outcomes	Assessment Foci	Framework Objectives
Week of study: 5				
Lesson 13+	● Whole novel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reviewing the major events and characters in the novel ● taking part in whole class role play to reflect on the novel's themes ● writing a formal literature essay 	R2, R6, Wr3, Wr4, Wr6	Year 7: S&L12, S&L14, R4, R5, Wr11, Wr19 Year 8: S&L12, S&L14, R5, R10, Wr17, Wr18 Year 9: S&L9, S&L12, R2, R5, Wr16, Wr17
Lesson 14	● Whole novel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reading intensively to deduce and summarise characters' opinions ● expressing personal judgements through argument and debate ● relating the novel's events to the realities of teen culture 	R1, R6, R7, Wr3	Year 7: S&L1, S&L12, R7, R9, Wr15, Wr16 Year 8: S&L5, S&L16, R5, R7, Wr13, Wr14 Year 9: S&L7, S&L9, R4, R6, Wr13, Wr14
Lesson 15	● Whole novel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● analysing a poem's style and structure, in particular metaphor ● relating the poem's themes to those of the book ● writing an account of the thematic links between the book and the poem 	R4, R5, Wr3, Wr4	Year 7: S&L12, S&L13, R7, R8, Wr18, Wr19 Year 8: S&L10, S&L11, R5, R16, Wr17, Wr18 Year 9: S&L2, S&L5, R6, R16, Wr16, Wr17

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