**Writing Workshop: The Short Story**

**Read the story and answer the questions**

When he returned home, the house was unusually quiet. Bill was surprised when he walked into the sitting room to find his parents waiting in silence. His mother was standing by the window, and his father was sitting on the sofa holding a letter. They both looked nervous, but everyone in the family seemed to be nervous at the moment. They were expecting Bill’s exam results any time.

‘A letter arrived for you today,’ said Bill’s father, holding it out. ‘Here.’

‘Thank you,’ Bill replied. He took the letter quickly and tore it open. His mother held her breath.

‘What a pity,’ said Bill, looking at the letter. Bill’s mother gasped and his father ran over to comfort her. Bill was shocked by his parents’ reaction.

‘But I’ve passed!,’ he exclaimed. ‘Seven grade A’s.’ ‘What a pity I only got a ‘B’ in Chemistry.’

His parents looked amazed. Bill quickly hid the letter – an invitation to a party. If his parents found out his real results, which had arrived yesterday, they would never let him go to the party.

(179 words)

1. What does the reader think the letter is going to be about?
2. Find at least two parts of the story that make the reader think the letter will contain Bill’s exam results.
3. At first, what does the reader think the letter actually said?
4. Find two reactions that give the reader the idea that the results were bad.
5. Read the following sample opening lines. Discuss in pairs what you would include in each of these stories.
* *As I approached the house, my heart began to beat faster.*
* *I realized very quickly that I had made a bad mistake.*
* *I sat up in bed, looked around and found myself in a large white room with no windows.*

**Punctuation: Match the following punctuation signs with the words below.**

. ? ‘’ , - ! ’

comma, question mark, apostrophe, exclamation mark, inverted commas, full stop, dash

Look back at the story you have just read:

1) Which punctuation marks do we use to show that someone is speaking?

2) What happens to the paragraphs every time there is a new speaker?

3) At the end of a piece of direct speech, where does the punctuation mark go – before or after the comma?

**Punctuate the following text:**

I was sitting alone at home one evening when the phone rang hello I said Jack here hello said the voice at the other end of the phone it was a womans voice a voice that sounded familiar in a way although I could not work out who it was then suddenly I realized who I was talking to Susan I said is that really you yes she said its me Im very impressed that you can remember after all its been a long time yes I know I replied its been more than ten years

**Writing Skills: Paragraph Writing**

**Read the following sentences and then develop them into small paragraphs using your own ideas. Think carefully about which tenses you should use.**

Example:

1. As soon as I saw the snake, I froze.

It was an enormous stripy one, lying on my bed. It was horrible. I was so terrified I didn’t know what to do. With my heart beating madly, I decided to go and get some help.

2. As we sat down to have our picnic by the lake, I looked around.

3. I’ll never forget the time when I met Adrianne.

4. I had been walking through the forest for several hours, when suddenly I heard something behind me.