

## Activity 7: Grammar & Sentence Work

### a. Pattern of three:

Fisher uses the **pattern of three** actions in a sentence to advance the action and inject a sense of pace into her writing. This helps to balance description, action and dialogue. e.g.

- The keeper **hung** his lantern on a nail, **took** the key from a dirty string around his neck, and **fitted** it into the keyhole.
- With both hands he **turned** the key, then **tugged** out the red chain in a shower of rust and **pushed** the door.
- He **stepped** well back, **handed** the stranger the lantern, and **jerked** his head.

★ Can you come up with three of your own sentences using this skill?

### b. Semicolon for independent clauses

A semicolon can be used between independent clauses that are closely related in theme. In the following sentences, Catherine Fisher chooses to use semicolons in both of these sentences rather than using a joining word (conjunction) like *because*.

- The keeper grinned; he knew fear when he heard it.
- He had no tongue to speak with; she'd made sure he kept her secrets.

★ In your opinion, why has she made this choice and what impact does it have on you as the reader?

★ Can you write two or three sentences of your own that illustrate the power of the semicolon over the use of a conjunction?

### c. Adverbs – roving reporters

In the sentences below, the adverb 'slowly' is used to describe how the man enters the room. Adverbs are like roving reporters – they can be moved around the sentence, e.g.

- a. The man went in, slowly
- b. Slowly, the man went in.
- c. The man went slowly in.
- d. The man slowly went in.



By changing the position of the adverb, we can often either alter the meaning or add emphasis to a sentence. In this instance, by placing the *slowly* at the end, we infer that the character has a heightened awareness of the situation they are in and therefore deliberately enters with caution.

★ Try playing around with the adverb position in the following sentences. Consider how it alters the meaning and where the emphasis is best placed.

1. Cautiously, Samantha crept towards the door that stood before her.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Sadly, the boy stared out of the window.

★ Now try this out with a sentence of your own.