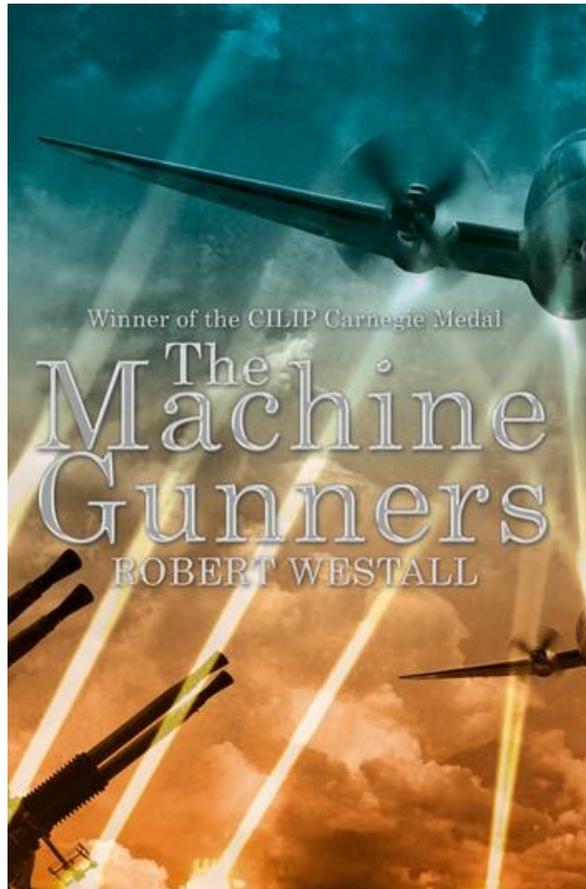
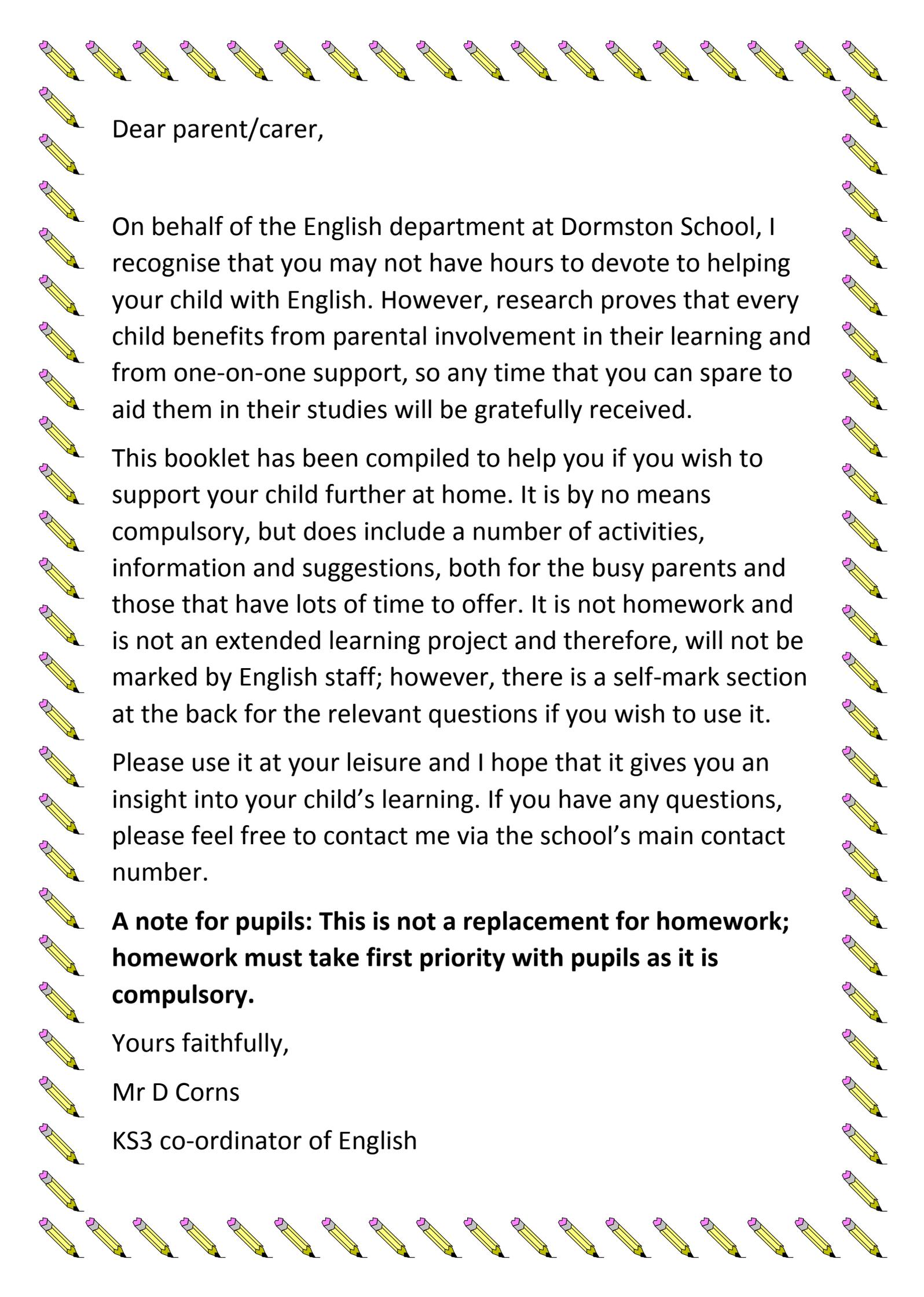


How to help your child in English

'The Machine Gunners' – Robert Westall



Year 7 Edition



Dear parent/carer,

On behalf of the English department at Dormston School, I recognise that you may not have hours to devote to helping your child with English. However, research proves that every child benefits from parental involvement in their learning and from one-on-one support, so any time that you can spare to aid them in their studies will be gratefully received.

This booklet has been compiled to help you if you wish to support your child further at home. It is by no means compulsory, but does include a number of activities, information and suggestions, both for the busy parents and those that have lots of time to offer. It is not homework and is not an extended learning project and therefore, will not be marked by English staff; however, there is a self-mark section at the back for the relevant questions if you wish to use it.

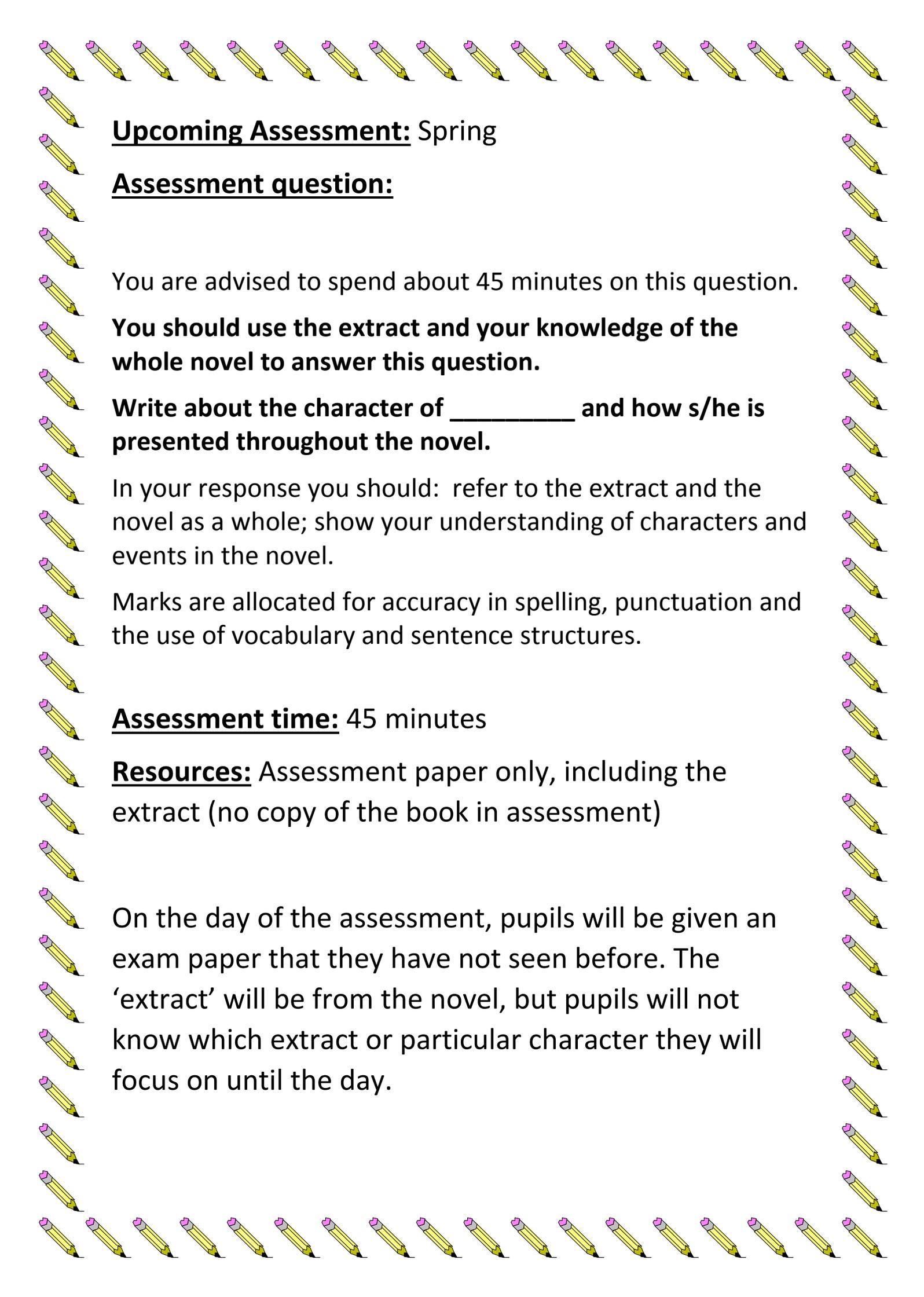
Please use it at your leisure and I hope that it gives you an insight into your child's learning. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via the school's main contact number.

A note for pupils: This is not a replacement for homework; homework must take first priority with pupils as it is compulsory.

Yours faithfully,

Mr D Corns

KS3 co-ordinator of English



Upcoming Assessment: Spring

Assessment question:

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Write about the character of _____ and how s/he is presented throughout the novel.

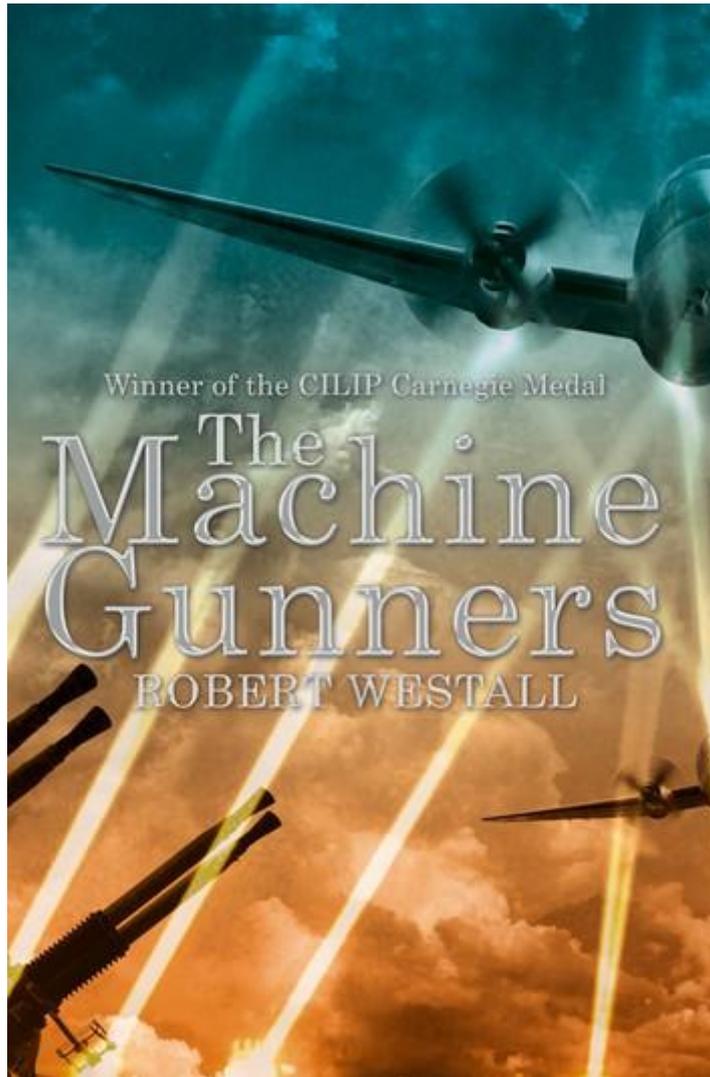
In your response you should: refer to the extract and the novel as a whole; show your understanding of characters and events in the novel.

Marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Assessment time: 45 minutes

Resources: Assessment paper only, including the extract (no copy of the book in assessment)

On the day of the assessment, pupils will be given an exam paper that they have not seen before. The 'extract' will be from the novel, but pupils will not know which extract or particular character they will focus on until the day.

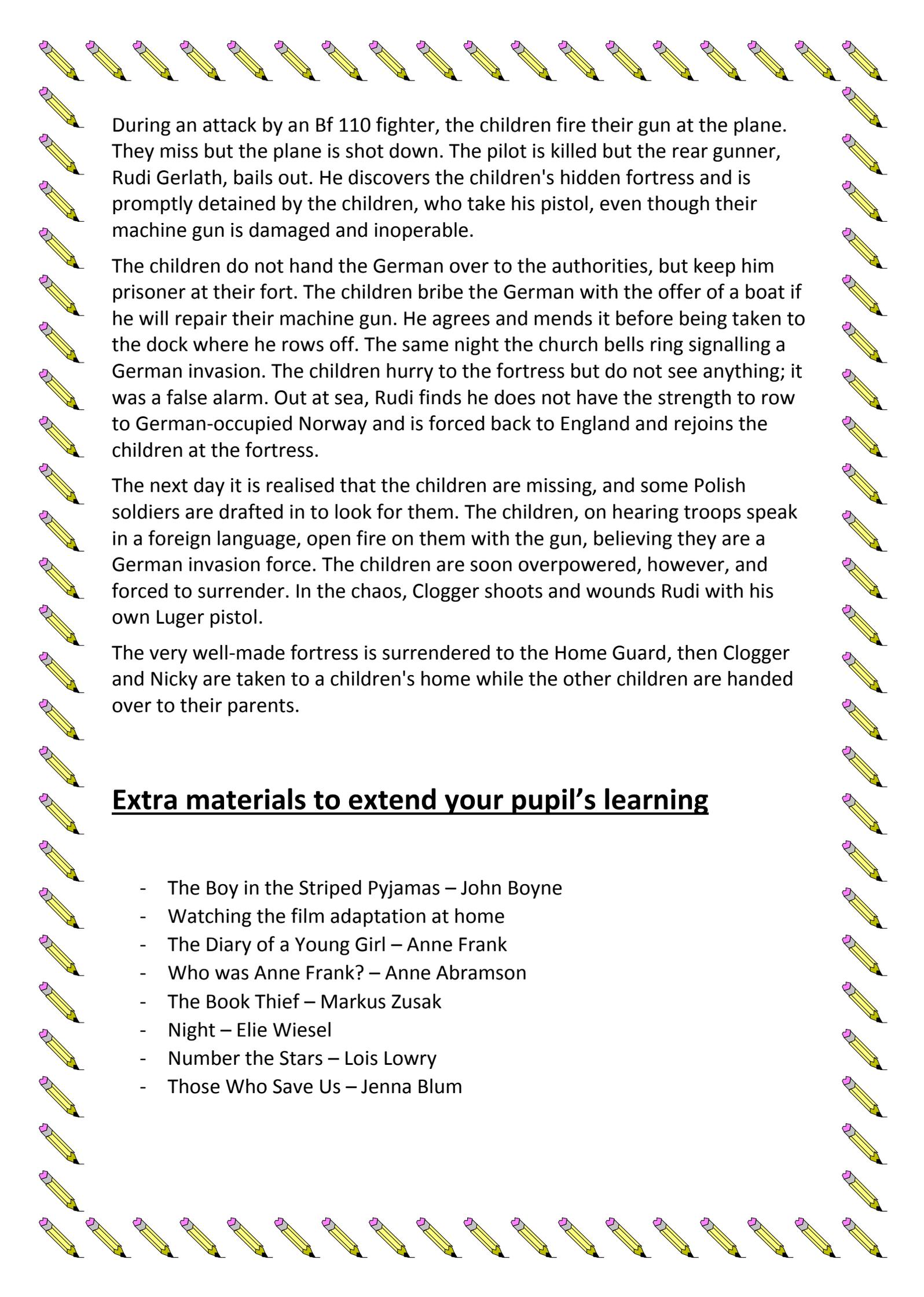


The Machine Gunners by Robert Westall

This synopsis does not include the end of the book – this story has a powerful ending which we do not wish pupils to discover until they have read it. Please respect our wishes and withhold the ending as far as possible.

Set during the Second World War the story follows six children living in the fictional town of Garmouth which regularly suffers bombing raids by the German Luftwaffe. When Chas McGill finds a crashed German Heinkel 111 bomber he removes a fully operational machine gun and over 2000 rounds of ammunition. With the help of his friends, Cem, Clogger, Carrot Juice, Audrey and Nicky they set up their own den called "Fortress Caporetto", named after a World War I battle in which Chas's grandfather fought.

Later a bomb lands on Nicky's house and he is presumed dead but actually survives and hides in the fortress, where he is found by the gang. After this, only his friends know he is alive and Clogger leaves his home and joins him.



During an attack by an Bf 110 fighter, the children fire their gun at the plane. They miss but the plane is shot down. The pilot is killed but the rear gunner, Rudi Gerlath, bails out. He discovers the children's hidden fortress and is promptly detained by the children, who take his pistol, even though their machine gun is damaged and inoperable.

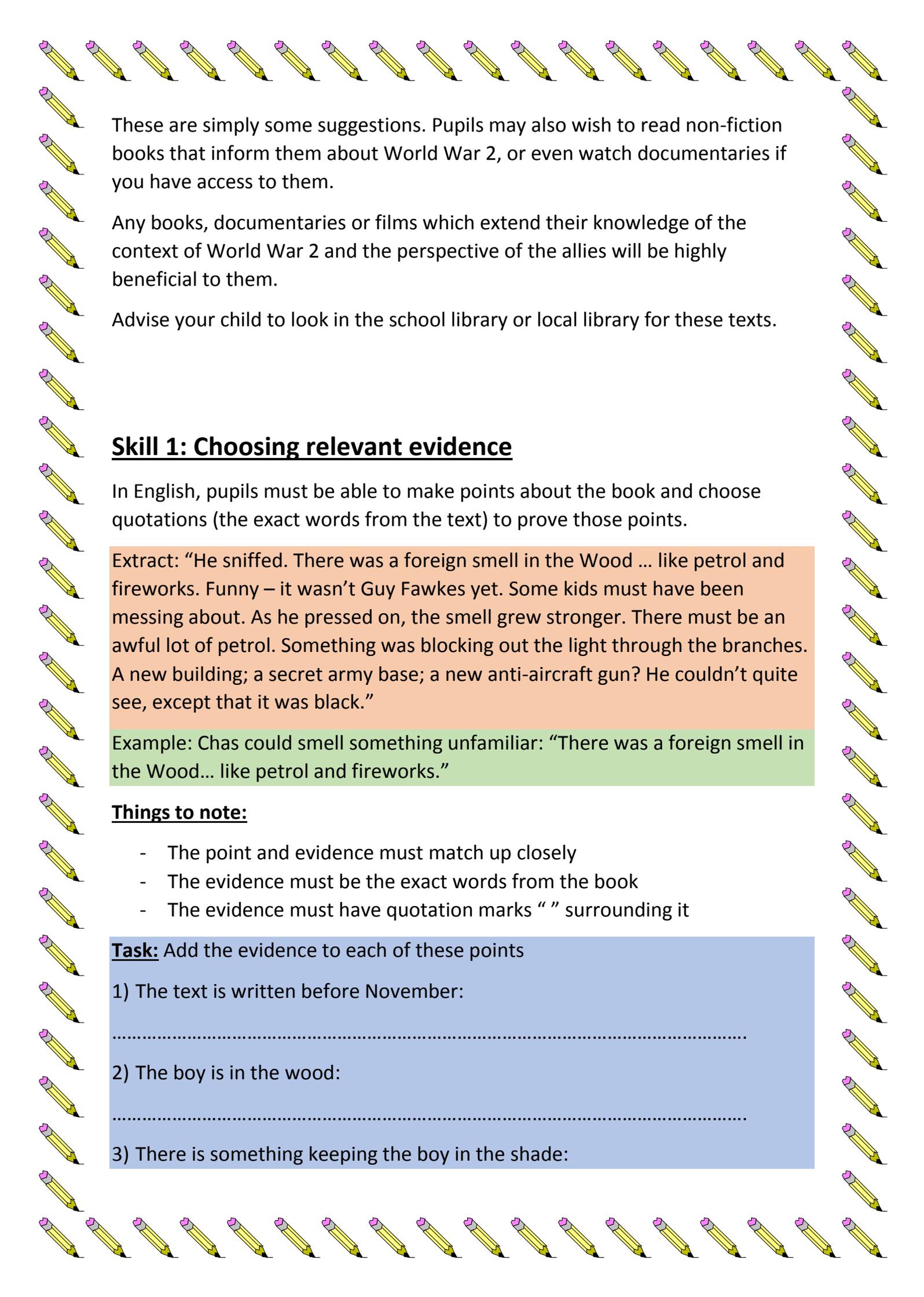
The children do not hand the German over to the authorities, but keep him prisoner at their fort. The children bribe the German with the offer of a boat if he will repair their machine gun. He agrees and mends it before being taken to the dock where he rows off. The same night the church bells ring signalling a German invasion. The children hurry to the fortress but do not see anything; it was a false alarm. Out at sea, Rudi finds he does not have the strength to row to German-occupied Norway and is forced back to England and rejoins the children at the fortress.

The next day it is realised that the children are missing, and some Polish soldiers are drafted in to look for them. The children, on hearing troops speak in a foreign language, open fire on them with the gun, believing they are a German invasion force. The children are soon overpowered, however, and forced to surrender. In the chaos, Clogger shoots and wounds Rudi with his own Luger pistol.

The very well-made fortress is surrendered to the Home Guard, then Clogger and Nicky are taken to a children's home while the other children are handed over to their parents.

Extra materials to extend your pupil's learning

- The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas – John Boyne
- Watching the film adaptation at home
- The Diary of a Young Girl – Anne Frank
- Who was Anne Frank? – Anne Abramson
- The Book Thief – Markus Zusak
- Night – Elie Wiesel
- Number the Stars – Lois Lowry
- Those Who Save Us – Jenna Blum



These are simply some suggestions. Pupils may also wish to read non-fiction books that inform them about World War 2, or even watch documentaries if you have access to them.

Any books, documentaries or films which extend their knowledge of the context of World War 2 and the perspective of the allies will be highly beneficial to them.

Advise your child to look in the school library or local library for these texts.

Skill 1: Choosing relevant evidence

In English, pupils must be able to make points about the book and choose quotations (the exact words from the text) to prove those points.

Extract: “He sniffed. There was a foreign smell in the Wood ... like petrol and fireworks. Funny – it wasn’t Guy Fawkes yet. Some kids must have been messing about. As he pressed on, the smell grew stronger. There must be an awful lot of petrol. Something was blocking out the light through the branches. A new building; a secret army base; a new anti-aircraft gun? He couldn’t quite see, except that it was black.”

Example: Chas could smell something unfamiliar: “There was a foreign smell in the Wood... like petrol and fireworks.”

Things to note:

- The point and evidence must match up closely
- The evidence must be the exact words from the book
- The evidence must have quotation marks “ ” surrounding it

Task: Add the evidence to each of these points

1) The text is written before November:

.....

2) The boy is in the wood:

.....

3) There is something keeping the boy in the shade:

.....

.....

Skill 2: Inference and Deduction

Inferring and deducing is an important skill in English; it basically means that pupils must look for clues in the texts and from those clues, come up with interpretations. The best inferences or deductions are those that read between the lines, rather than state the obvious.



Look at the extract on the following page.

An obvious, simple inference = Chas is uncertain what to do
A much better inference = Chas feels torn in his attitude towards his new discovery, he is unsure whether to be inquisitive or be fearful.

Task: Answer the questions below

1) What can Chas see at the opening of the extract?

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2) Why does Chas feel "proud"?

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3) Why does Chas not want to report what he has found?

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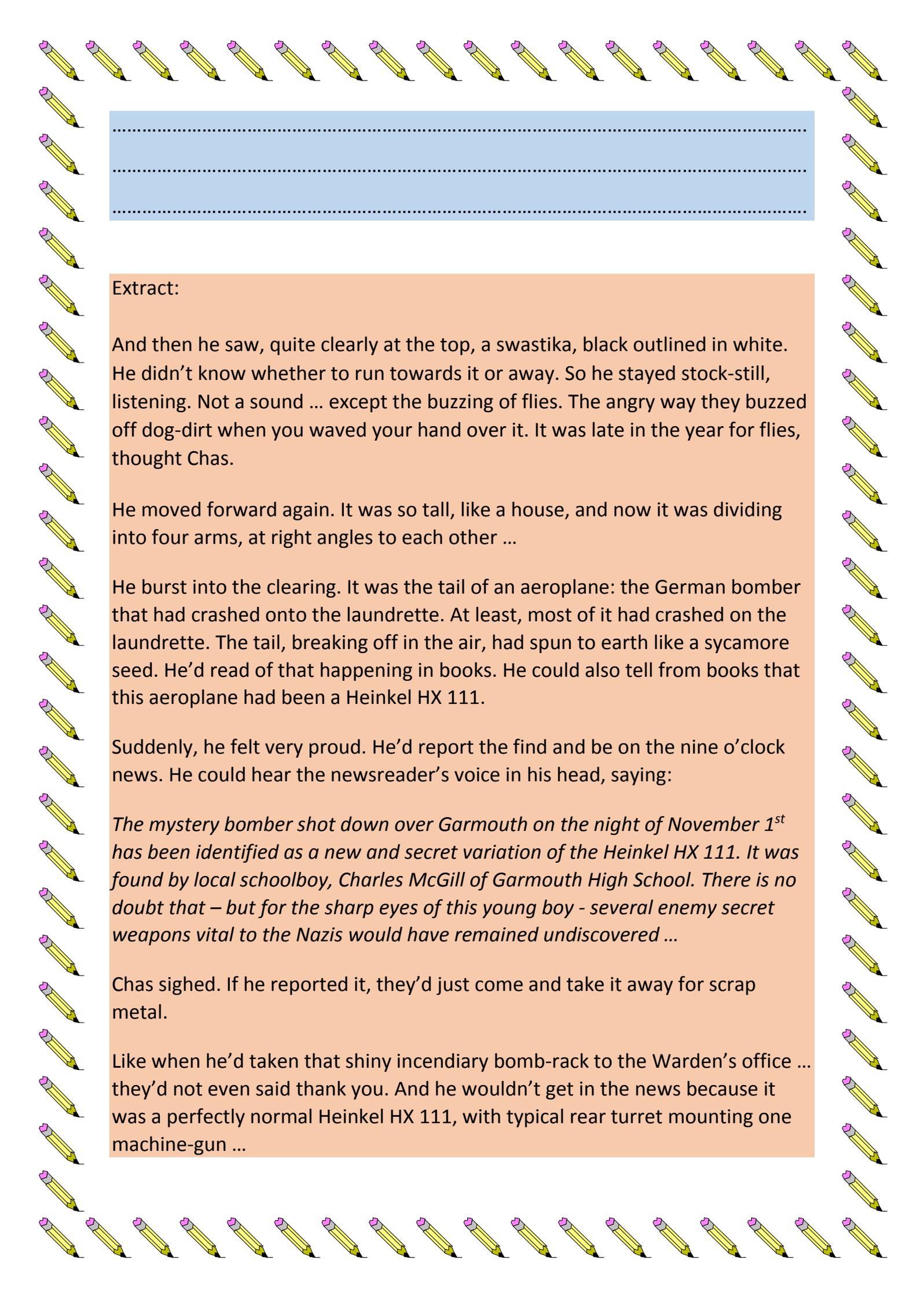
4) Why was Chas so surprised at the end of the extract?

.....

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5) What can you infer about Chas here?

.....



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Extract:

And then he saw, quite clearly at the top, a swastika, black outlined in white. He didn't know whether to run towards it or away. So he stayed stock-still, listening. Not a sound ... except the buzzing of flies. The angry way they buzzed off dog-dirt when you waved your hand over it. It was late in the year for flies, thought Chas.

He moved forward again. It was so tall, like a house, and now it was dividing into four arms, at right angles to each other ...

He burst into the clearing. It was the tail of an aeroplane: the German bomber that had crashed onto the laundrette. At least, most of it had crashed on the laundrette. The tail, breaking off in the air, had spun to earth like a sycamore seed. He'd read of that happening in books. He could also tell from books that this aeroplane had been a Heinkel HX 111.

Suddenly, he felt very proud. He'd report the find and be on the nine o'clock news. He could hear the newsreader's voice in his head, saying:

The mystery bomber shot down over Garmouth on the night of November 1st has been identified as a new and secret variation of the Heinkel HX 111. It was found by local schoolboy, Charles McGill of Garmouth High School. There is no doubt that – but for the sharp eyes of this young boy - several enemy secret weapons vital to the Nazis would have remained undiscovered ...

Chas sighed. If he reported it, they'd just come and take it away for scrap metal.

Like when he'd taken that shiny incendiary bomb-rack to the Warden's office ... they'd not even said thank you. And he wouldn't get in the news because it was a perfectly normal Heinkel HX 111, with typical rear turret mounting one machine-gun ...

Chas gulped. The machine gun was still there, hanging from the turret, shiny and black!

EXTENSION: Now read lines 6 to 11.

- (1) Label the image below with descriptions from lines 6 to 11 ONLY.
- (2) Write the details down as quotations, using quotation marks.

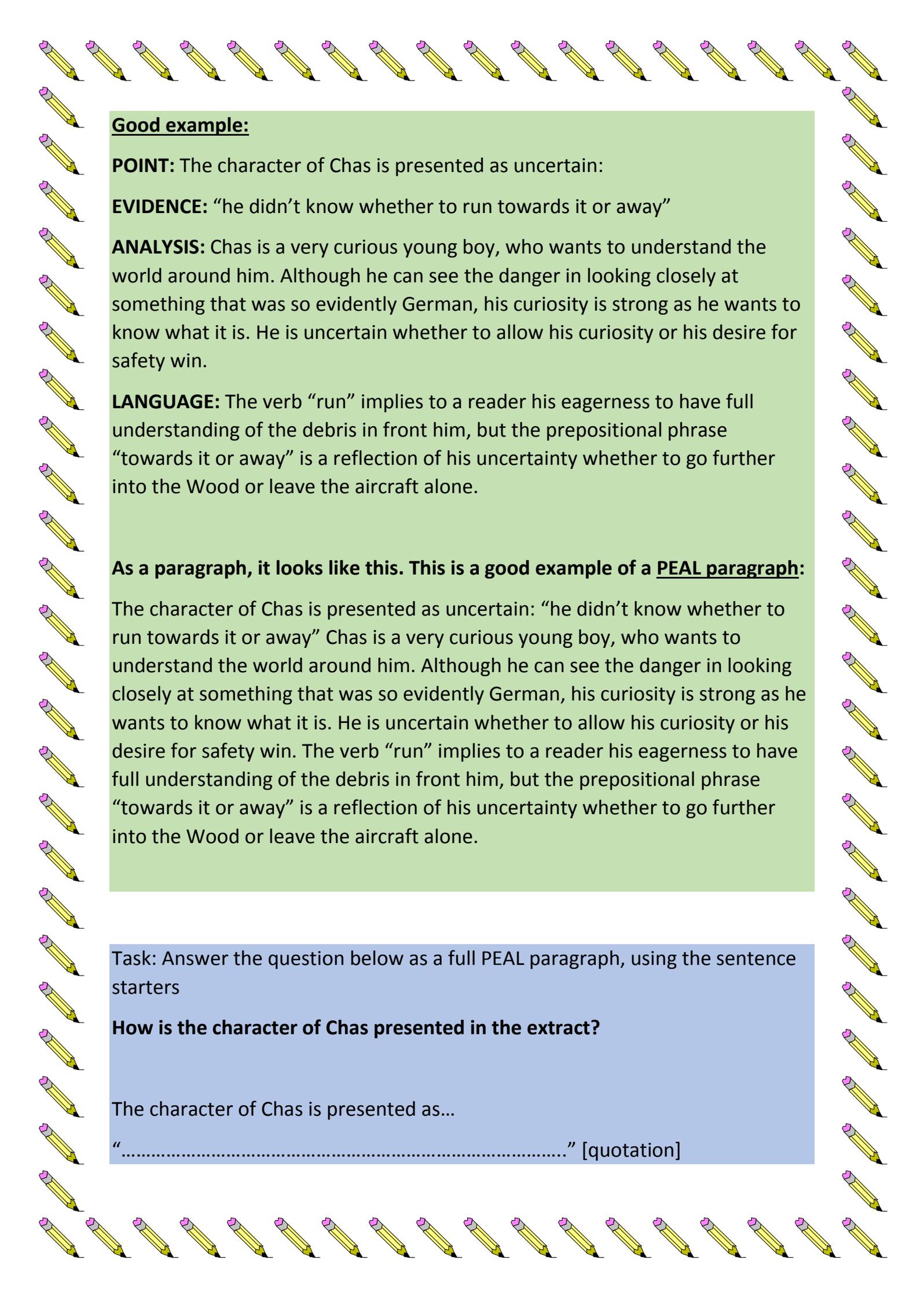


Skill 3: Creating PEAL paragraphs

PEAL is an acronym that stands for 4 important words

Point	How would you describe the character?
Evidence	Your quotation in quotation marks “ ”
Analyse	What the quotation tells you about the character
Language	Particular words that have been used and why Any similes/metaphors/personification/etc

Look at the extract on the previous page. How is the character of Chas presented?



Good example:

POINT: The character of Chas is presented as uncertain:

EVIDENCE: “he didn’t know whether to run towards it or away”

ANALYSIS: Chas is a very curious young boy, who wants to understand the world around him. Although he can see the danger in looking closely at something that was so evidently German, his curiosity is strong as he wants to know what it is. He is uncertain whether to allow his curiosity or his desire for safety win.

LANGUAGE: The verb “run” implies to a reader his eagerness to have full understanding of the debris in front him, but the prepositional phrase “towards it or away” is a reflection of his uncertainty whether to go further into the Wood or leave the aircraft alone.

As a paragraph, it looks like this. This is a good example of a PEAL paragraph:

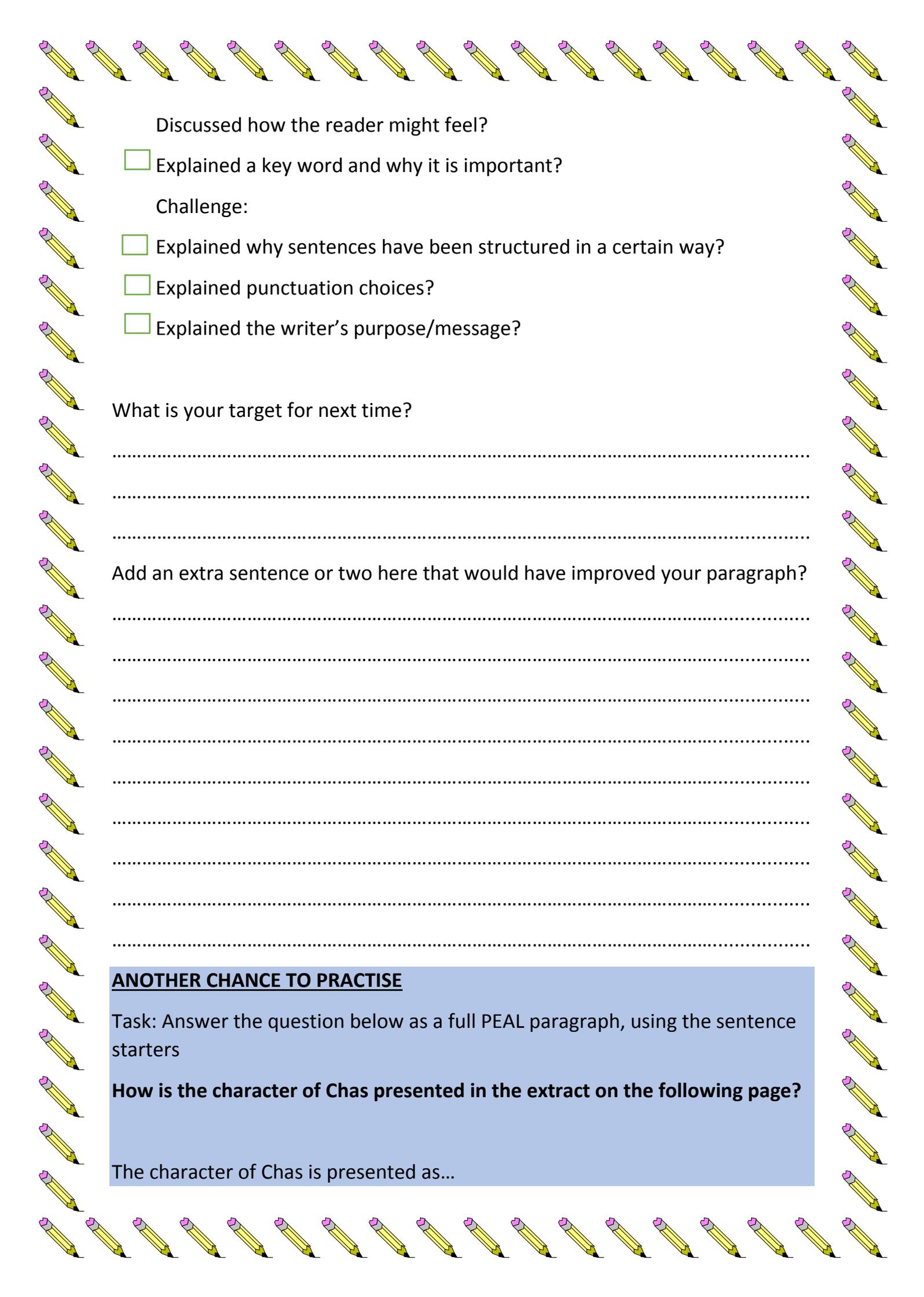
The character of Chas is presented as uncertain: “he didn’t know whether to run towards it or away” Chas is a very curious young boy, who wants to understand the world around him. Although he can see the danger in looking closely at something that was so evidently German, his curiosity is strong as he wants to know what it is. He is uncertain whether to allow his curiosity or his desire for safety win. The verb “run” implies to a reader his eagerness to have full understanding of the debris in front him, but the prepositional phrase “towards it or away” is a reflection of his uncertainty whether to go further into the Wood or leave the aircraft alone.

Task: Answer the question below as a full PEAL paragraph, using the sentence starters

How is the character of Chas presented in the extract?

The character of Chas is presented as...

“.....” [quotation]



Discussed how the reader might feel?

Explained a key word and why it is important?

Challenge:

Explained why sentences have been structured in a certain way?

Explained punctuation choices?

Explained the writer's purpose/message?

What is your target for next time?

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Add an extra sentence or two here that would have improved your paragraph?

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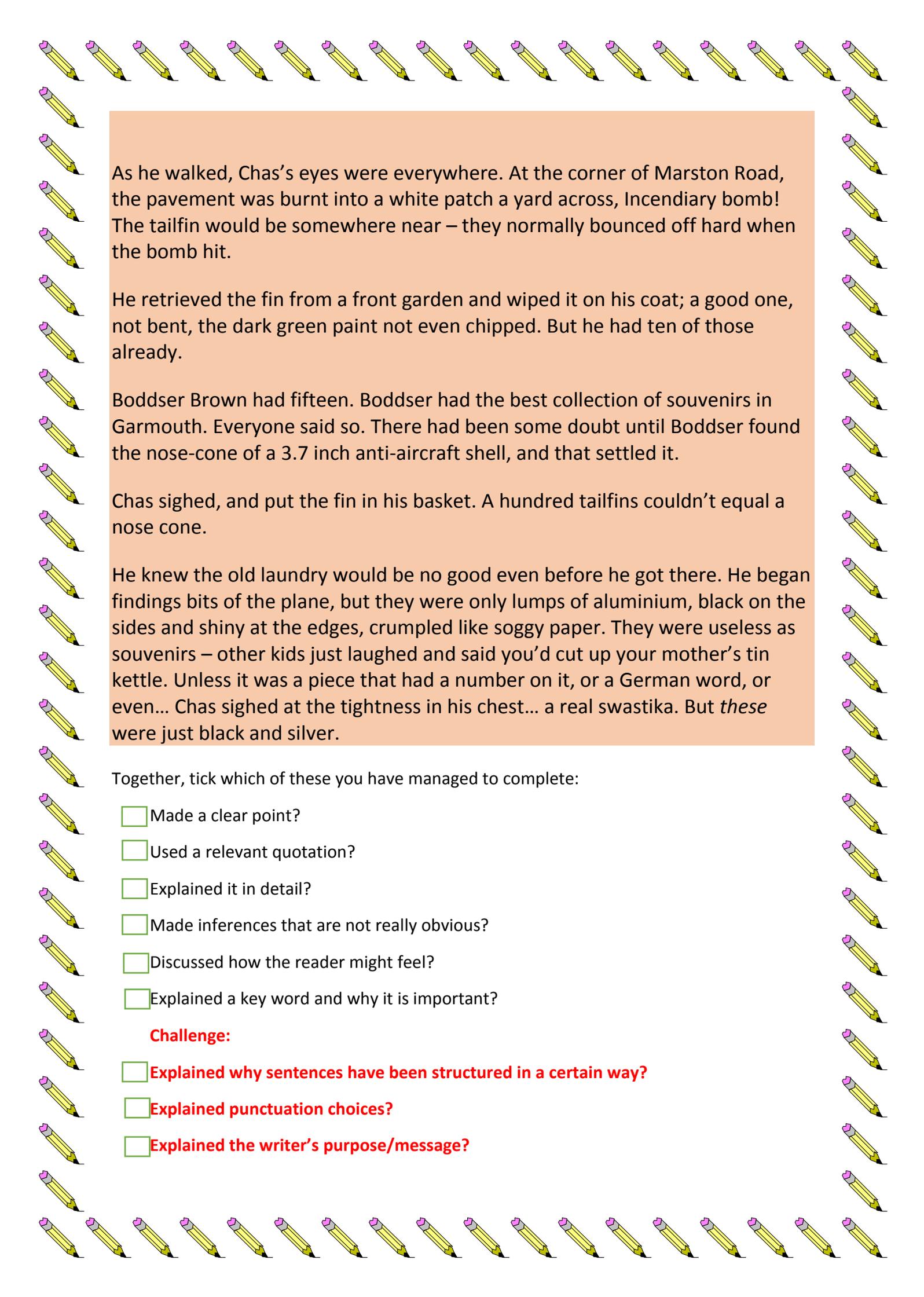
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ANOTHER CHANCE TO PRACTISE

Task: Answer the question below as a full PEAL paragraph, using the sentence starters

How is the character of Chas presented in the extract on the following page?

The character of Chas is presented as...



As he walked, Chas's eyes were everywhere. At the corner of Marston Road, the pavement was burnt into a white patch a yard across, incendiary bomb! The tailfin would be somewhere near – they normally bounced off hard when the bomb hit.

He retrieved the fin from a front garden and wiped it on his coat; a good one, not bent, the dark green paint not even chipped. But he had ten of those already.

Boddser Brown had fifteen. Boddser had the best collection of souvenirs in Garmouth. Everyone said so. There had been some doubt until Boddser found the nose-cone of a 3.7 inch anti-aircraft shell, and that settled it.

Chas sighed, and put the fin in his basket. A hundred tailfins couldn't equal a nose cone.

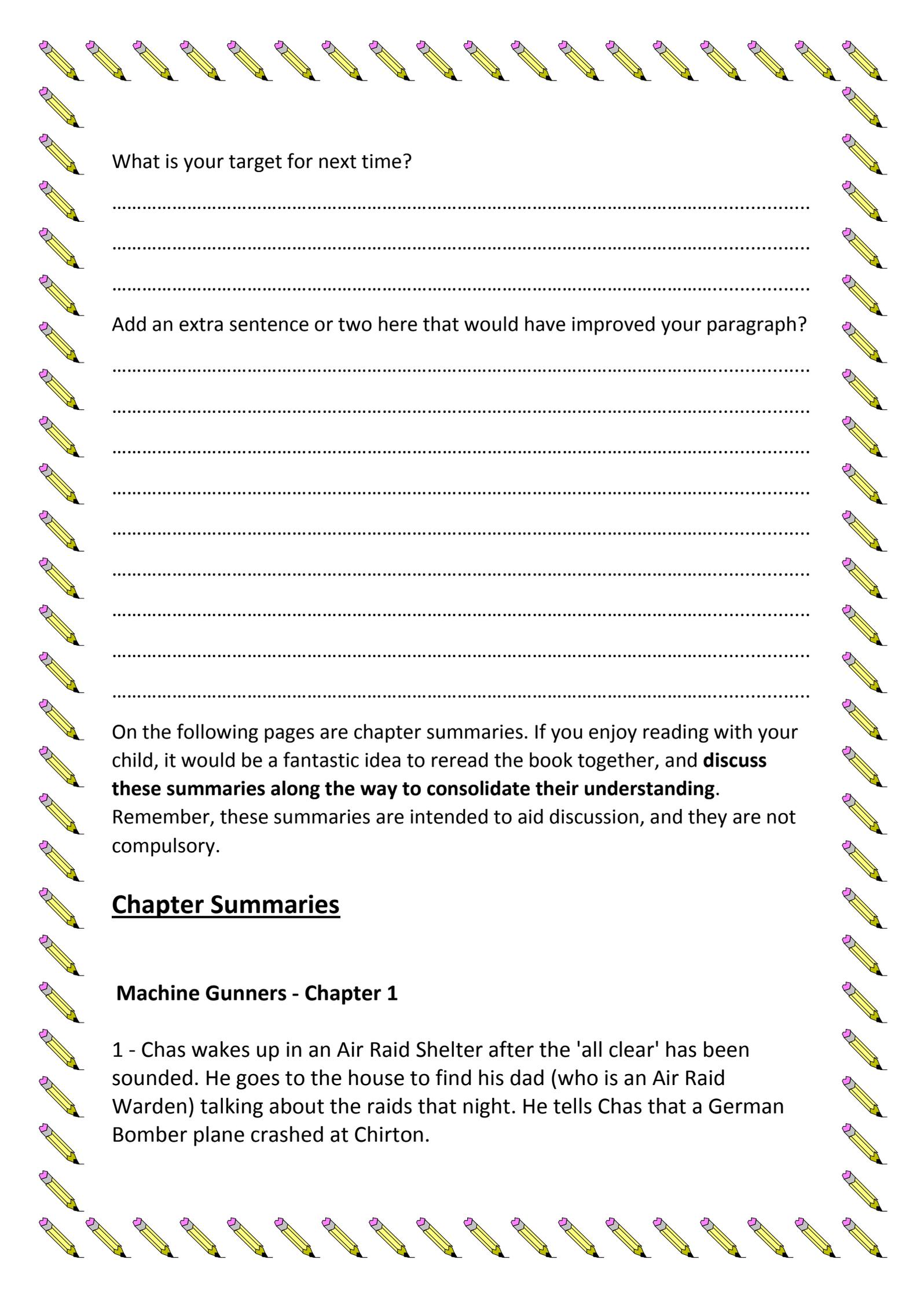
He knew the old laundry would be no good even before he got there. He began finding bits of the plane, but they were only lumps of aluminium, black on the sides and shiny at the edges, crumpled like soggy paper. They were useless as souvenirs – other kids just laughed and said you'd cut up your mother's tin kettle. Unless it was a piece that had a number on it, or a German word, or even... Chas sighed at the tightness in his chest... a real swastika. But *these* were just black and silver.

Together, tick which of these you have managed to complete:

- Made a clear point?
- Used a relevant quotation?
- Explained it in detail?
- Made inferences that are not really obvious?
- Discussed how the reader might feel?
- Explained a key word and why it is important?

Challenge:

- Explained why sentences have been structured in a certain way?
- Explained punctuation choices?
- Explained the writer's purpose/message?



What is your target for next time?

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Add an extra sentence or two here that would have improved your paragraph?

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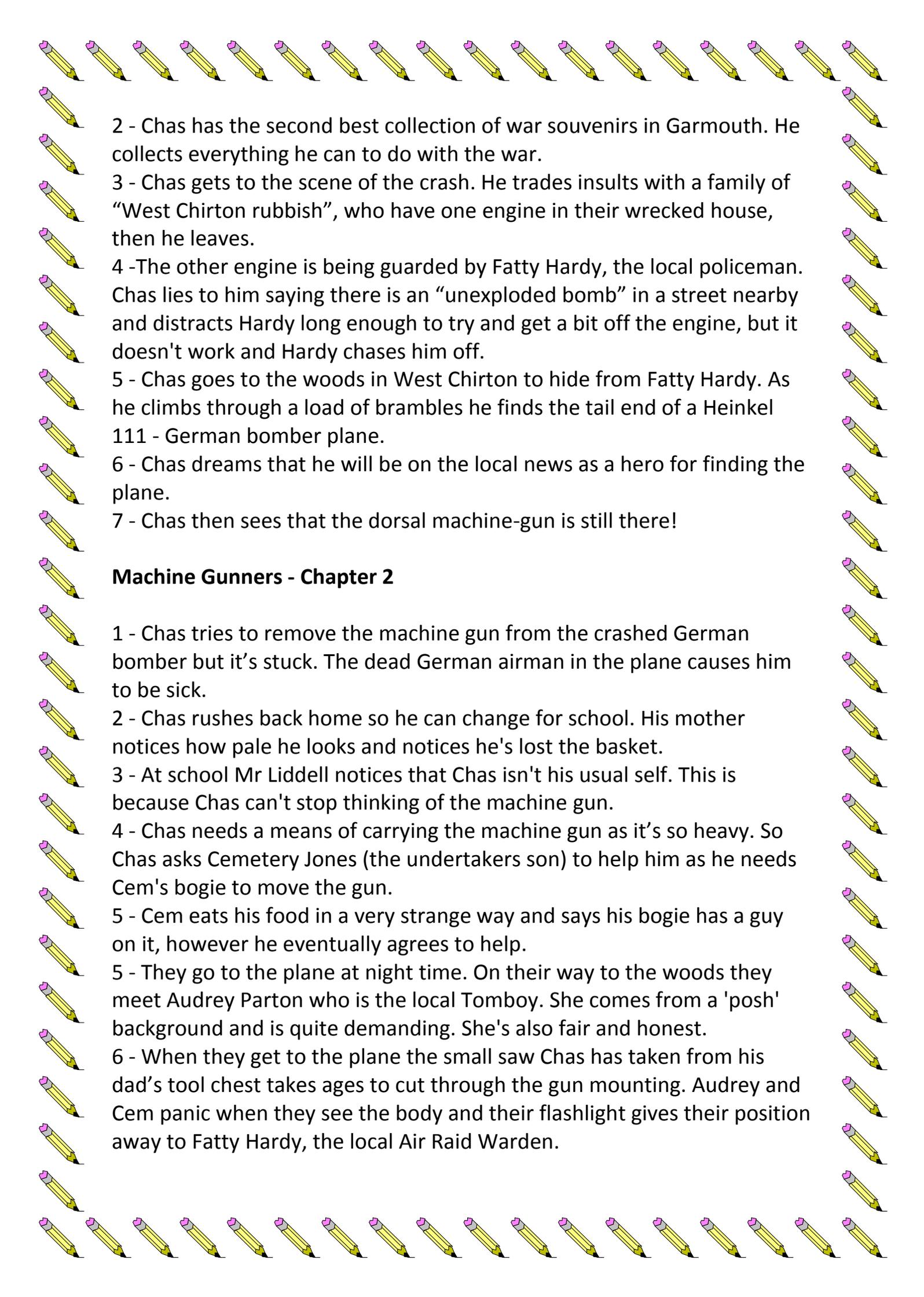
On the following pages are chapter summaries. If you enjoy reading with your child, it would be a fantastic idea to reread the book together, and **discuss these summaries along the way to consolidate their understanding.**

Remember, these summaries are intended to aid discussion, and they are not compulsory.

Chapter Summaries

Machine Gunners - Chapter 1

1 - Chas wakes up in an Air Raid Shelter after the 'all clear' has been sounded. He goes to the house to find his dad (who is an Air Raid Warden) talking about the raids that night. He tells Chas that a German Bomber plane crashed at Chirton.



2 - Chas has the second best collection of war souvenirs in Garmouth. He collects everything he can to do with the war.

3 - Chas gets to the scene of the crash. He trades insults with a family of “West Chirton rubbish”, who have one engine in their wrecked house, then he leaves.

4 -The other engine is being guarded by Fatty Hardy, the local policeman. Chas lies to him saying there is an “unexploded bomb” in a street nearby and distracts Hardy long enough to try and get a bit off the engine, but it doesn't work and Hardy chases him off.

5 - Chas goes to the woods in West Chirton to hide from Fatty Hardy. As he climbs through a load of brambles he finds the tail end of a Heinkel 111 - German bomber plane.

6 - Chas dreams that he will be on the local news as a hero for finding the plane.

7 - Chas then sees that the dorsal machine-gun is still there!

Machine Gunners - Chapter 2

1 - Chas tries to remove the machine gun from the crashed German bomber but it's stuck. The dead German airman in the plane causes him to be sick.

2 - Chas rushes back home so he can change for school. His mother notices how pale he looks and notices he's lost the basket.

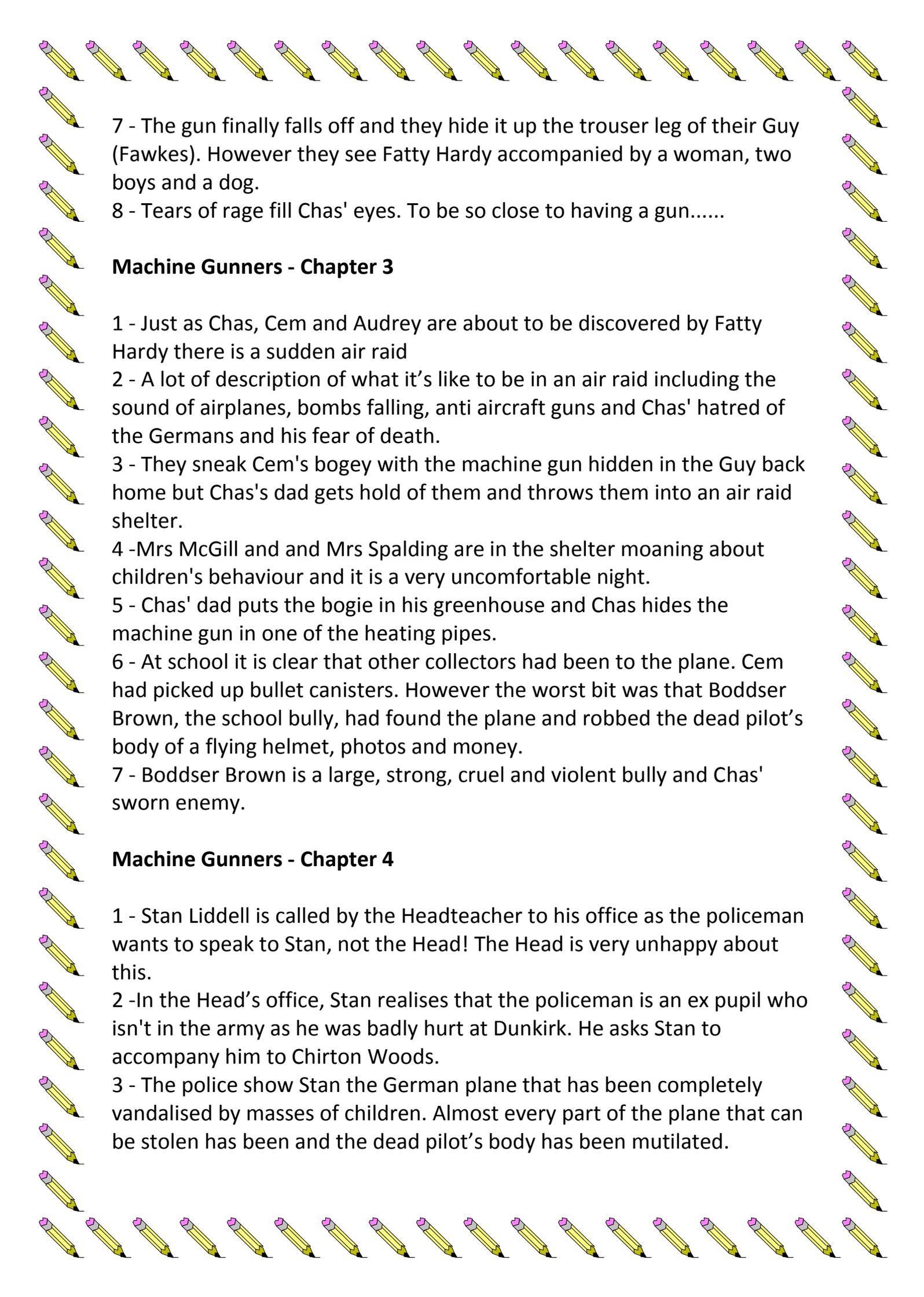
3 - At school Mr Liddell notices that Chas isn't his usual self. This is because Chas can't stop thinking of the machine gun.

4 - Chas needs a means of carrying the machine gun as it's so heavy. So Chas asks Cemetery Jones (the undertakers son) to help him as he needs Cem's bogie to move the gun.

5 - Cem eats his food in a very strange way and says his bogie has a guy on it, however he eventually agrees to help.

5 - They go to the plane at night time. On their way to the woods they meet Audrey Parton who is the local Tomboy. She comes from a 'posh' background and is quite demanding. She's also fair and honest.

6 - When they get to the plane the small saw Chas has taken from his dad's tool chest takes ages to cut through the gun mounting. Audrey and Cem panic when they see the body and their flashlight gives their position away to Fatty Hardy, the local Air Raid Warden.



7 - The gun finally falls off and they hide it up the trouser leg of their Guy (Fawkes). However they see Fatty Hardy accompanied by a woman, two boys and a dog.

8 - Tears of rage fill Chas' eyes. To be so close to having a gun.....

Machine Gunners - Chapter 3

1 - Just as Chas, Cem and Audrey are about to be discovered by Fatty Hardy there is a sudden air raid

2 - A lot of description of what it's like to be in an air raid including the sound of airplanes, bombs falling, anti aircraft guns and Chas' hatred of the Germans and his fear of death.

3 - They sneak Cem's bogey with the machine gun hidden in the Guy back home but Chas's dad gets hold of them and throws them into an air raid shelter.

4 -Mrs McGill and Mrs Spalding are in the shelter moaning about children's behaviour and it is a very uncomfortable night.

5 - Chas' dad puts the bogie in his greenhouse and Chas hides the machine gun in one of the heating pipes.

6 - At school it is clear that other collectors had been to the plane. Cem had picked up bullet canisters. However the worst bit was that Boddser Brown, the school bully, had found the plane and robbed the dead pilot's body of a flying helmet, photos and money.

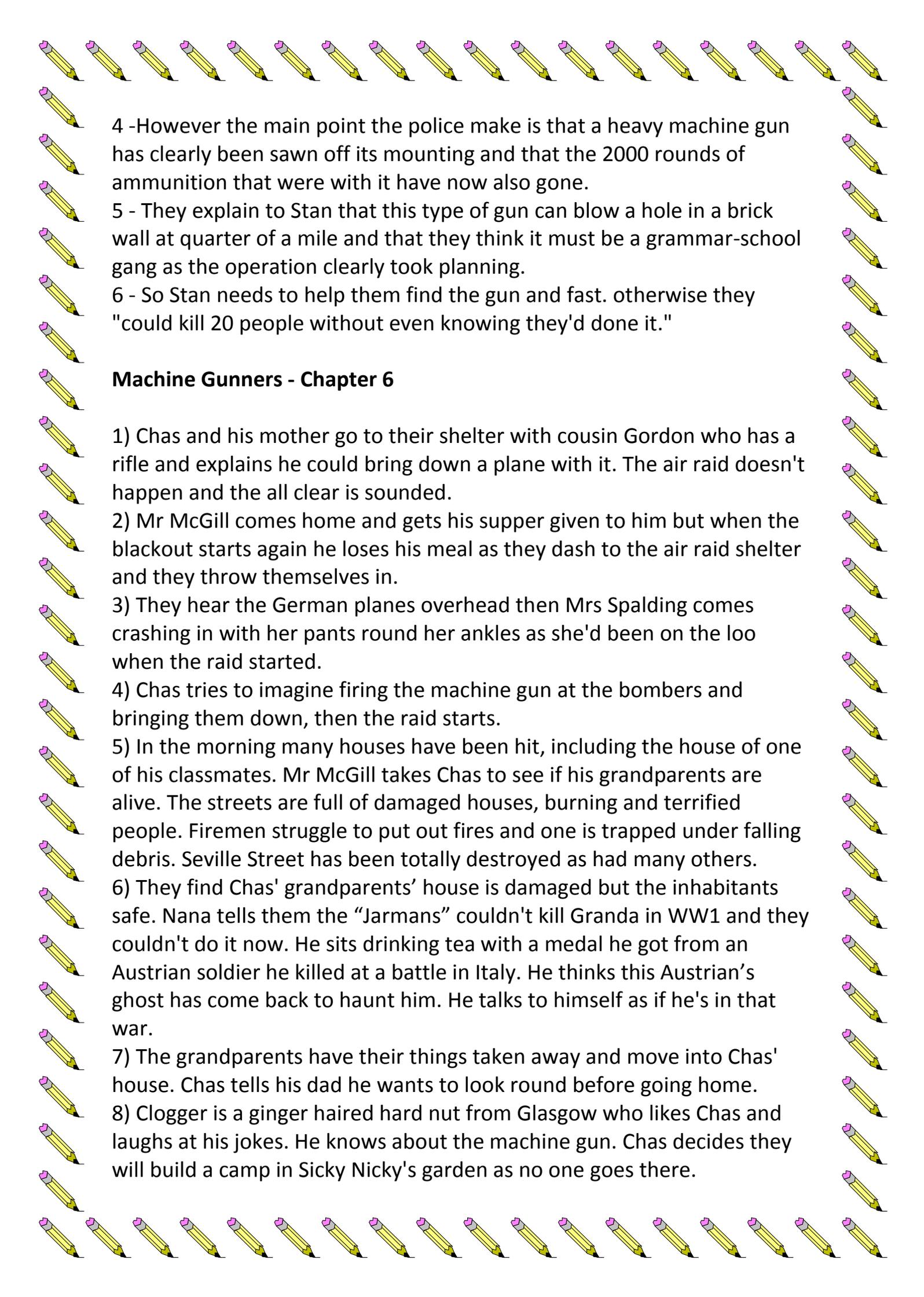
7 - Boddser Brown is a large, strong, cruel and violent bully and Chas' sworn enemy.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 4

1 - Stan Liddell is called by the Headteacher to his office as the policeman wants to speak to Stan, not the Head! The Head is very unhappy about this.

2 -In the Head's office, Stan realises that the policeman is an ex pupil who isn't in the army as he was badly hurt at Dunkirk. He asks Stan to accompany him to Chirton Woods.

3 - The police show Stan the German plane that has been completely vandalised by masses of children. Almost every part of the plane that can be stolen has been and the dead pilot's body has been mutilated.



4 - However the main point the police make is that a heavy machine gun has clearly been sawn off its mounting and that the 2000 rounds of ammunition that were with it have now also gone.

5 - They explain to Stan that this type of gun can blow a hole in a brick wall at quarter of a mile and that they think it must be a grammar-school gang as the operation clearly took planning.

6 - So Stan needs to help them find the gun and fast. otherwise they "could kill 20 people without even knowing they'd done it."

Machine Gunners - Chapter 6

1) Chas and his mother go to their shelter with cousin Gordon who has a rifle and explains he could bring down a plane with it. The air raid doesn't happen and the all clear is sounded.

2) Mr McGill comes home and gets his supper given to him but when the blackout starts again he loses his meal as they dash to the air raid shelter and they throw themselves in.

3) They hear the German planes overhead then Mrs Spalding comes crashing in with her pants round her ankles as she'd been on the loo when the raid started.

4) Chas tries to imagine firing the machine gun at the bombers and bringing them down, then the raid starts.

5) In the morning many houses have been hit, including the house of one of his classmates. Mr McGill takes Chas to see if his grandparents are alive. The streets are full of damaged houses, burning and terrified people. Firemen struggle to put out fires and one is trapped under falling debris. Seville Street has been totally destroyed as had many others.

6) They find Chas' grandparents' house is damaged but the inhabitants safe. Nana tells them the "Jarmans" couldn't kill Granda in WW1 and they couldn't do it now. He sits drinking tea with a medal he got from an Austrian soldier he killed at a battle in Italy. He thinks this Austrian's ghost has come back to haunt him. He talks to himself as if he's in that war.

7) The grandparents have their things taken away and move into Chas' house. Chas tells his dad he wants to look round before going home.

8) Clogger is a ginger haired hard nut from Glasgow who likes Chas and laughs at his jokes. He knows about the machine gun. Chas decides they will build a camp in Sicky Nicky's garden as no one goes there.



9) Sicky Nicky gets picked on by Boddser every day after school. He's a quiet sensitive type. Everyone seems to bully him.

10) On the way home Chas, Cem and Clogger walk with Nicky and are confronted by Boddser and his gang. Clogger floors two of the gang. Boddser singles out Chas for a fight. Chas avoids Boddser's first punch and throws gravel in his eye. Chas then hits him with his gas mask twice and causes huge damage. Cem stops him from striking a third blow.

11) Chas is told that Britishers fight with their fists and his father, the Head and even his class disown him. However Boddser is laughed at for his bandages, his gang leave him and parents tell his mum how he'd been a bully.

12) Chas, Audrey and Nicky are also outcasts so they go to Nicky's very big house. Nicky's father had been a Captain of a warship but had been killed in 1940. However there is loads of food as Nicky's mum 'billets' lots of sailors. Mrs Nichol also drinks far too much and has relationships with the sailors in return for food off the ships. Chas decides the huge rockery in the garden is a perfect place for a secret den.

13) Chas asks his parents why Nicky's house is a bad place to visit but they are too embarrassed to tell him. The same goes for Audrey's parents.

14) Above Garmouth there were five barrage balloons and each one had their own nickname. As Chas looked at them he saw a lone German plane fly in and he could even see the pilot's face. Chas gives him the V sign as he's a Britisher.

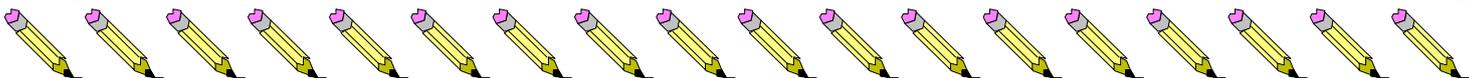
15) British anti aircraft guns start firing but the plane fires at 'The South Shield's' barrage balloon and sets it on fire. The British AA guns set fire to The Wellington Windbag. The German plane also sets fire to the Fish Quay Buster.

16) They hide bits of the Fish Quay Buster in a disused shed. They are going to use this to waterproof their Fortress.

17) Boddser tries to get Clogger and Cem to join his gang by offering them to see his dirty postcards or play with his railway set. Chas realises he needs Cem and Clogger.

18) A German plane crashes into their school and wrecks it. There is no other school available so they have time off. Chas realises they can't build the Fortress on their own so he gets John (a 40 year old man with huge learning disabilities) to help them.

19) Mr McGill hardly ever came home as he was working so hard as an air raid warden. He barely washed and hardly had time to eat. Granda had





bronchitis and Nana was annoying Mrs McGill so the house was not a good place to be. So no one minded if Chas wasn't around.

20) Cem gets his sister's boyfriend to design him a machine gun emplacement in return for leaving them alone.

21) Sarge notices sandbags are being stolen. Mrs Nichol notices their shelter for the servants has been stolen. The sailor's notice their food and various items are being stolen.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 7

1) On Christmas Eve Chas and Clogger are in the Crow's nest of the Fortress. Audrey was making tea and they had plenty of food. Carrot Juice Nicky and Cem are inside Fortress Caparetto, which is now finished.

2) The children have made rules for the Fortress and created their own home there. John is given the seat of honour as he built the place.

3) Nicky wakes up in his house ashamed and angry to hear there is a sailor in his mum's room as well as in the house. He senses rather than hears the air raid (he has a dream his dad warns him) and runs to the Fortress.

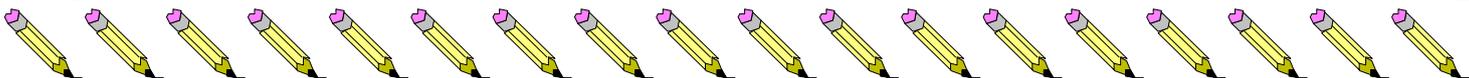
4) The Nichol house had been destroyed by a bomb. The front was almost normal but the back was completely destroyed. People believed Nicky had been blown to bits as they couldn't find his body. Nicky tells Chas he wants to live in the Fortress so he's not taken to a home.

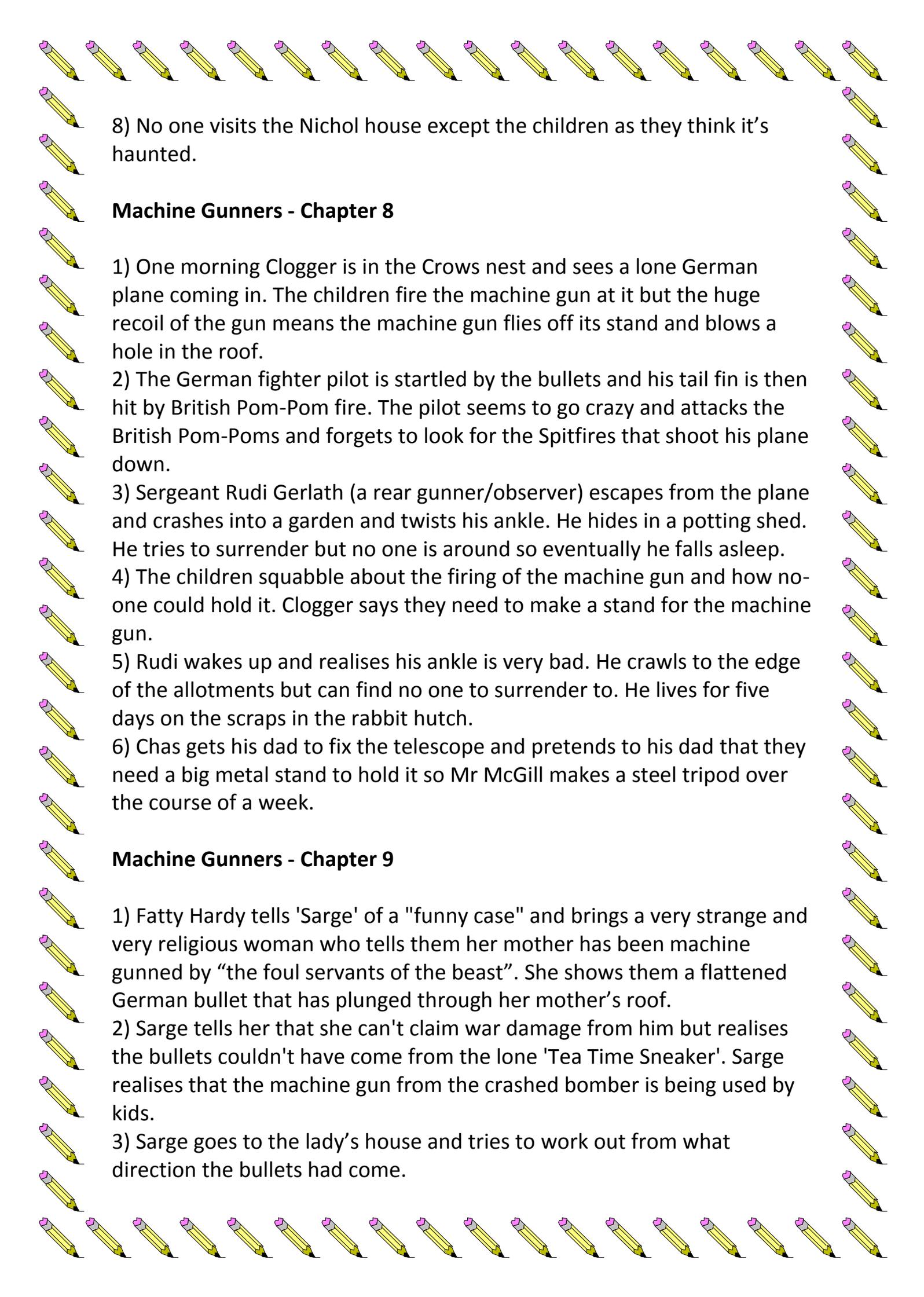
5) Carrot Juice thinks they should tell the grown ups about Nicky but Clogger says they will take him to a home which is terrible. Nicky starts to cry really badly. Clogger decides he will live in the Fortress with Nicky as he hates living at his Auntie's. So Fortress Caparetto becomes more than a game - it becomes their home.

Clogger says that he'll join Charles whenever he can, - his parents both work full time and he never sees them in the afternoon, only in the mornings.

6) The police think that Clogger walked out of his Auntie's to go back home to Glasgow. Mr McGill questions Chas about this but Chas lies. He'd never done this before but he had lost faith in grown ups to keep children safe - an effect of the war.

7) With John's help they enlarge the Fortress with a second Anderson Shelter taken from the Nichols' garden. With three loop-holes for the gun the Fortress is ready.





8) No one visits the Nichol house except the children as they think it's haunted.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 8

1) One morning Clogger is in the Crows nest and sees a lone German plane coming in. The children fire the machine gun at it but the huge recoil of the gun means the machine gun flies off its stand and blows a hole in the roof.

2) The German fighter pilot is startled by the bullets and his tail fin is then hit by British Pom-Pom fire. The pilot seems to go crazy and attacks the British Pom-Poms and forgets to look for the Spitfires that shoot his plane down.

3) Sergeant Rudi Gerlath (a rear gunner/observer) escapes from the plane and crashes into a garden and twists his ankle. He hides in a potting shed. He tries to surrender but no one is around so eventually he falls asleep.

4) The children squabble about the firing of the machine gun and how no-one could hold it. Clogger says they need to make a stand for the machine gun.

5) Rudi wakes up and realises his ankle is very bad. He crawls to the edge of the allotments but can find no one to surrender to. He lives for five days on the scraps in the rabbit hutch.

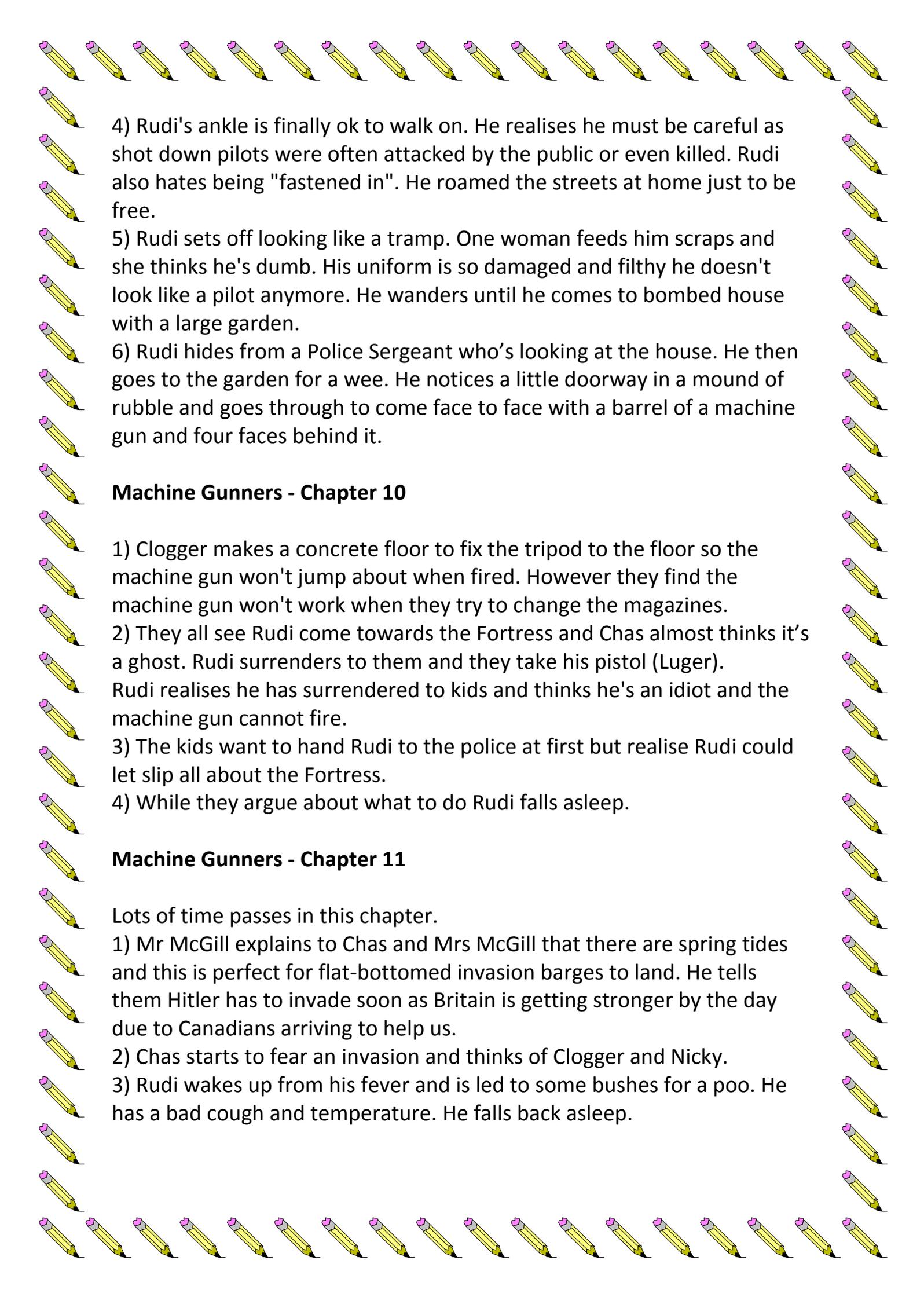
6) Chas gets his dad to fix the telescope and pretends to his dad that they need a big metal stand to hold it so Mr McGill makes a steel tripod over the course of a week.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 9

1) Fatty Hardy tells 'Sarge' of a "funny case" and brings a very strange and very religious woman who tells them her mother has been machine gunned by "the foul servants of the beast". She shows them a flattened German bullet that has plunged through her mother's roof.

2) Sarge tells her that she can't claim war damage from him but realises the bullets couldn't have come from the lone 'Tea Time Sneaker'. Sarge realises that the machine gun from the crashed bomber is being used by kids.

3) Sarge goes to the lady's house and tries to work out from what direction the bullets had come.



4) Rudi's ankle is finally ok to walk on. He realises he must be careful as shot down pilots were often attacked by the public or even killed. Rudi also hates being "fastened in". He roamed the streets at home just to be free.

5) Rudi sets off looking like a tramp. One woman feeds him scraps and she thinks he's dumb. His uniform is so damaged and filthy he doesn't look like a pilot anymore. He wanders until he comes to bombed house with a large garden.

6) Rudi hides from a Police Sergeant who's looking at the house. He then goes to the garden for a wee. He notices a little doorway in a mound of rubble and goes through to come face to face with a barrel of a machine gun and four faces behind it.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 10

1) Clogger makes a concrete floor to fix the tripod to the floor so the machine gun won't jump about when fired. However they find the machine gun won't work when they try to change the magazines.

2) They all see Rudi come towards the Fortress and Chas almost thinks it's a ghost. Rudi surrenders to them and they take his pistol (Luger). Rudi realises he has surrendered to kids and thinks he's an idiot and the machine gun cannot fire.

3) The kids want to hand Rudi to the police at first but realise Rudi could let slip all about the Fortress.

4) While they argue about what to do Rudi falls asleep.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 11

Lots of time passes in this chapter.

1) Mr McGill explains to Chas and Mrs McGill that there are spring tides and this is perfect for flat-bottomed invasion barges to land. He tells them Hitler has to invade soon as Britain is getting stronger by the day due to Canadians arriving to help us.

2) Chas starts to fear an invasion and thinks of Clogger and Nicky.

3) Rudi wakes up from his fever and is led to some bushes for a poo. He has a bad cough and temperature. He falls back asleep.



4) For days Rudi battles his fever. He thinks the children look too grown up and solemn. But he realises they are nicer than the Hitler Youth at home. Rudi notices that Nicky was the weakest and most nervous one.

5) Stan Liddell gets used to not going to school as it's bombed out. He remembers WW1 and how he fought the Germans then. He realises they can't fight the Germans now with rifles from The Boer War and rocket firing drainpipes. But he does have Sandy who gets some shotguns from a farmer and 'wins' some ammo.

6) The police sergeant with a limp tells Sandy he thinks that a group of children have got the missing machine gun. He says Charlie McGill lives in the same street as John Brownlee and Audrey Parton and Cem Jones are all in the third year together as was 'The Nichol Boy' whose body was never found and Young Duncan who never showed up in Scotland. The sergeant says all the families have reported things stolen from their houses.

7) Stan Liddell goes to the observation platform on the old mill and learns that the Germans use paratroopers to start any invasion. Through his binoculars he notices Chas.

8) Rudi gets the 'ginger boy' to put the safety catch on the Luger and starts to become friends with Clogger, then Nicky.

9) More time passes. Rudi has got better at English. He reads Desperate Dan comics and notices Nicky is almost treating him like he's his dad. Rudi notices he's less like a soldier and doesn't miss Germany or being near death in a plane.

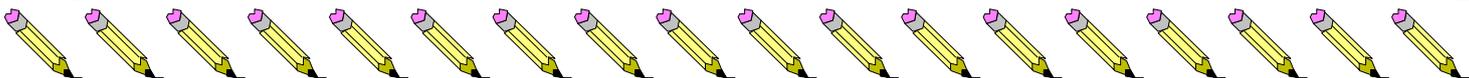
10) Rudi suggests they expand the Fortress to include a 'bog'. The children steal many things including doors, sand bags and a bucket to help. They even get barbed wire, bricks and windows to help him. Nicky calls Rudi 'Dad' by accident.

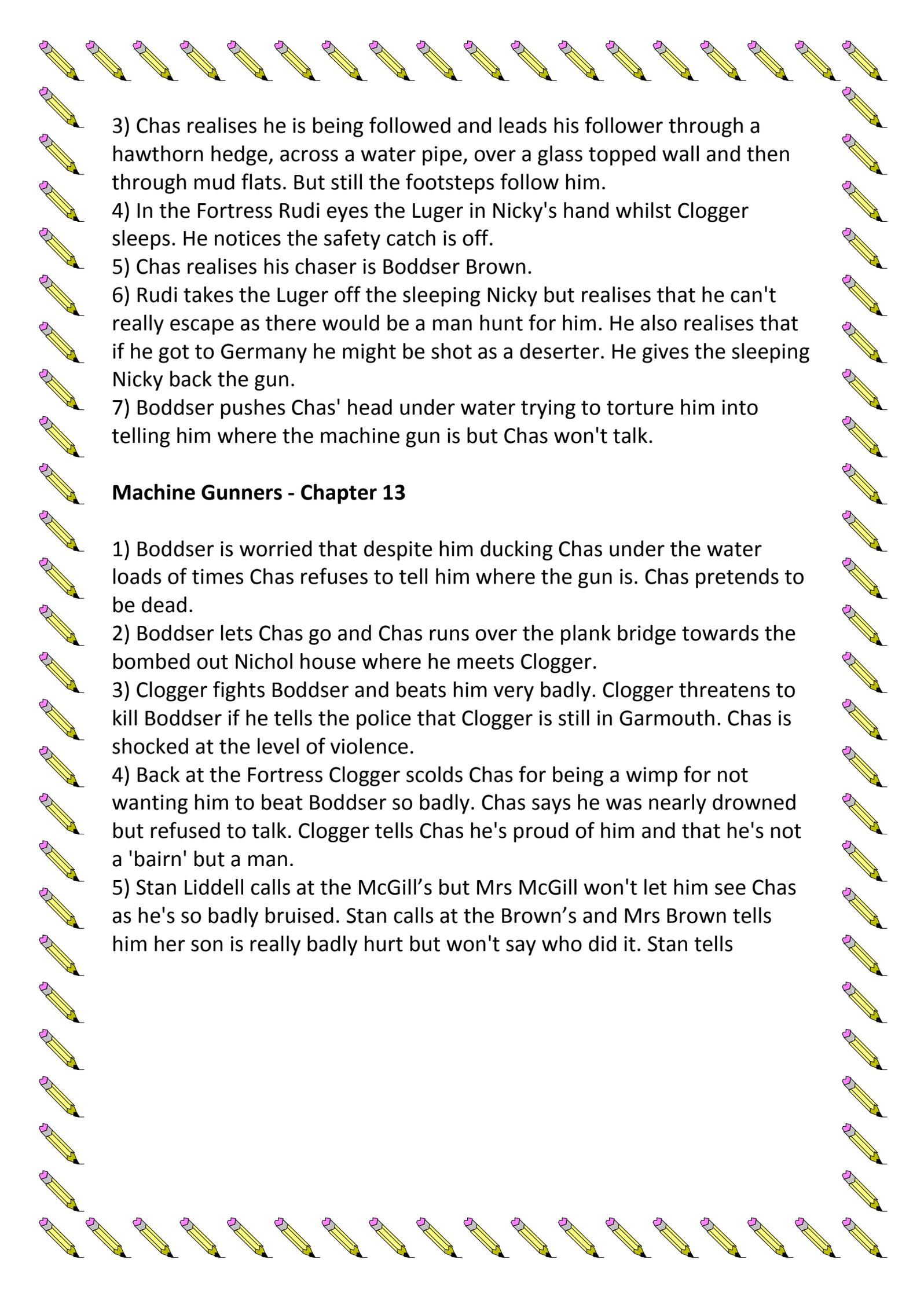
11) The children want Rudi to fix the machine gun but he refuses as he knows how dangerous it can be but finally agrees to do it in return for a boat back to Germany.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 12

1) Stan is watching Chas' house through binoculars but can never find out where Chas goes to because Chas always goes different directions and he loses him.

2) Stan spies Boddser Brown following Chas.





3) Chas realises he is being followed and leads his follower through a hawthorn hedge, across a water pipe, over a glass topped wall and then through mud flats. But still the footsteps follow him.

4) In the Fortress Rudi eyes the Luger in Nicky's hand whilst Clogger sleeps. He notices the safety catch is off.

5) Chas realises his chaser is Boddser Brown.

6) Rudi takes the Luger off the sleeping Nicky but realises that he can't really escape as there would be a man hunt for him. He also realises that if he got to Germany he might be shot as a deserter. He gives the sleeping Nicky back the gun.

7) Boddser pushes Chas' head under water trying to torture him into telling him where the machine gun is but Chas won't talk.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 13

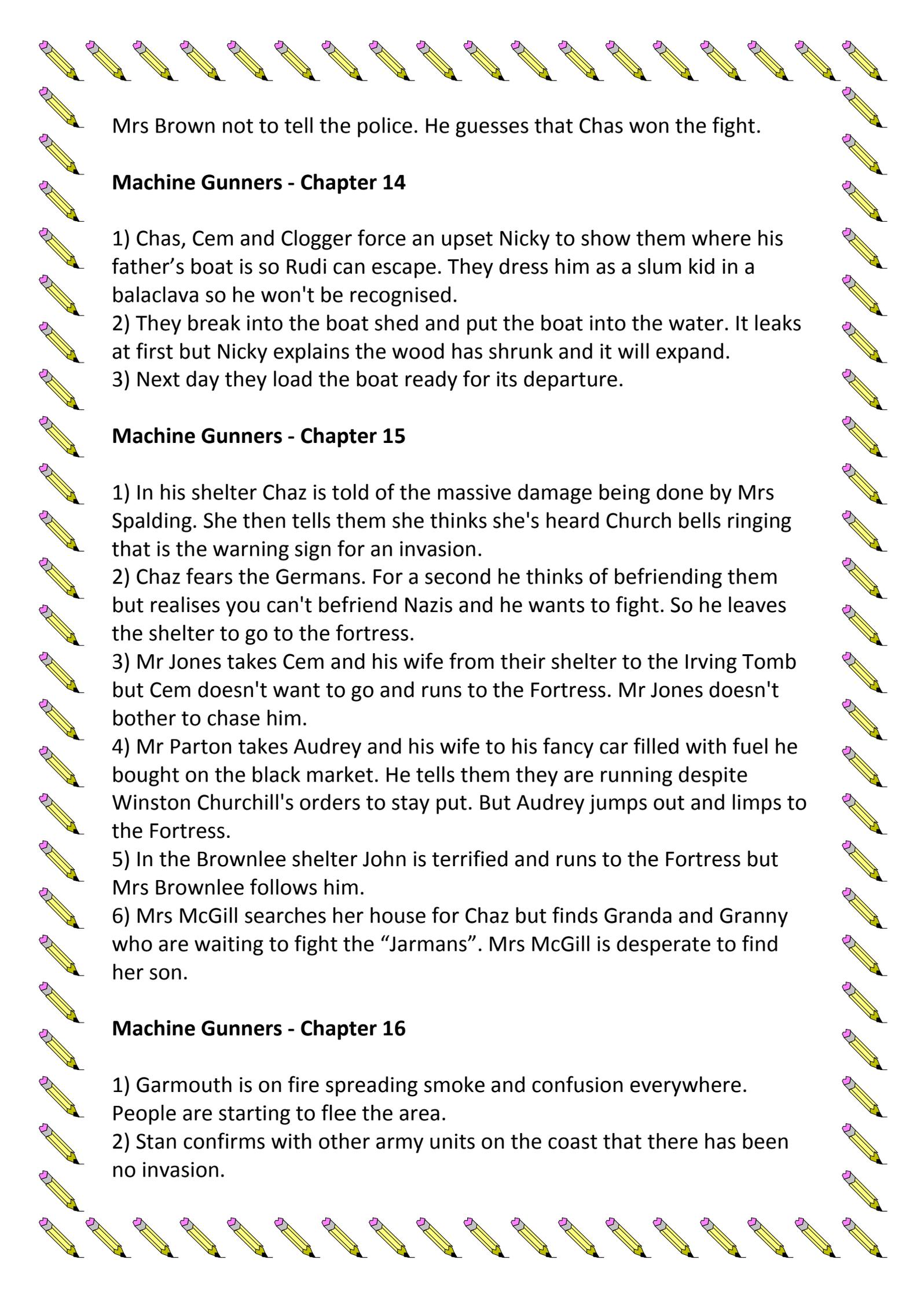
1) Boddser is worried that despite him ducking Chas under the water loads of times Chas refuses to tell him where the gun is. Chas pretends to be dead.

2) Boddser lets Chas go and Chas runs over the plank bridge towards the bombed out Nichol house where he meets Clogger.

3) Clogger fights Boddser and beats him very badly. Clogger threatens to kill Boddser if he tells the police that Clogger is still in Garmouth. Chas is shocked at the level of violence.

4) Back at the Fortress Clogger scolds Chas for being a wimp for not wanting him to beat Boddser so badly. Chas says he was nearly drowned but refused to talk. Clogger tells Chas he's proud of him and that he's not a 'bairn' but a man.

5) Stan Liddell calls at the McGill's but Mrs McGill won't let him see Chas as he's so badly bruised. Stan calls at the Brown's and Mrs Brown tells him her son is really badly hurt but won't say who did it. Stan tells



Mrs Brown not to tell the police. He guesses that Chas won the fight.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 14

1) Chas, Cem and Clogger force an upset Nicky to show them where his father's boat is so Rudi can escape. They dress him as a slum kid in a balaclava so he won't be recognised.

2) They break into the boat shed and put the boat into the water. It leaks at first but Nicky explains the wood has shrunk and it will expand.

3) Next day they load the boat ready for its departure.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 15

1) In his shelter Chaz is told of the massive damage being done by Mrs Spalding. She then tells them she thinks she's heard Church bells ringing that is the warning sign for an invasion.

2) Chaz fears the Germans. For a second he thinks of befriending them but realises you can't befriend Nazis and he wants to fight. So he leaves the shelter to go to the fortress.

3) Mr Jones takes Cem and his wife from their shelter to the Irving Tomb but Cem doesn't want to go and runs to the Fortress. Mr Jones doesn't bother to chase him.

4) Mr Parton takes Audrey and his wife to his fancy car filled with fuel he bought on the black market. He tells them they are running despite Winston Churchill's orders to stay put. But Audrey jumps out and limps to the Fortress.

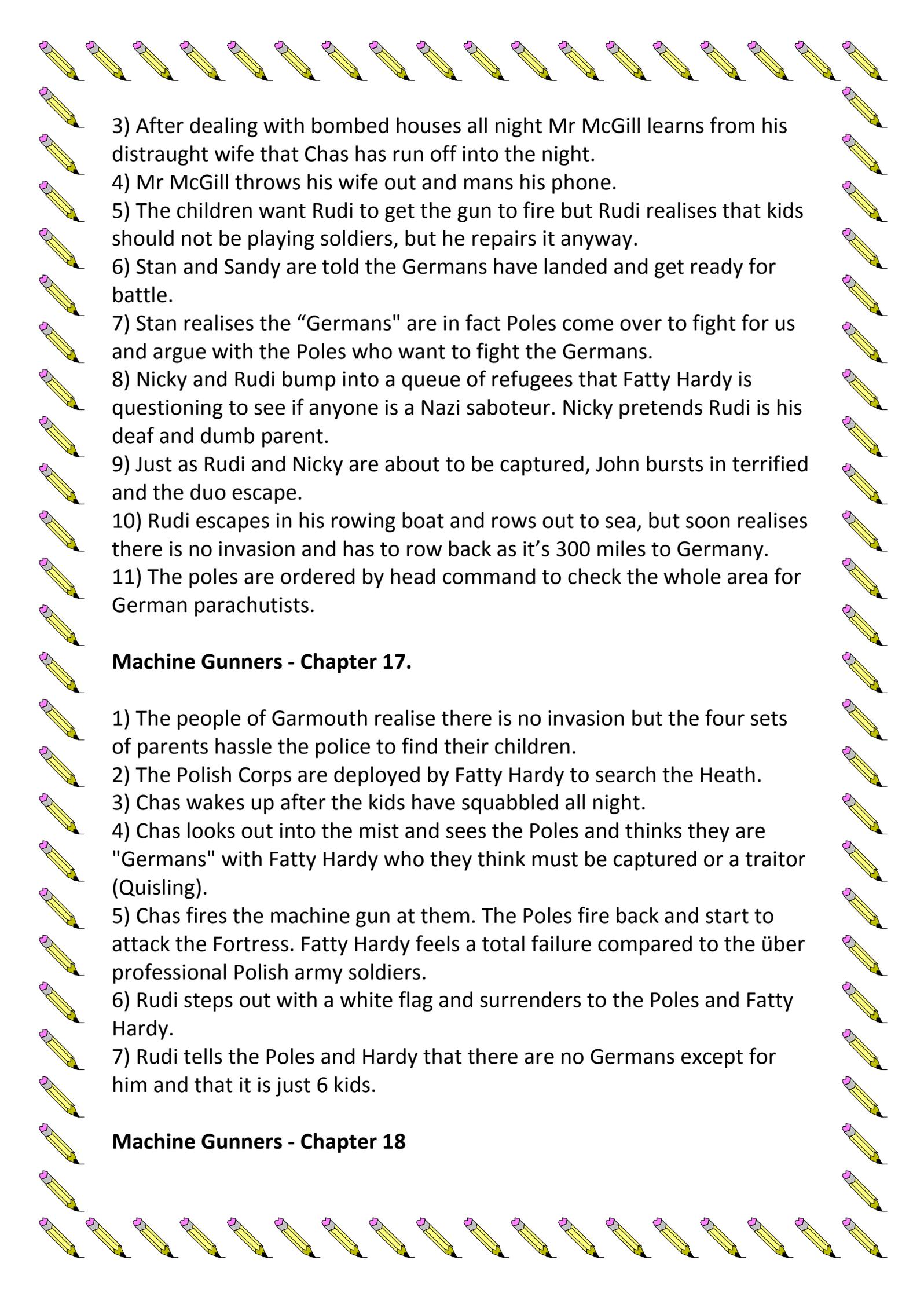
5) In the Brownlee shelter John is terrified and runs to the Fortress but Mrs Brownlee follows him.

6) Mrs McGill searches her house for Chaz but finds Granda and Granny who are waiting to fight the "Jarmans". Mrs McGill is desperate to find her son.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 16

1) Garmouth is on fire spreading smoke and confusion everywhere. People are starting to flee the area.

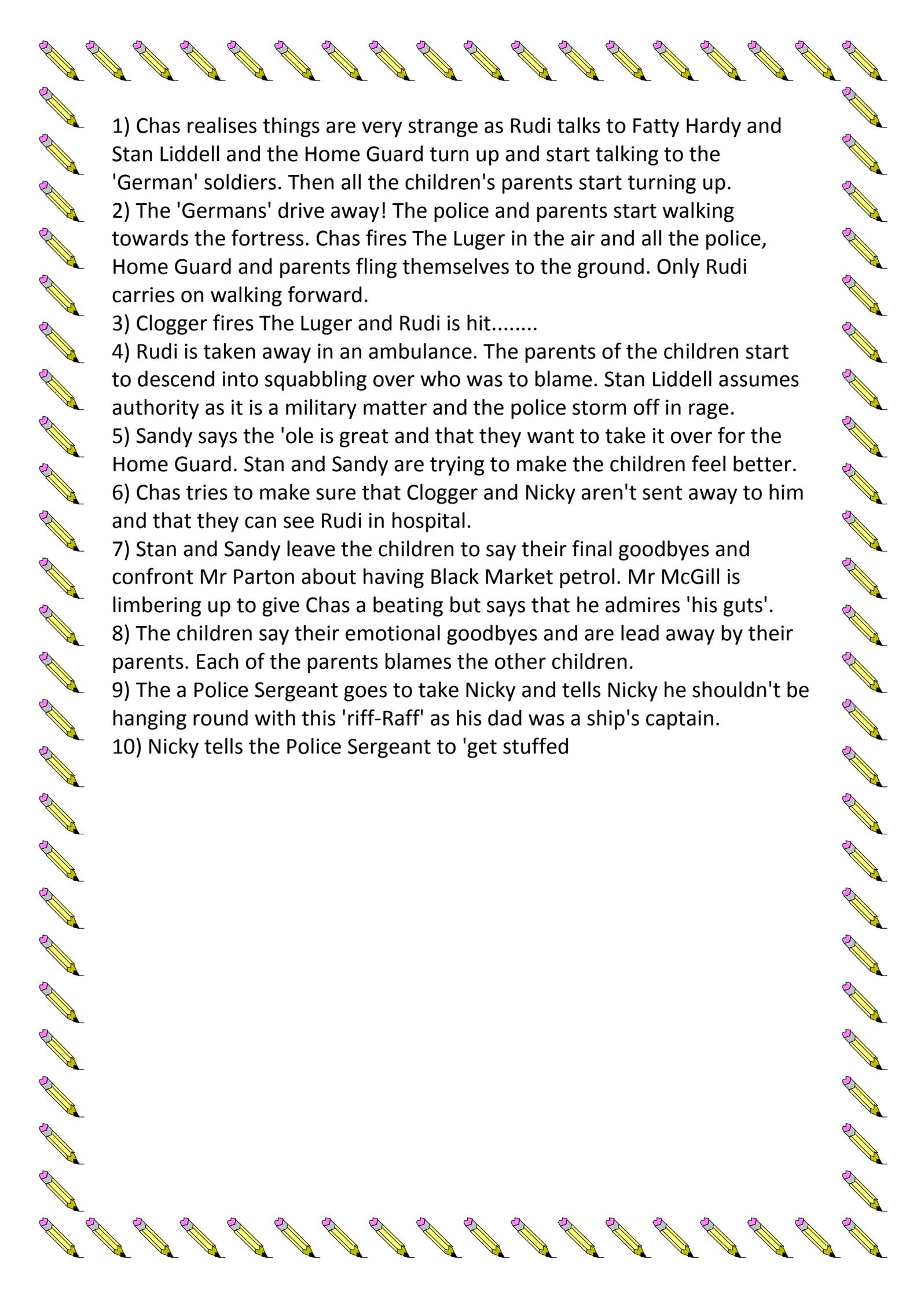
2) Stan confirms with other army units on the coast that there has been no invasion.

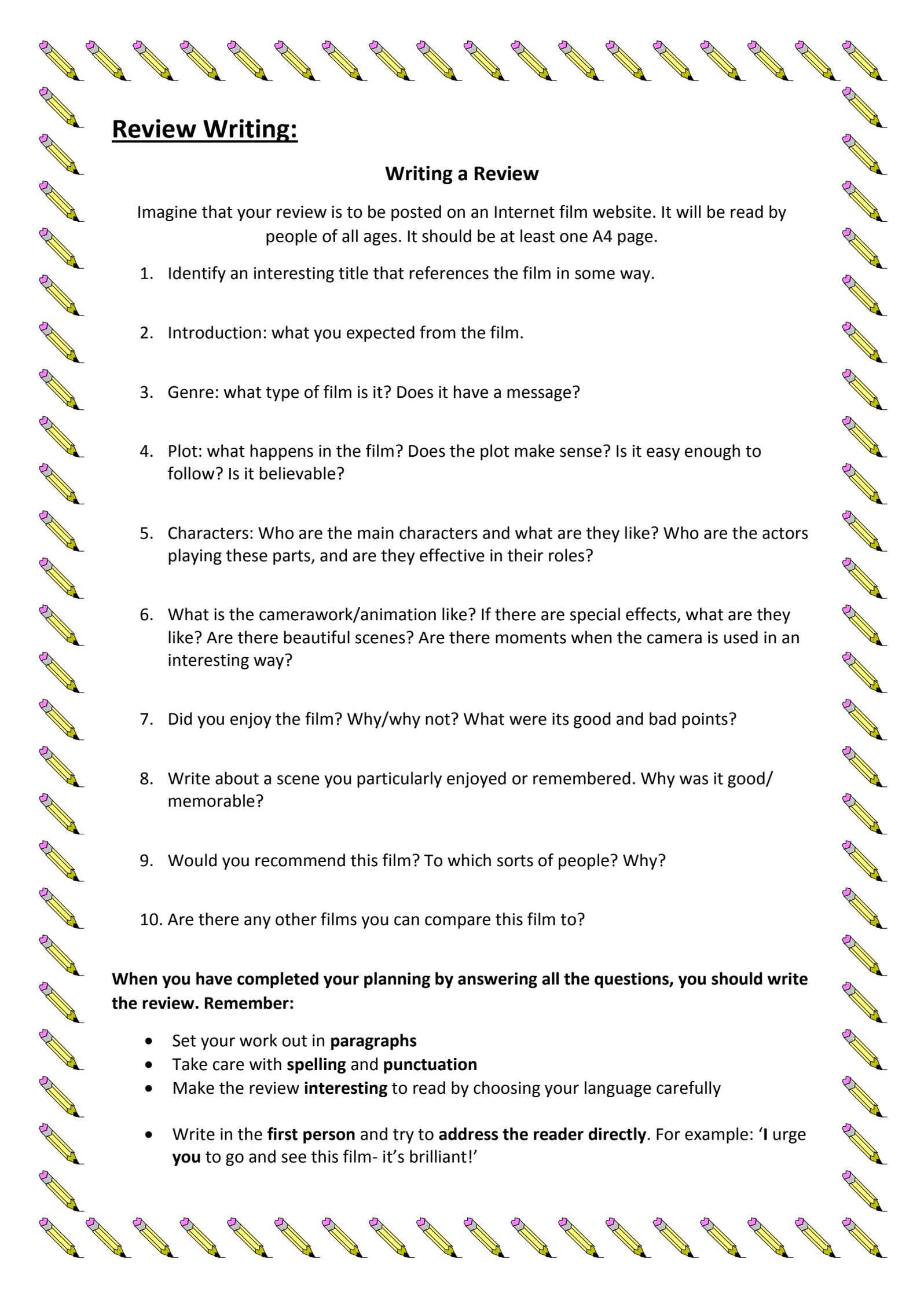
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- 3) After dealing with bombed houses all night Mr McGill learns from his distraught wife that Chas has run off into the night.
 - 4) Mr McGill throws his wife out and mans his phone.
 - 5) The children want Rudi to get the gun to fire but Rudi realises that kids should not be playing soldiers, but he repairs it anyway.
 - 6) Stan and Sandy are told the Germans have landed and get ready for battle.
 - 7) Stan realises the "Germans" are in fact Poles come over to fight for us and argue with the Poles who want to fight the Germans.
 - 8) Nicky and Rudi bump into a queue of refugees that Fatty Hardy is questioning to see if anyone is a Nazi saboteur. Nicky pretends Rudi is his deaf and dumb parent.
 - 9) Just as Rudi and Nicky are about to be captured, John bursts in terrified and the duo escape.
 - 10) Rudi escapes in his rowing boat and rows out to sea, but soon realises there is no invasion and has to row back as it's 300 miles to Germany.
 - 11) The poles are ordered by head command to check the whole area for German parachutists.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 17.

- 1) The people of Garmouth realise there is no invasion but the four sets of parents hassle the police to find their children.
- 2) The Polish Corps are deployed by Fatty Hardy to search the Heath.
- 3) Chas wakes up after the kids have squabbled all night.
- 4) Chas looks out into the mist and sees the Poles and thinks they are "Germans" with Fatty Hardy who they think must be captured or a traitor (Quisling).
- 5) Chas fires the machine gun at them. The Poles fire back and start to attack the Fortress. Fatty Hardy feels a total failure compared to the über professional Polish army soldiers.
- 6) Rudi steps out with a white flag and surrenders to the Poles and Fatty Hardy.
- 7) Rudi tells the Poles and Hardy that there are no Germans except for him and that it is just 6 kids.

Machine Gunners - Chapter 18

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- 1) Chas realises things are very strange as Rudi talks to Fatty Hardy and Stan Liddell and the Home Guard turn up and start talking to the 'German' soldiers. Then all the children's parents start turning up.
 - 2) The 'Germans' drive away! The police and parents start walking towards the fortress. Chas fires The Luger in the air and all the police, Home Guard and parents fling themselves to the ground. Only Rudi carries on walking forward.
 - 3) Clogger fires The Luger and Rudi is hit.....
 - 4) Rudi is taken away in an ambulance. The parents of the children start to descend into squabbling over who was to blame. Stan Liddell assumes authority as it is a military matter and the police storm off in rage.
 - 5) Sandy says the 'ole is great and that they want to take it over for the Home Guard. Stan and Sandy are trying to make the children feel better.
 - 6) Chas tries to make sure that Clogger and Nicky aren't sent away to him and that they can see Rudi in hospital.
 - 7) Stan and Sandy leave the children to say their final goodbyes and confront Mr Parton about having Black Market petrol. Mr McGill is limbering up to give Chas a beating but says that he admires 'his guts'.
 - 8) The children say their emotional goodbyes and are lead away by their parents. Each of the parents blames the other children.
 - 9) The a Police Sergeant goes to take Nicky and tells Nicky he shouldn't be hanging round with this 'riff-Raff' as his dad was a ship's captain.
 - 10) Nicky tells the Police Sergeant to 'get stuffed



Review Writing:

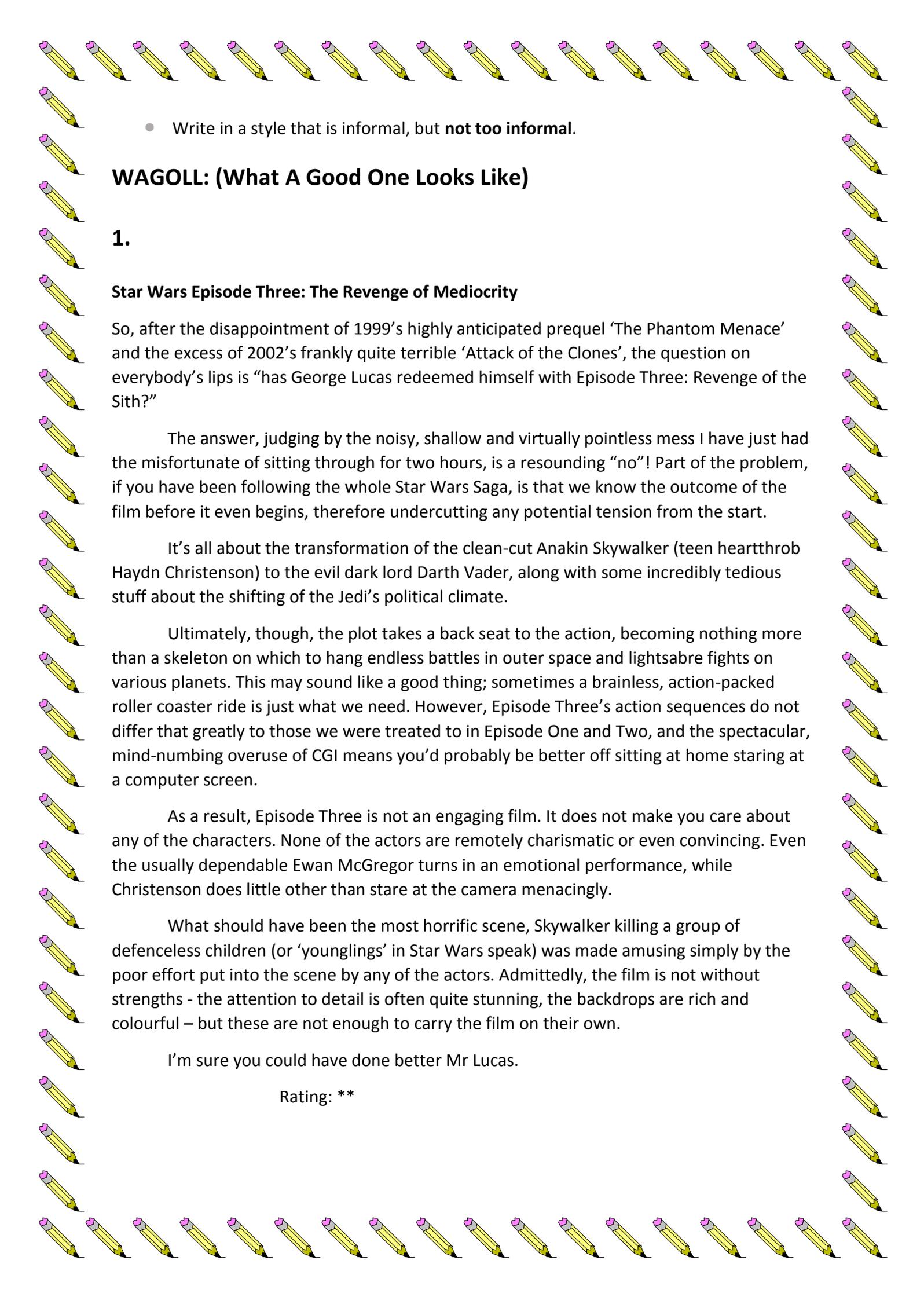
Writing a Review

Imagine that your review is to be posted on an Internet film website. It will be read by people of all ages. It should be at least one A4 page.

1. Identify an interesting title that references the film in some way.
2. Introduction: what you expected from the film.
3. Genre: what type of film is it? Does it have a message?
4. Plot: what happens in the film? Does the plot make sense? Is it easy enough to follow? Is it believable?
5. Characters: Who are the main characters and what are they like? Who are the actors playing these parts, and are they effective in their roles?
6. What is the camerawork/animation like? If there are special effects, what are they like? Are there beautiful scenes? Are there moments when the camera is used in an interesting way?
7. Did you enjoy the film? Why/why not? What were its good and bad points?
8. Write about a scene you particularly enjoyed or remembered. Why was it good/memorable?
9. Would you recommend this film? To which sorts of people? Why?
10. Are there any other films you can compare this film to?

When you have completed your planning by answering all the questions, you should write the review. Remember:

- Set your work out in **paragraphs**
- Take care with **spelling** and **punctuation**
- Make the review **interesting** to read by choosing your language carefully
- Write in the **first person** and try to **address the reader directly**. For example: 'I urge **you** to go and see this film- it's brilliant!'

- 
- Write in a style that is informal, but **not too informal**.

WAGOLL: (What A Good One Looks Like)

1.

Star Wars Episode Three: The Revenge of Mediocrity

So, after the disappointment of 1999's highly anticipated prequel 'The Phantom Menace' and the excess of 2002's frankly quite terrible 'Attack of the Clones', the question on everybody's lips is "has George Lucas redeemed himself with Episode Three: Revenge of the Sith?"

The answer, judging by the noisy, shallow and virtually pointless mess I have just had the misfortune of sitting through for two hours, is a resounding "no"! Part of the problem, if you have been following the whole Star Wars Saga, is that we know the outcome of the film before it even begins, therefore undercutting any potential tension from the start.

It's all about the transformation of the clean-cut Anakin Skywalker (teen heartthrob Haydn Christenson) to the evil dark lord Darth Vader, along with some incredibly tedious stuff about the shifting of the Jedi's political climate.

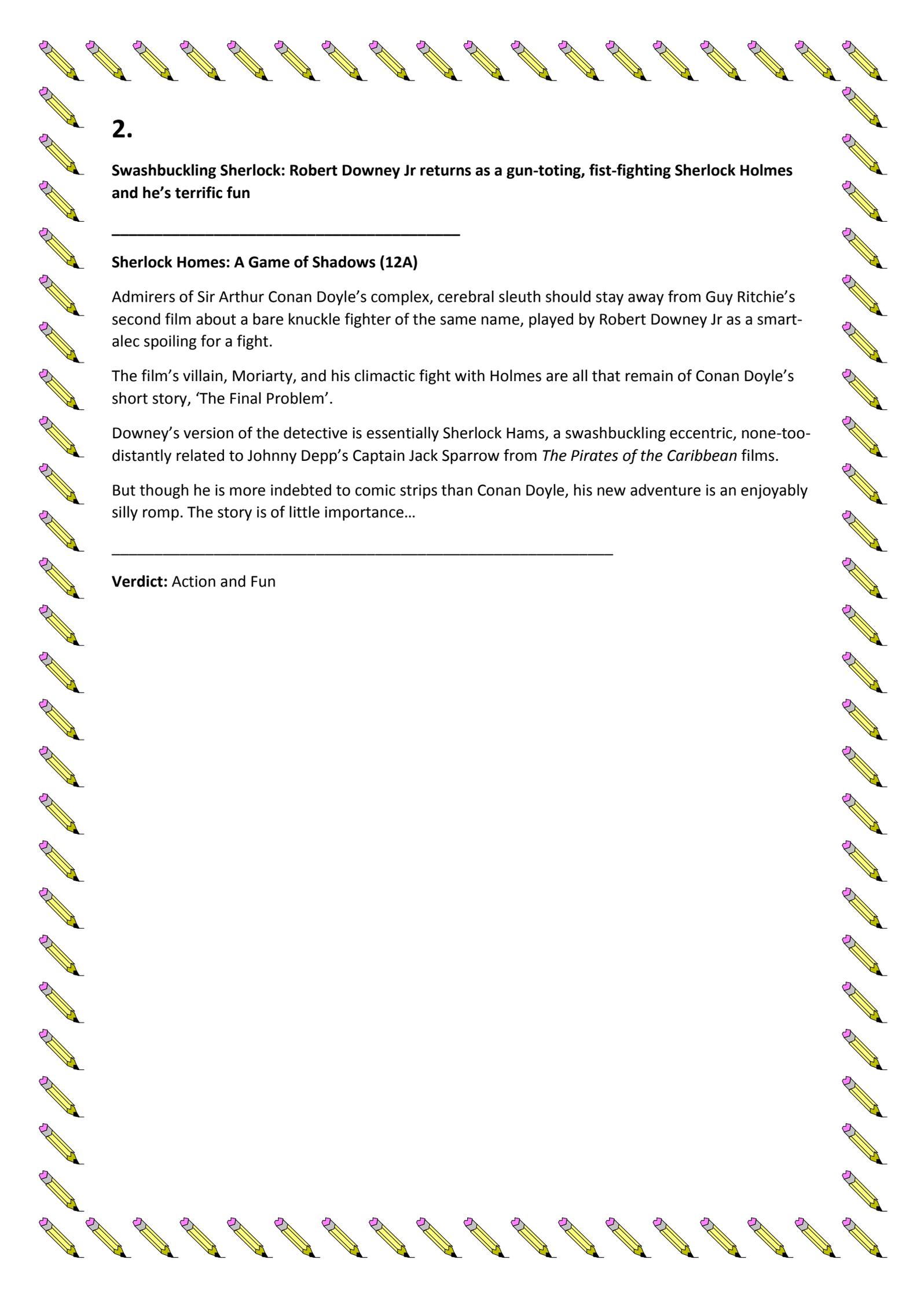
Ultimately, though, the plot takes a back seat to the action, becoming nothing more than a skeleton on which to hang endless battles in outer space and lightsabre fights on various planets. This may sound like a good thing; sometimes a brainless, action-packed roller coaster ride is just what we need. However, Episode Three's action sequences do not differ that greatly to those we were treated to in Episode One and Two, and the spectacular, mind-numbing overuse of CGI means you'd probably be better off sitting at home staring at a computer screen.

As a result, Episode Three is not an engaging film. It does not make you care about any of the characters. None of the actors are remotely charismatic or even convincing. Even the usually dependable Ewan McGregor turns in an emotional performance, while Christenson does little other than stare at the camera menacingly.

What should have been the most horrific scene, Skywalker killing a group of defenceless children (or 'younglings' in Star Wars speak) was made amusing simply by the poor effort put into the scene by any of the actors. Admittedly, the film is not without strengths - the attention to detail is often quite stunning, the backdrops are rich and colourful - but these are not enough to carry the film on their own.

I'm sure you could have done better Mr Lucas.

Rating: **



2.

Swashbuckling Sherlock: Robert Downey Jr returns as a gun-toting, fist-fighting Sherlock Holmes and he's terrific fun

Sherlock Homes: A Game of Shadows (12A)

Admirers of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's complex, cerebral sleuth should stay away from Guy Ritchie's second film about a bare knuckle fighter of the same name, played by Robert Downey Jr as a smart-alec spoiling for a fight.

The film's villain, Moriarty, and his climactic fight with Holmes are all that remain of Conan Doyle's short story, 'The Final Problem'.

Downey's version of the detective is essentially Sherlock Hams, a swashbuckling eccentric, none-too-distantly related to Johnny Depp's Captain Jack Sparrow from *The Pirates of the Caribbean* films.

But though he is more indebted to comic strips than Conan Doyle, his new adventure is an enjoyably silly romp. The story is of little importance...

Verdict: Action and Fun