

# Sherlock Holmes

READING

LEVEL  
Advanced

NUMBER  
C1\_1025R\_EN

LANGUAGE  
English



lingoda

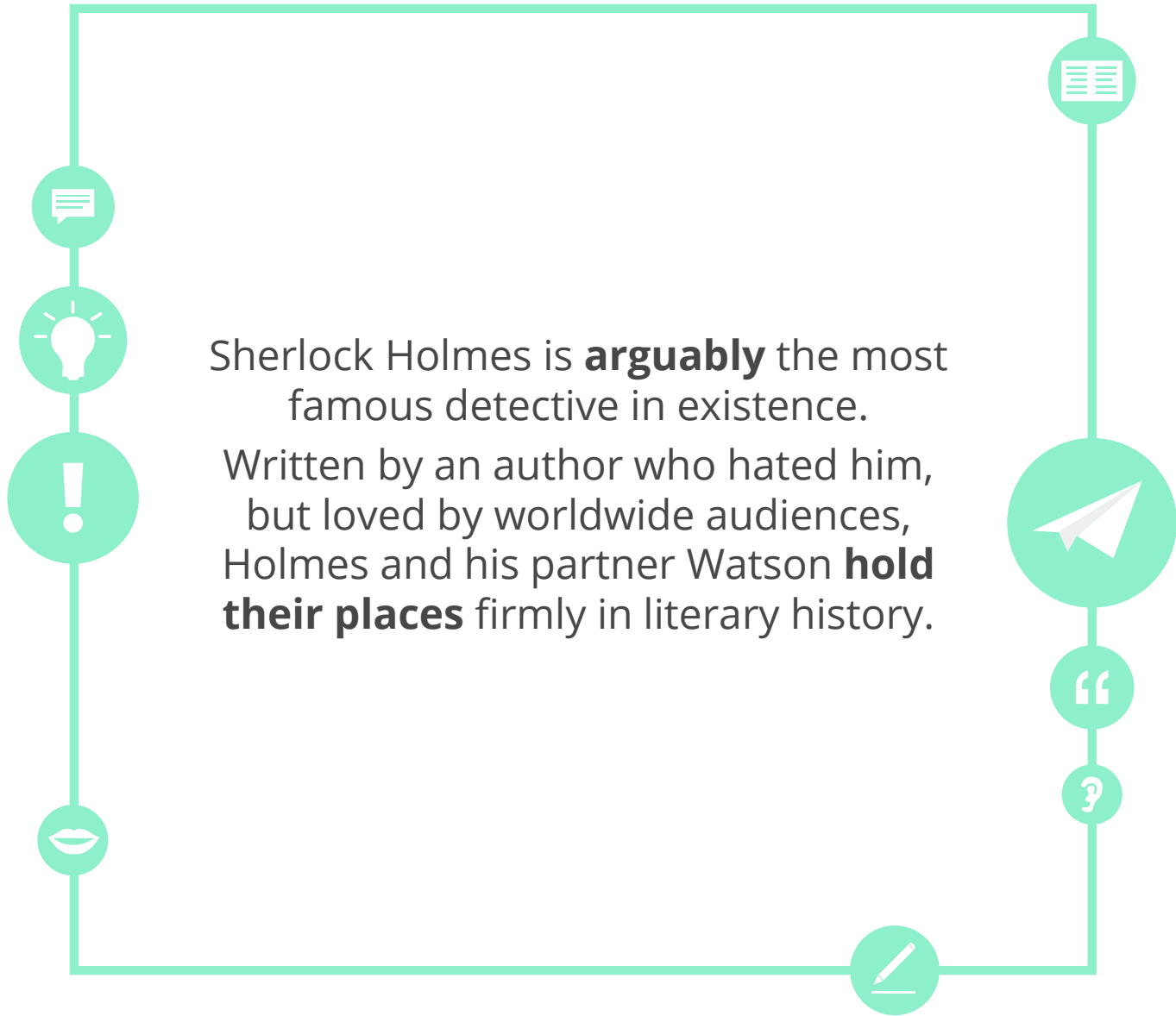




## Goals

- Can read and understand a lengthy, factual text about Sherlock Holmes.
- Can analyse the choices Arthur Conan Doyle made about his characters and detail what makes certain stories timeless.







## Stories and their settings

Have you read any books set in the  
late 1800s?  
Have you read many detective  
novels?



## What do you know about the history of the series?



Which characters do you know?



How many Holmes books were written?



What do you think...

**What is it that  
makes a story  
timeless?**

plot

themes

characters



## Background to Sherlock Holmes

There are few who have never heard of Sherlock Holmes. Created in the late 1800s by Edinburgh-born Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the stories of the unbelievable success, **cunning** and **wit** of the London detective have been capturing the imaginations of readers for over 100 years.

Conan Doyle originally studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh and only wrote in his spare time. He covered a variety of genres, among which his first two Sherlock Holmes novellas were born. However, it was only when he decided to write a series of short stories for a popular magazine, *The Strand*, that his literary career took off.



## Background to Sherlock Holmes



The stories were a raging success and brought him fame as well as money. This financial incentive gave him the push he needed to leave his medical career behind him and write full time. However, his detective stories were not **where his heart truly lay**, and he began producing historical novels, which, unfortunately, did not have the same success.

In 1893, *The Strand* commissioned a set of twelve further stories, which Doyle accepted for what was a sizeable sum of money at the time. However, it was during the writing of these tales that Doyle revealed his true feelings towards the hero he had created, so **beloved** by the public.





## Correct the sentences

1. Arthur Conan Doyle was originally from London.



Arthur Conan Doyle was from Edinburgh.

2. The Sherlock Holmes books were written during Conan Doyle's work hours.



\_\_\_\_\_

3. Conan Doyle had only ever considered working as a writer.



\_\_\_\_\_

4. His first novels were an unprecedented success.



\_\_\_\_\_

5. Despite their success, Doyle's detective stories brought him little financial gain.



\_\_\_\_\_

6. *The Strand* didn't commission a new set of stories until 1900.



\_\_\_\_\_

7. Doyle loved writing about Holmes.



\_\_\_\_\_

8. Doyle and the public had the same opinions about Holmes.



\_\_\_\_\_



## What if...?



Conan Doyle took a gamble on his writing career, leaving a steady, well-paying job as a doctor to take it on.

Do you think he was right to do this?

If you ever had such an opportunity, what would you do? Would you pursue a childhood dream or start a new career from scratch?



## Read and fill the gaps

Continue reading the text, but this time, fill the gaps as you read. In each case, an adjective or adverb is missing.

The truth was that Doyle had \_\_\_\_\_ begun to hate his title character and resent the reason for his success. Doyle did not think \_\_\_\_\_ of this genre and considered it \_\_\_\_\_ of his time, wishing to dedicate himself to more \_\_\_\_\_ historical works.

Due to the complexity of each plot, with the \_\_\_\_\_, tangled storylines the readers loved, each work took \_\_\_\_\_ time to plan. The pressure, deadlines and demand for more increased as Doyle and Holmes became more famous. Finally, in his \_\_\_\_\_ story for *The Strand*, Doyle sent Sherlock plunging to his death.

unworthy

highly

intricate

gradually

ambitious

last

considerable



## Read and fill the gaps

Continue reading the text, but this time, fill the gaps as you read. This time, nouns are missing.

The \_\_\_\_\_ was phenomenal. England mourned the death as though it were that of a \_\_\_\_\_. Thousands of readers cancelled their \_\_\_\_\_ to *The Strand*. Doyle, however, felt freed from the \_\_\_\_\_ he had put himself into and turned his attention to projects closer to his heart.

For two years, he stuck to his guns and Holmes had no new \_\_\_\_\_. Eventually, Doyle was persuaded to write his character once more and created *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which was, conveniently, set prior to Holmes' \_\_\_\_\_ and was largely from Watson's \_\_\_\_\_. Ten years after killing him off, Doyle succumbed to public \_\_\_\_\_ and brought Sherlock back from the dead. Doyle continued to write his stories for a further twenty years.

cases

prison

friend

death

subscriptions

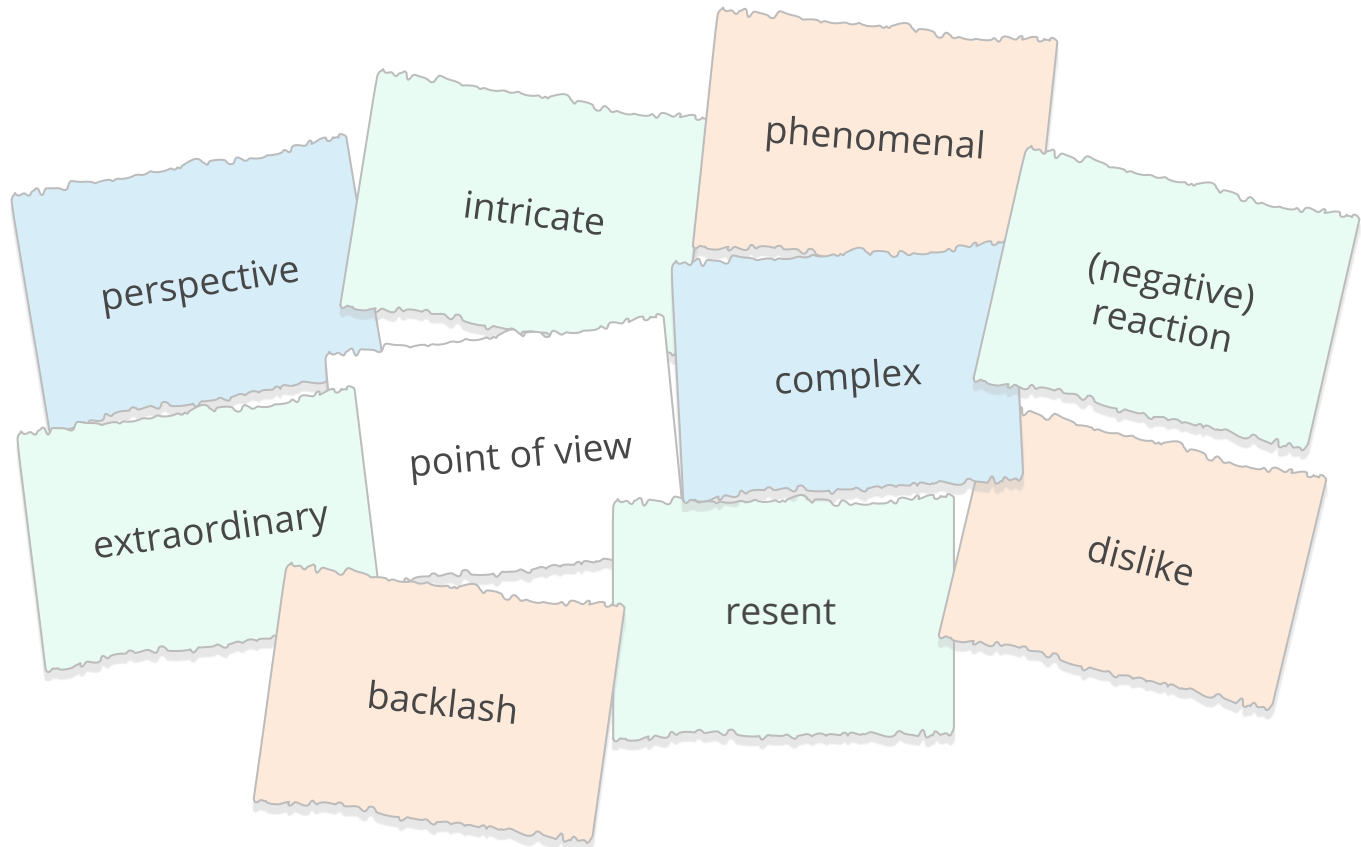
backlash

demand

perspective



## Match the words from the text with their synonym





## Vocabulary in practice

Using the new vocabulary from the previous slide, create five sentences. These need not be on the topic of Sherlock Holmes, but should, where possible, have something to do with literature.

perspective

phenomenal

intricate

resent

backlash

... plus one  
more word  
from the text of  
your choice

A sheet of white lined paper with five horizontal lines for writing. The paper has a blue vertical line on the left side and a series of small circles along the left edge, suggesting it's a page from a notebook.



## Discuss

**Conan Doyle hated his main character, but felt pressured into continuing to write about him. Is it ever worth continuing to do something you hate, whether at work or in your private life?**

financial gain

don't want to  
disappoint

doing it for  
reputation

has to be done  
by someone -  
why not me?

too much  
pressure



## Timelessness

Thanks to its **unprecedented** success, Sherlock Holmes has entered the popular culture of not only the United Kingdom, but the **world over**. The stories have been translated and are studied by students all over the world, read for pleasure, and have been **adapted** into numerous television series, stage and radio plays, computer games -- even a musical and a ballet! Holmes' **ubiquitous** silhouette, with his deerstalker hat and pipe, has appeared on postage stamps and **adorns** the walls of the London Underground at Baker Street station, where Holmes lives in the stories.

Despite the stories' setting in the 1800s, they continue to appeal to audiences today, over 100 years later. There is something about their mystery and **intrigue**, which, although based in a world yet to have many of the modern comforts we now **take for granted**, readers still find fascinating today.





## Cultural icons

Are there any literary characters which have made a similar impact in your home country? If not, can you think of another example in a different country?

Why did (s)he appeal so much to the imaginations of the public?



## Why is Holmes still so popular today?

**Why are the stories about Holmes still so popular 100 years later?  
Discuss with your group, using the ideas below.**





## Discuss the quote

Consider books you are familiar with which have film adaptations. To what extent would you agree with the quote below in relation to these?

//

The film adaptation is never as good as the book!

//



## Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





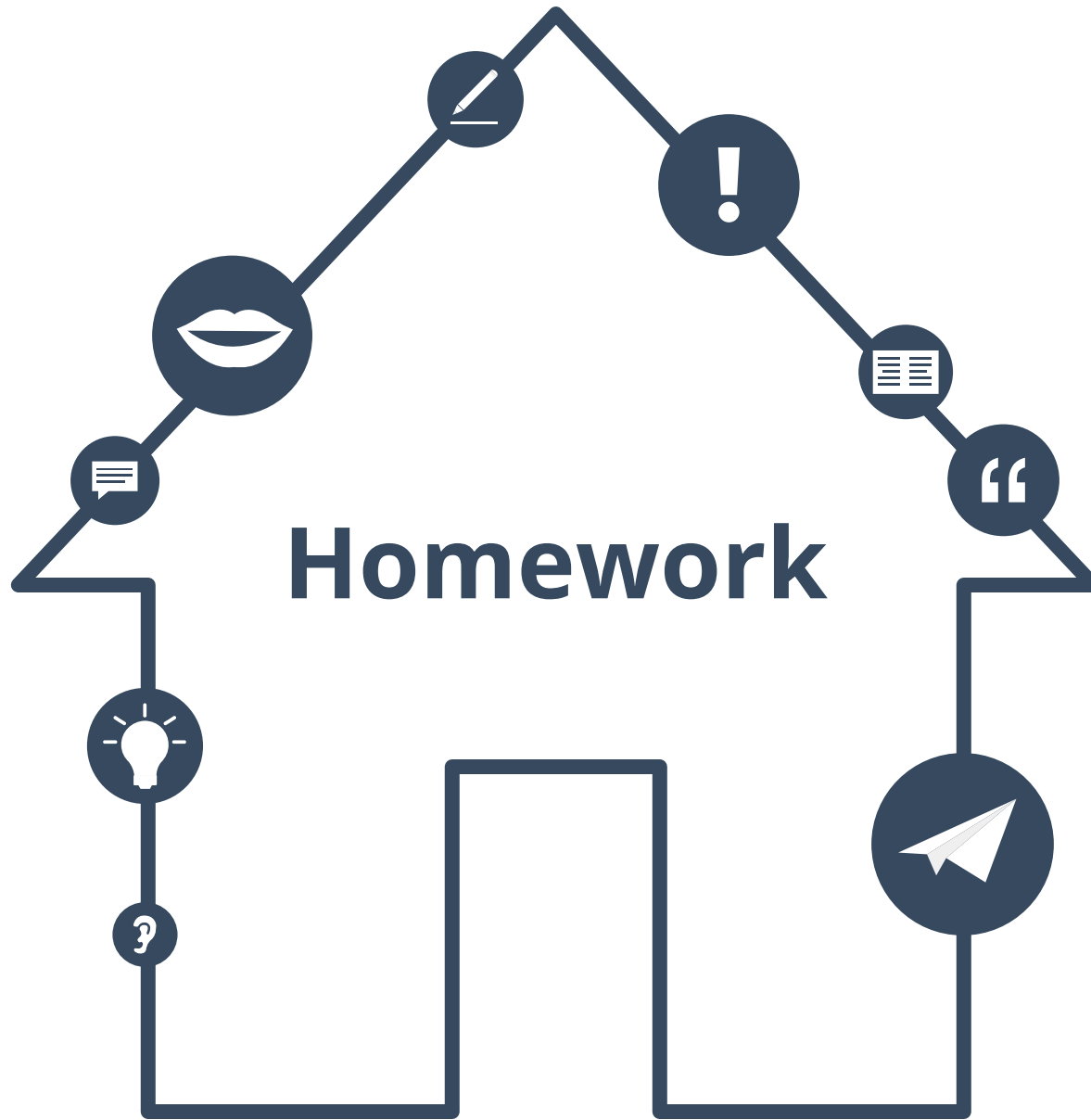
## Answer key

**Exercise p. 9:**  
he wrote after hours; he trained as a doctor; his first **Holmes** short stories were (his others were unsuccessful); they brought him wealth; 1893; he hated him; they differed: he hated him, they loved him.

**Exercise p. 11:**  
gradually; highly; unworthy; ambitious; intricate; considerable; last.

**Exercise p. 12:**  
backlash; friend; subscriptions; prison; cases; death; perspective; demand.

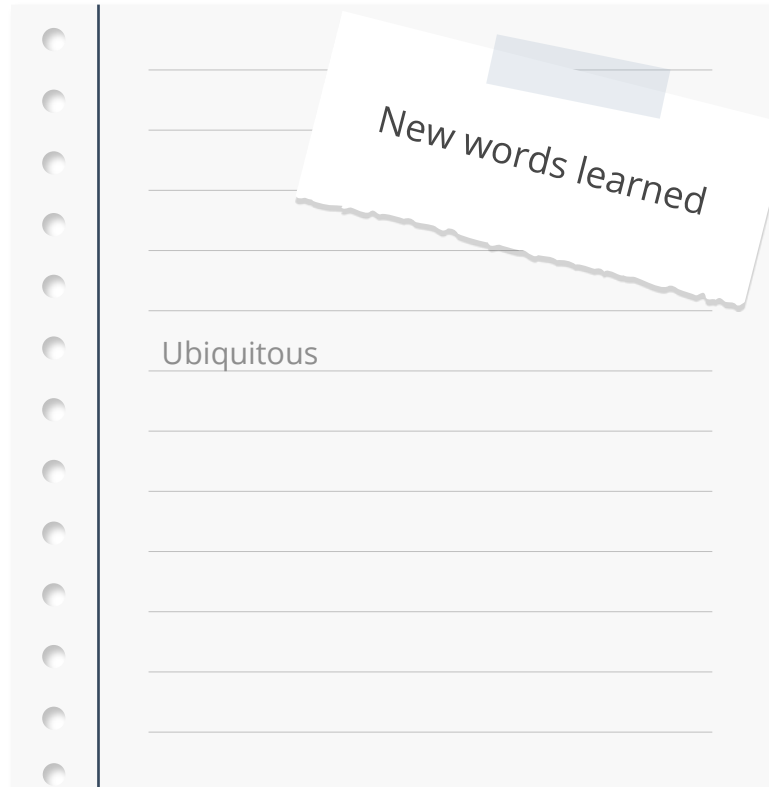
**Exercise p. 13:**  
backlash – reaction; perspective – point of view; phenomenal – extraordinary; intricate – complex; backlash – reaction; resent – dislike.





## New words

Collect the new words you learned during the lesson here, with an example sentence for each.

A graphic of a notepad with a spiral binding on the left. A white sticky note with a blue tab is attached to the top right, containing the text "New words learned". The notepad has several horizontal lines for writing. The word "Ubiquitous" is written on one of the lines.

New words learned

Ubiquitous



## Writing activity

**Write about a literary character who you admire. Did everyone feel the same way?**

**Write at least 6 sentences.**

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I admire...because...

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