

'The Long Night' by Ernst Bornstein

What's your story?
3. Life in the ghetto

How can we use language to describe our experiences?

An online self-study course about the Holocaust for secondary school students studying English in KS3 and 4.

Short lesson 3: Welcome!



Hello and welcome again!

Click on the photo and you'll be able to see a couple of minutes of film introducing you to the next part of 'What's your story?'

Overview



This is the first in a series of short, 30-minute lessons that I've put together for you to help think about how language can be used to tell the stories of our lives.

In this 30 minute lesson you are going to;

- a) Look at a picture to make inferences about a story (5 mins.)
- b) Watch an animation of the first part of 'The Long Night' (5 mins.)
- c) Think about how language is used to tell the story (15 mins.)



Key terms for this lesson

You may find some of these words useful for this short lesson

Key term	Meaning
ghetto	a part of a city, usually a slum area, where a minority group, such as Jews, as forced to live
inference	working out what isn't being directly said or shown
<i>in media res</i>	a story that start in the middle and then goes back to the beginning.
paradox	something that seems contradictory, such as calling someone 'a wise fool'.
testimony	an account an eye-witness gives of events they have seen happen.

Short lesson 2: Warm up



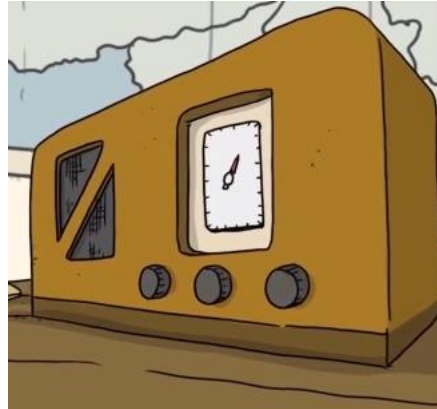
To get warmed up, I'm going to show you a picture, but only bit by bit. There will be 5 slides that each reveal more and more of the picture.

Take a piece of paper and write down letters A to E in the margin. By each picture letter write down what you see and what you think it tells you about the story you are going to encounter.

No cheating by peeping at the next slide until you've written an idea in note form. Move now to the first slide!

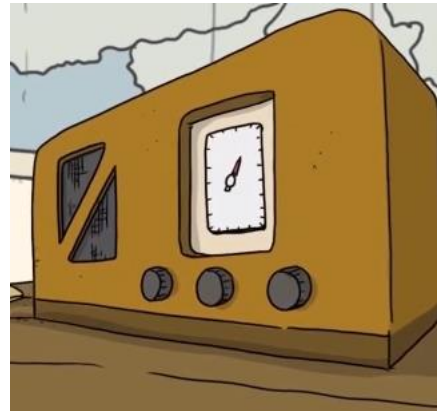
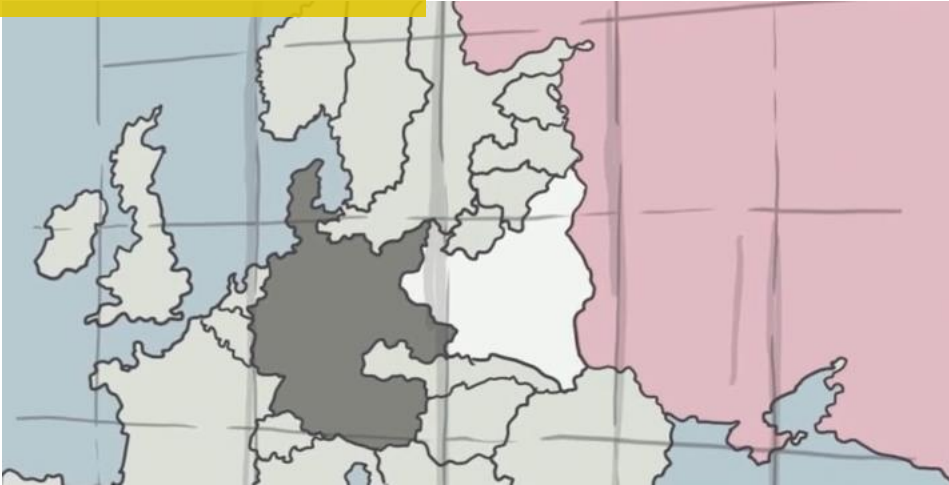
PICTURE A

- What can you see?
- What does this tell you?



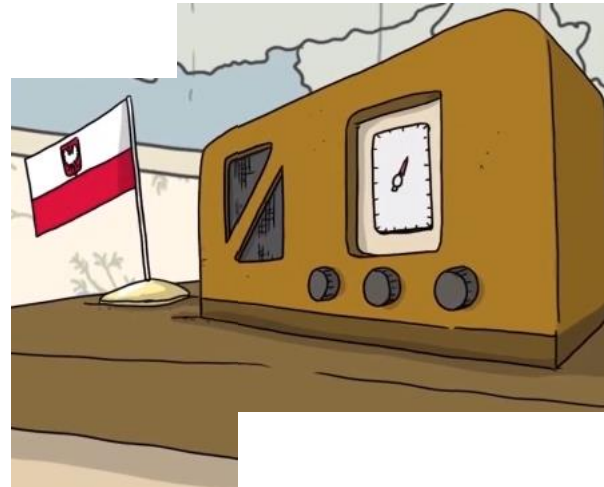
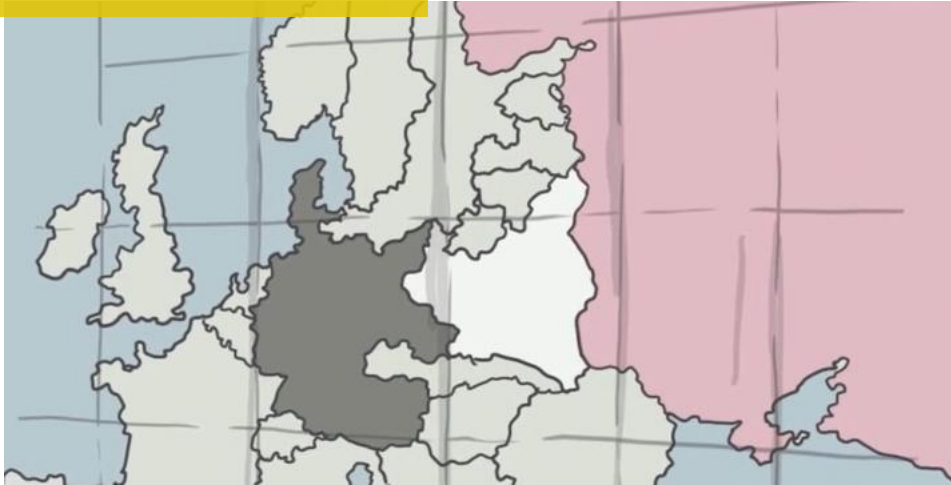
PICTURE B

- What can you now see?
- What does this tell you?



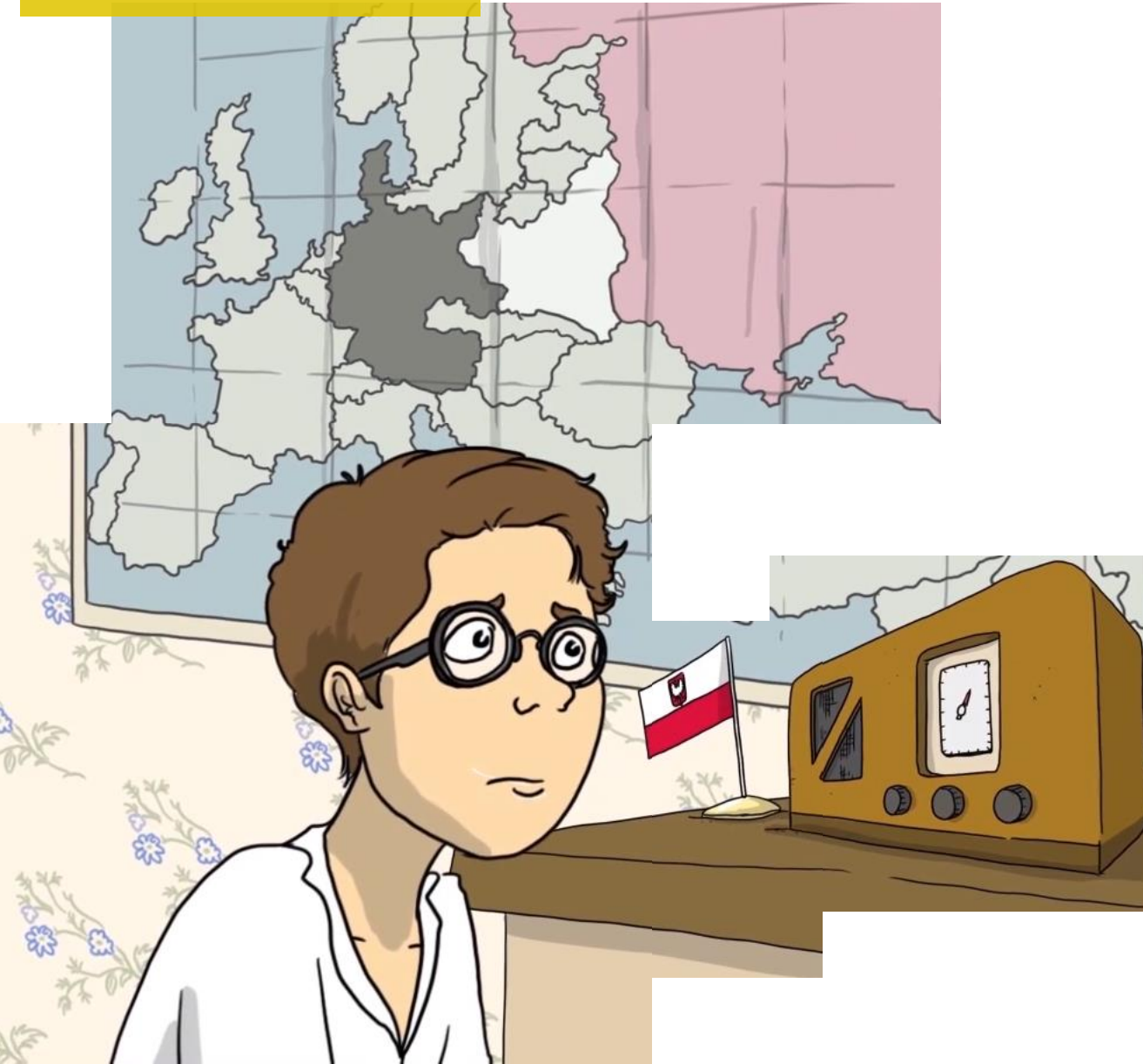
PICTURE C

- What can you now see?
- What does this tell you?



PICTURE D

- What can you now see?
- What does this tell you?



PICTURE E

- What can you see?
- What does this tell you?



Warm up



In a moment you are going to watch the first part of an animation of Ernst Bornstein's book 'The Long Night.' Using the images you've just seen, write a sentence to predict what the two characters might be thinking. This is using **inference** – working out what isn't being said or shown directly. After watching you can decide if you were right.

Remember that you have seen;

- An old-fashioned radio
- A map of Europe, with Germany highlighted
- A flag of Poland
- A boy looking pensive and worried
- His father, also looking pensive and worried.

Thinking about animation



You can watch an animation from part of 'The Long Night' the next slide, but before you do, please be aware of two things;

- Cartoon animations can make something seem to be not real, that it's a kind of made-up fantasy. Remember, however, that this is just that artists' way of showing a story. In this case, it is part of Ernst's story, a story which is based on historical fact.
- The animation will depict moments which some viewers may possibly find a bit worrying. Nothing very graphic is shown, but there are references to people who act in unpleasant and at times violent ways towards others. If what you see concerns you after, do talk to an adult or your teacher about it.

Life in the ghetto



Now watch the first part of The Long Night. Click on the image and it will take you straight there.

As you watch, think about;

- What do you notice about the order events happen in?
- What do you think might be meant by the phrase 'the dawn of the long night'?
- Why might the author have written the story of his life? Who might he be writing it for?

Just watch though, you don't have to write anything down. You can also open the transcript to read along as the film plays if it helps.

How does Ernst tell his story?



10 mins.



Now you've heard the first part of Ernst's life story, we're going to look at 3 ways in which authors tell their stories;

- The order in which events occur
- The use of phrases which seem paradoxical
- The purpose of writing stories.

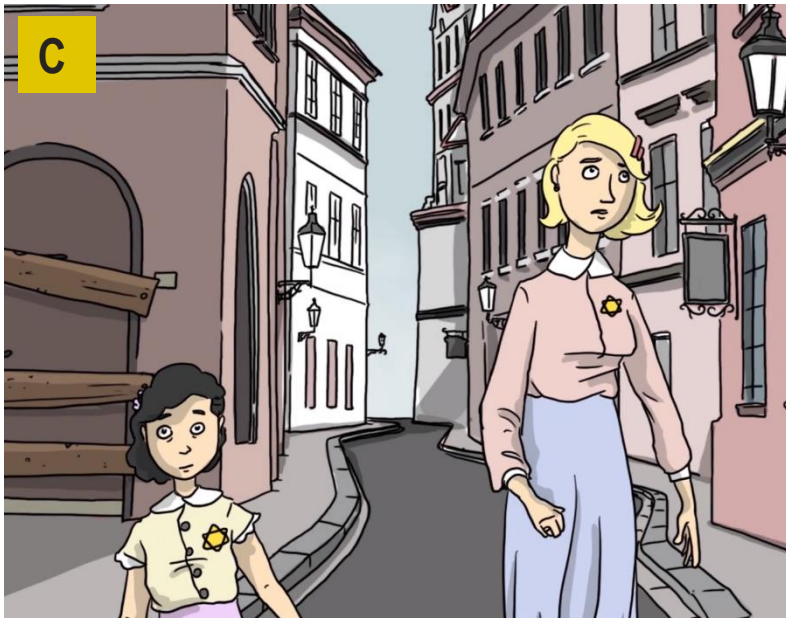
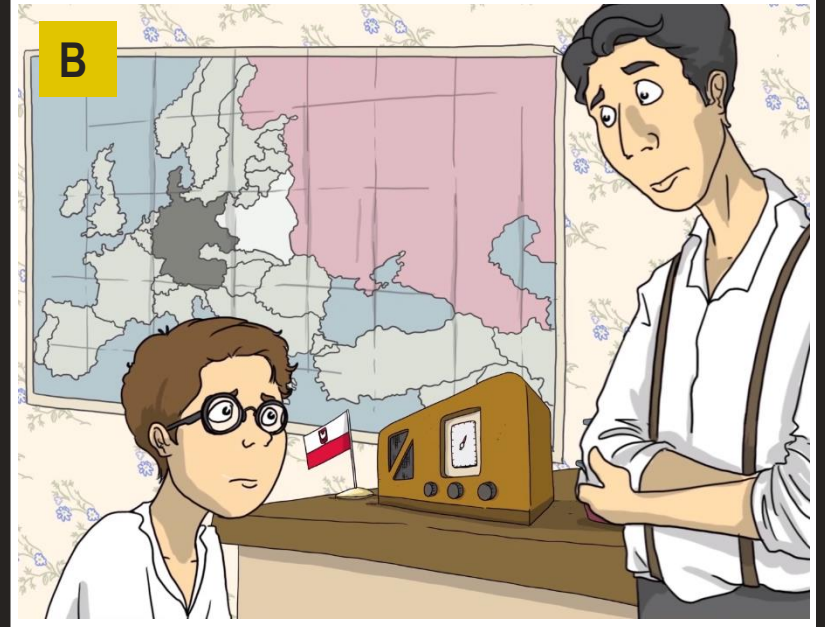
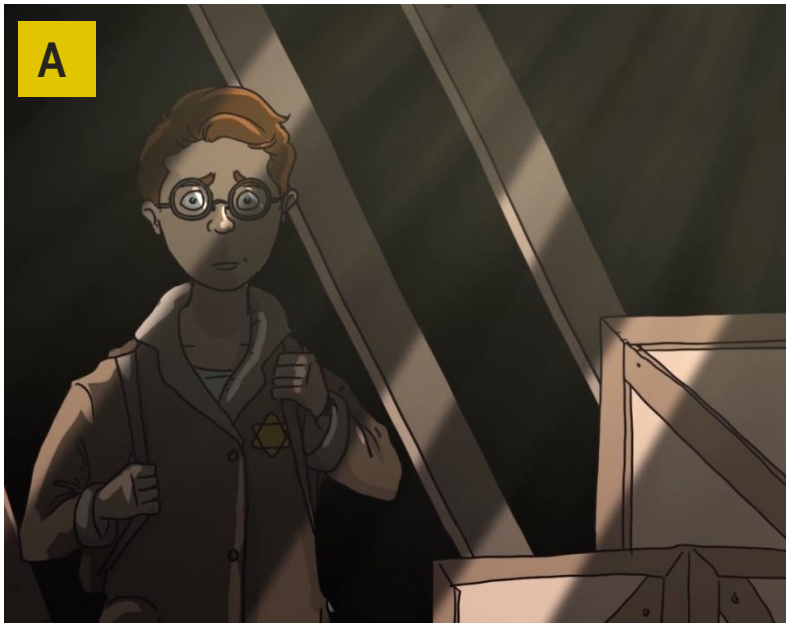
Part 1: What's the sequence of events?



So firstly, think about the way the author orders the events of the story.

I'm going to show you 4 images from the animation. Can you put them in the order they occur in the film? Write down letters in the order they appear. For each one, give a caption (a title) of no more than 5 words to describe what is happening.

(If you get stuck you can replay the film to help)

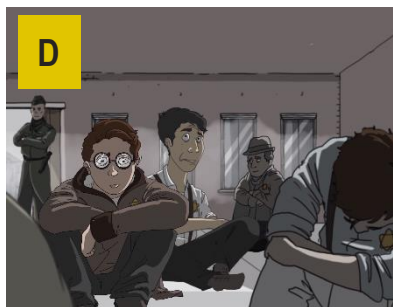


Part 1: What's the sequence of events?

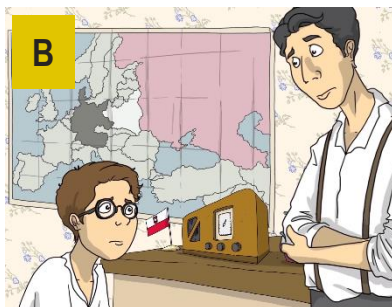


How did you do?

Here's the sequence they occur in in the animation:



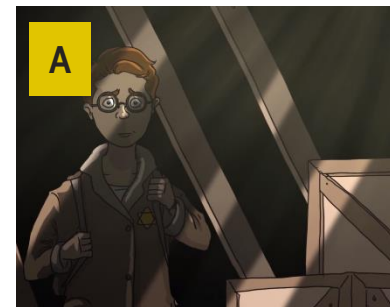
Waiting before the labour camp



The outbreak of war



Hard life in the ghetto



In hiding

But do you notice something unusual about this order?

What is it?

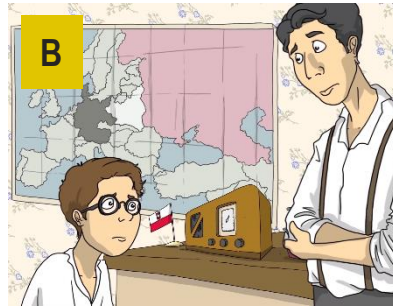
Part 1: What's the sequence of events?



Did you notice they're not in chronological (time) order? If it started in time order, then picture **B**, the outbreak of war, should come first. But instead, it's **D** that starts. This is called *in media res* – where the story starts not at the beginning, but somewhere towards the middle. Authors sometimes use this to make their readers curious and want to keep reading



Waiting before the labour camp



The outbreak of war



Hard life in the ghetto



In hiding

But this is in the animation. In Ernst's written story, he describes things chronologically. There's an important reason why he does this, which we'll come to in Part 3 of this lesson.

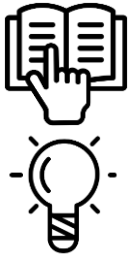
Part 2: Paradox



‘This is the dawn of the long night’

This phrase is used more than once in this first part of Ernst’s story.

What do you notice about it that seems odd or strange?



Part 2: Paradox

‘This is the dawn of the long night’

This phrase is a **paradox**. A paradox is something that seems to contradict (go against) itself. It seems to be a nonsense.

Surely dawn comes at the end of night, not at the beginning?

Why do you think this phrase has been used, when it doesn't seem to make sense?



Part 2: Paradox

‘This is the dawn of the long night’

This **paradox** is used because to Ernst, the events that happened didn't seem to make sense: the outbreak of the Second World War, living in a ghetto, Jews being treated as second-class citizens, going into hiding, being captured and waiting to be sent to Grunheide labour camp. All these things were horrible and made him feel like his world was being turned upside-down.

Shakespeare often uses paradoxes. His play *Macbeth* starts with three witches who say ***‘Fair is foul, and foul is fair.’*** But how can this be? If you want to find out, get yourself a copy - it's a really gripping story.

Part 3: Purpose



This is an early picture of Ernst Bornstein, who wrote 'The Long Night'. He wrote it for a particular purpose. From what you know about the story so far, write down your ideas about;

- Why might he have written his life story?
- Who might he have written it for?

Clues;

- Think about the events that have happened to him so far.
- Think about why he wrote it in chronological order.



Part 3: Purpose



As we introduced last lesson, Ernst's story is a special form of autobiography called a **testimony**.

A testimony is an account an eye-witness gives of events that have happened to them. Often, these events are particularly important, and can also be very traumatic and stressful.

It is important in testimony for authors to be very accurate in their writing because they want people in the future to know *what they experienced*, and not allow lies or misunderstandings to occur. Part of this involves writing everything in the order that happened, so people would be clear and know their truth.

End of short lesson 3



Well done!

You have now completed the second short lesson in 'What's your story?' You have seen an animation of the first part of Ernst's story, and learnt about some key terms such as *in media res*, **paradox** and **testimony**.

In the next short lesson you will see the next part of the animation. You will use it to look at how the language Ernst uses needs to be understood in the context he was writing in. I think you'll be surprised.

'What's your story?'

3. Life in the ghetto



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