

**KCS  home**

# English I

## English I, Week 1

### Powerful Openings

Instead of reading a novel in its entirety at the beginning of this unit—tracking all the twists and turns of the plot and how themes resurface and evolve over the course of the story—you will closely read the openings of several novels. In doing so, you will gain an appreciation for the captivating ways writers lure their readers in, one line at a time.

Week 1 Task 1: Activity 4.1 p.457 (~10 min)

- Read “Learning Targets,” “Preview,” and “About this Unit” (5 min).
- Answer “Essential Questions” (5 min).

Week 1 Task 2: Activity 4.3 p.460-464 (~50 min)

- Complete the “Opening Writing Prompt” on p. 460 (5 min).
- Read the “About Author” on p. 460- conduct on the spot research to learn more about George Orwell (2-3 min).
- Using the “As You Read” prompt on p. 460, read excerpt *from 1984* on p. 461 (10 min).
- Complete the “Knowledge Quest” and Questions 1-4 on p. 462-463 (20 min).
- Do “Drawing Conclusions and Generating Questions” & “Check Your Understanding” on p.464 (10 min).

Week 1 Task 3: Activity 4.3 p.464-469 (~45 min)

- Complete “Opening Writing Prompt” on p. 464 (5 min).
- Read the “About Author” on p. 465 - conduct on the spot research to learn more about Erin Morgenstern (2-3 min).
- Using the “As You Read” prompt on p. 464, read except *from The Night Circus* on p. 465 (15min).
- Complete the “Knowledge Quest” p.467 and do questions 5-8 on p. 468-469 (20 min).

Week 1 Task 4: Activity 4.3 p.469 (20 min)

- Do “Drawing Conclusions and Generating Questions” (5 min).
- Complete “Check Your Understanding” on p. 469 (15 min).

# Previewing the Unit

Task 1: 10 minutes

## Learning Targets

- Preview the big ideas for the unit.
- Create a plan for reading independently.

## Preview

In this activity, you will explore the big ideas and tasks of Unit 4 and make plans for your own independent reading.

## Learning Strategies

Previewing  
Skimming/Scanning

## My Notes

## About the Unit

Instead of reading a novel in its entirety at the beginning of this unit—tracking all the twists and turns of the plot and how themes resurface and evolve over the course of the story—you will closely read the openings of several novels. In doing so, you will gain an appreciation for the captivating ways writers lure their readers in, one line at a time. Then you will settle in to read an entire novel about a young girl's coming-of-age experience and research the novel's historical and cultural context.

## Essential Questions

Based on your current thinking, how would you answer these questions?

1. What makes an opening powerful?
2. What makes you want to keep reading a book?
3. How can understanding a book's context help you understand the book?

## Planning Independent Reading

In this unit, you will read a novel in class that tells the story of a young girl coming of age in a real historical period. In your independent reading, you have the opportunity to read another book, either fiction or nonfiction, on a related topic that interests you. Consider finding books about people coming of age or books related to the Jim Crow era or the Civil Rights Movement. Reading other texts that relate to the theme and context of *To Kill a Mockingbird* will deepen your understanding and allow you to make meaningful connections. To find a book you will like, consider these questions.

- What kinds of books have you enjoyed reading in the past? Do you prefer fiction or nonfiction? Do you have a favorite author?
- Who are some writers and thought leaders from the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights Movement, and what books by or about them might you be interested in reading?
- Think of some coming-of-age stories you have seen in movies or on television. Do you know if any were based on a book?
- When you find a book you might like, flip through the first section. Does it seem interesting? Does it seem too easy, too hard, or just right?

## Learning Strategies

Close Reading  
Graphic Organizer

## My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze the settings of novels based on their opening paragraphs.
- Generate questions and draw conclusions about events that will happen in a novel.
- Integrate ideas from multiple texts to build knowledge and vocabulary about realistic novels.

## Preview

In this activity, you will read excerpts from the openings of two novels and discuss how those openings hook readers.

## Opening Writing Prompt

Read this opening line of a novel and jot down any telling details that indicate what kind of world you are entering.

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.

## As You Read

- Highlight words, descriptions, and imagery that give you clues about the novel's world.
- Circle unfamiliar words or phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

## About the Author



George Orwell was the pseudonym of author Eric Arthur Blair (1903–1950), who took the pen name early in his writing career to avoid embarrassing his family. From boyhood, Orwell was considered both brilliant and eccentric, and his writing reflected these qualities, as well as his rejection of the social norms by which he had been raised. Although Orwell is best known for his novella *Animal Farm* and his dystopian novel *1984*, he also wrote poetry, literary criticism, news articles, and polemical essays, or essays that inspire controversy. In

one such essay, “Politics and the English Language,” Orwell addresses writers and argues in favor of using simple, straightforward language to boldly express ideas. He explains how clear writing correlates with clear thought, while also accusing some political leaders of using vague language, such as euphemisms, to manipulate the way people think.

## Novel

from **1984**

by George Orwell

**1** It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

**2** The hallway **smelt** of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a colored poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a meter wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black mustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the **lift**. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The **flat** was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a **varicose ulcer** above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

**3** Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the meagerness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the Party. His hair was very fair, his face naturally **sanguine**, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended.

**4** Outside, even through the shut window pane, the world looked cold. Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no color in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere. The black-mustachio'd face gazed down from every commanding corner. There was one on the house front immediately opposite. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said, while the dark eyes looked deep into Winston's own. Down at street level another poster, torn at one corner, flapped fitfully in the wind, alternately covering and uncovering the single word INGSOC. In the far distance a helicopter skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle, and darted away again with a curving flight. It was the Police Patrol, snooping into people's windows. The patrols did not matter, however. Only the Thought Police mattered.

**KNOWLEDGE QUEST****Knowledge Question:**

How can a fictional setting seem real?

In Activity 4.3, you will read the openings of two novels that use realistic details to hook readers. While you read and build knowledge about the theme of realistic novels, think about your answer to the Knowledge Question.

**My Notes**


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**smelt:** smelled**lift:** elevator**flat:** apartment**varicose ulcer:** painful, bloody sore that takes several weeks to heal**sanguine:** a healthy reddish color

## My Notes

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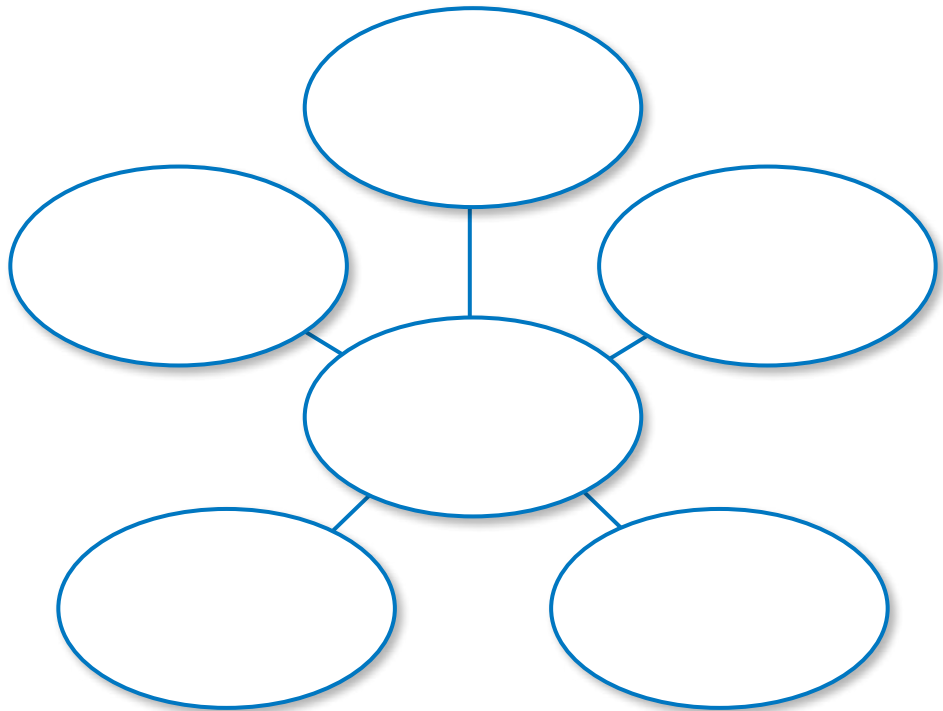
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### Knowledge Quest

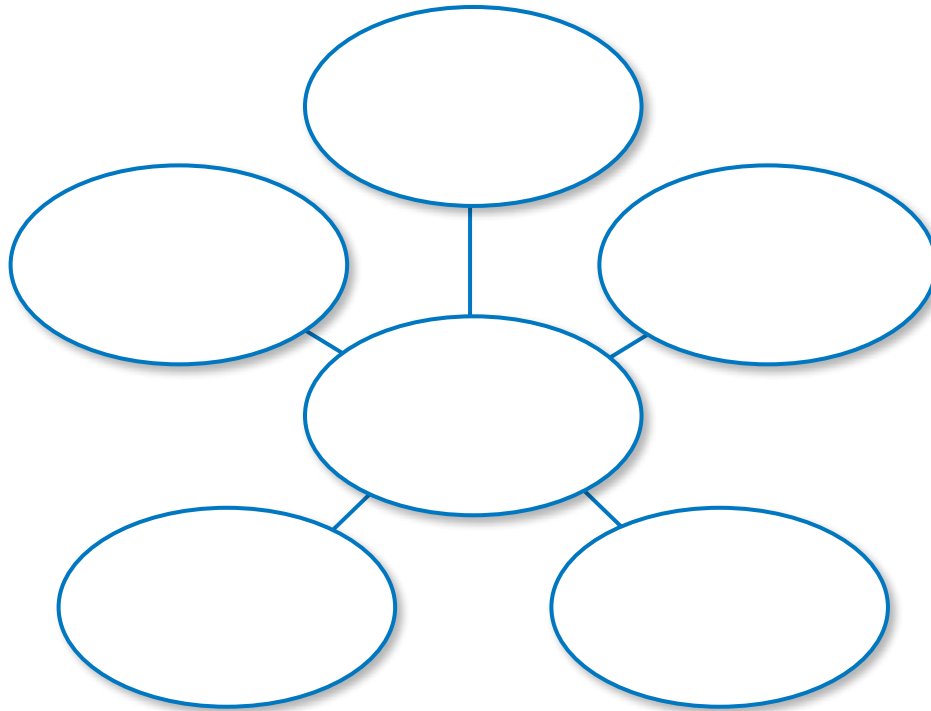
- What does this place look like? Use one adjective as your response.
- What would it feel like to live in this place?

### Working from the Text

1. With a partner, go back to the text and highlight the most striking examples of imagery and details that elicit the strongest emotional responses as you read.
2. How would you sum up the physical details of the novel's world? Write your one-word response in the center of the web. Then, in the surrounding ovals, write quotes from the text that support your one-word response.



3. How would you sum up the emotional effect of the novel's world? Write your one-word response in the center of the web. Then, in the surrounding ovals, write quotes from the text that support your one-word response.



### Analysis of Setting

4. Write a brief paragraph summarizing your observations and analysis of the setting of *1984*. Use the quotes from the webs you completed about the physical details and emotional effect of the novel's world to help you.

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### Drawing Conclusions and Generating Questions

As directed by your teacher, discuss the following questions with your classmates.

- What are some questions that the excerpt from *1984* provokes?
- What are some things that seem mysterious at the beginning of the excerpt but are easier to understand later on?
- What do the details of the setting imply about the economic and political state of the novel's world?

### Check Your Understanding

How does Orwell hook readers with the first paragraphs of his novel *1984*?

**Task 3: 45 minutes**

#### Opening Writing Prompt

Read this opening line of another novel and jot down any telling details that indicate what kind of world you are entering.

The circus arrives without warning.

#### As You Read

- Highlight words, descriptions, and imagery that give you clues about the novel's world.
- Circle unfamiliar words or phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.



## About the Author



Erin Morgenstern (b. 1978) is one of a growing number of authors who wrote their first novels while participating in National Novel Writing Month, an annual writing challenge more commonly known as NaNoWriMo. During NaNoWriMo, writers try to draft 50,000 words in only 30 days. Morgenstern calls the event “magical,” and she appreciates it for the company she keeps as she and other writers race toward the finish line. She also values its tight deadline, which forces her to get her ideas down quickly, without editing them as she goes. Says

Morgenstern, “Before NaNoWriMo, I was the sort of person who would write a page and hate it, so I’d stop, when really you need to keep going and write more pages.” Morgenstern says she explored ideas for *The Night Circus* over the course of two consecutive NaNoWriMo’s, writing a different draft each time. Then she took the second draft through a heavy revision phase before finally having it published. Since then, *The Night Circus* has spent seven weeks as a *New York Times* Best Seller and won the American Library Association’s Alex Award and the Locus Award for Best First Novel.

## Novel

## from *The Night Circus*

by Erin Morgenstern

## Anticipation

- 1 The circus arrives without warning.
- 2 No announcements precede it, no paper notices on downtown posts and billboards, no mentions or advertisements in local newspapers. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not.
- 3 The towering tents are striped in white and black, no golds and **crimsons** to be seen. No color at all, save for the neighboring trees and the grass of the surrounding fields. Black-and-white stripes on grey sky; countless tents of varying shapes and sizes, with an elaborate wrought-iron fence encasing them in a colorless world. Even what little ground is visible from outside is black or white, painted or powdered, or treated with some other circus trick.
- 4 But it is not open for business. Not just yet.
- 5 Within hours everyone in town has heard about it. By afternoon news has spread several towns over. Word of mouth is a more effective method of advertisement than typeset words and exclamation points on paper pamphlets or posters. It is impressive and unusual news, the sudden appearance of a mysterious circus. People marvel at the staggering height of the tallest tents. They stare at the clock that sits just inside the gates that no one can properly describe.

## My Notes

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**KNOWLEDGE QUEST****Knowledge Question:**

How can a fictional setting seem real?

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**crimsons:** dark reds

## My Notes

6 And the black sign painted in white letters that hangs upon the gates, the one that reads:

*Opens at Nightfall*

*Closes at Dawn*

7 “What kind of circus is only open at night?” people ask. No one has a proper answer, yet as dusk approaches there is a substantial crowd of spectators gathering outside the gates.

8 You are amongst them, of course. Your curiosity got the better of you, as curiosity is wont to do. You stand in the fading light, the scarf around your neck pulled up against the chilly evening breeze, waiting to see for yourself exactly what kind of circus only opens once the sun sets.

9 The ticket booth clearly visible behind the gates is closed and barred. The tents are still, save for when they ripple ever so slightly in the wind. The only movement within the circus is the clock that ticks by the passing minutes, if such a wonder of sculpture can even be called a clock.

10 The circus looks abandoned and empty. But you think perhaps you can smell caramel wafting through the evening breeze, beneath the crisp scent of the autumn leaves. A subtle sweetness at the edges of the cold.

11 The sun disappears completely beyond the horizon, and the remaining luminosity shifts from dusk to twilight. The people around you are growing restless from waiting, a sea of shuffling feet, murmuring about abandoning the endeavor in search of someplace warmer to pass the evening. You yourself are debating departing when it happens.

12 First, there is a popping sound. It is barely audible over the wind and conversation. A soft noise like a kettle about to boil for tea. Then comes the light.

13 All over the tents, small lights begin to flicker, as though the entirety of the circus is covered in particularly bright fireflies. The waiting crowd quiets as it watches this display of illumination. Someone near you gasps. A small child claps his hands with glee at the sight.



My Notes

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14 When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears.

15 Stretched across the top of the gates, hidden in curls of iron, more firefly-like lights flicker to life. They pop as they brighten, some accompanied by a shower of glowing white sparks and a bit of smoke. The people nearest to the gates take a few steps back.

16 At first, it is only a random pattern of lights. But as more of them ignite, it becomes clear that they are aligned in scripted letters. First a C is distinguishable, followed by more letters. A q, oddly, and several e’s. When the final bulb pops a light, and the smoke and sparks dissipate, it is finally legible, this elaborate incandescent sign. Leaning to your left to gain a better view, you can see that it reads:

*Le Cirque des Rêves*

17 Some in the crowd smile knowingly, while others frown and look questioningly at their neighbors. A child near you tugs on her mother’s sleeve, begging to know what it says.

18 “The Circus of Dreams,” comes the reply. The girl smiles delightedly.

19 Then the iron gates shudder and unlock, seemingly by their own **volition**. They swing outward, inviting the crowd inside.

20 Now the circus is open.

21 Now you may enter.

 Knowledge Quest

- What does this place look like? Use one adjective as your response.
- What would it feel like to visit this place?

 Knowledge Quest

Think about the novel openings you have read. How do the writers create worlds that seem real? Write a few paragraphs to compare and contrast how the writers created realistic worlds in the openings of these novels. Be sure to:

- Include a topic sentence and cite textual evidence as support.
- Organize your ideas in a way that makes similarities and differences clear.
- Use transitions to make connections between ideas clear.
- Provide a conclusion that explains the importance of setting in the novels.

 INDEPENDENT READING LINK

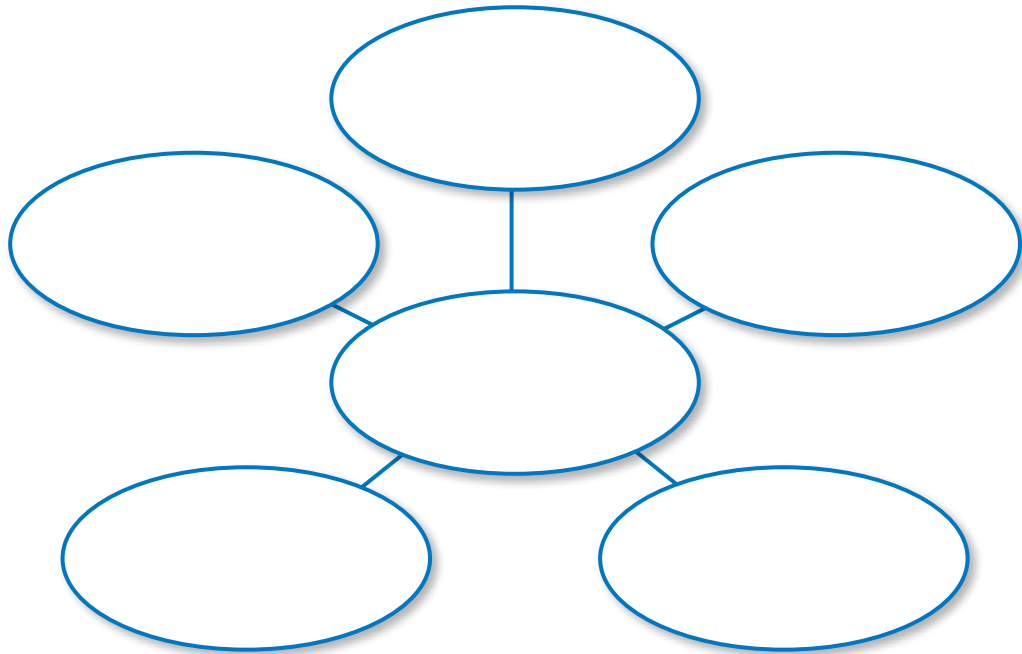
You can continue to build your knowledge about this theme by reading related fiction at ZINC Reading Labs. Select the **fiction** filter and type keywords such as *realistic* in the **Search all ZINC articles** field.



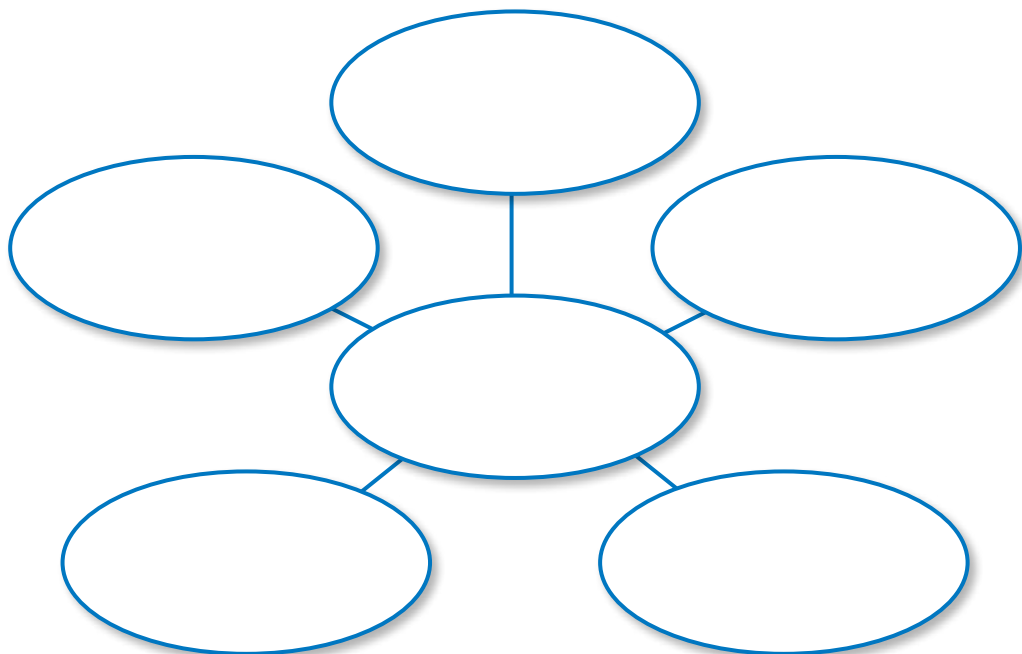
**volition:** will

### Working from the Text

5. Go back to the text and highlight the most striking examples of imagery and details that elicit the strongest emotional response as you read.
6. How would you sum up the physical details of the novel's world? Write your one-word response in the center of the web. Then, in the surrounding ovals, write quotes from the text that support your one-word response.



7. How would you sum up the emotional effect of the novel's world? Write your one-word response in the center of the web. Then, in the surrounding ovals, write quotes from the text that support your one-word response.



## Analysis of Setting

8. Write a brief paragraph summarizing your observations and analysis of the setting of *The Night Circus*. Use the quotes from the webs you completed about the physical details and emotional effect of the novel's world to help you.

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### INDEPENDENT READING LINK

#### Read and Respond

Reread the opening paragraphs of the text you are reading independently. How does the author make you interested in reading more of the story or text? Does the author use any of the techniques you learned from Orwell and Morgenstern for hooking the reader? Write a paragraph that summarizes the beginning few paragraphs of the text you are reading and describes how the author uses telling details to create suspense or generate the reader's interest in the text's topic. Eliminate widow.

### My Notes

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### Task 4: 20 minutes

## Drawing Conclusions and Generating Questions

Discuss the following questions with your classmates.

- What are some questions that the excerpt from *The Night Circus* provokes?
- What are some things that seem mysterious at the beginning of the excerpt but are easier to understand later on?



### Check Your Understanding

How does Morgenstern hook readers with the first paragraphs of her novel *The Night Circus*?