

The Curse

Characterisation

Pre-reading

Below are some chunks from the text. You have two things to do with them. First, decide if they are the order that you think fits best. Next try and work out how the chunks might be linked – in other words, can you build a story around the information you have been given? Work in small groups and be prepared to share your narrative with others.

For three hundred years, while its fame spread across the world, the little town had stood here at the river's bend. Time and change had touched it lightly; it had heard from afar both the coming of the Armada and the fall of the Third Reich, and all Man's wars had passed it by.

The rocket had been astray, one of the last ever to be fired. It was hard to say for what target it had been intended. Certainly not London, for London was no longer a military objective. London, indeed, was no longer anything at all.

But that had been days ago, at the beginning of the War. The defenders had long since been brushed aside, as they had known they must be. They had held on to life long enough to discharge their duty; too late, the enemy had learned his mistake.

A church had stood here by the river's edge, and though no trace of the building remained, the gravestones that the years had gathered round it still marked its place. Now the stone slabs lay in parallel rows, snapped off at their bases and pointing mutely along the line of the blast.

Timidly the waters touched the worn gravestone that for more than three hundred years had laid before the vanished altar.' The church that had sheltered it so long had given it some protection at the last, and only a slight discolouration of the rock told of the fires that had passed this way.



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Now it was gone, as though it had never been. In a moment of time the toil and treasure of centuries had been swept away. The vanished streets could still be traced as faint marks in the vitrified ground, but of the houses, nothing remained.

In the story 'The Curse', there are no characters. That is to say, there are no living people mentioned, and the only thing that is moving is a river. How do you describe a story with no characters? Look at the following pictures and see what stories you can make up about them.



