



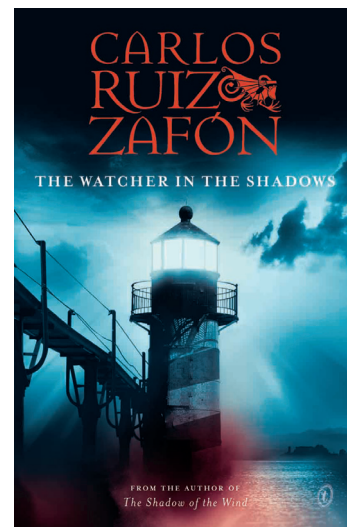
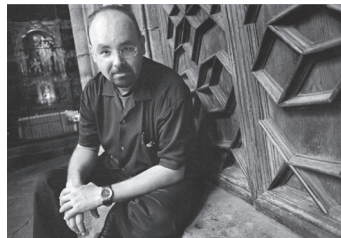
The Watcher in the Shadows

CARLOS RUIZ ZAFÓN

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Fiction, B paperback

RECOMMENDED AGE:
YEARS 7-10

Text's Teaching Notes for the Australian Curriculum

- ▶ Text's teaching notes are designed for teachers to explore the novel in line with the *Australian Curriculum: English*.
- ▶ Questions are divided into stages: from pre-reading to post-reading and include suggested tasks for assessment.
- ▶ An ACARA coding system connects each task to the *Australian Curriculum: English*. It includes links to strands, modes, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.
- ▶ Refer to the legend below and the accompanying [Australian Curriculum: English Scope and Sequence reference chart](#) to decipher these codes.
- ▶ Students can record their responses in writing through reading journals, online discussions or verbally in classroom discussions.

Strands	LA – Language LT – Literature LY – Literacy
Modes	W – Writing L – Listening R – Reading
General capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Ethical behaviour Intercultural understanding Personal and social capability Critical and creative thinking Numeracy Information and communication technology
Cross-curriculum priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

SYNOPSIS

Carlos Ruiz Zafón weaves a tale as macabre as Edgar Allan Poe and gripping to the very end. Set in pre-WWII France, Simone and her children, Irene and Dorian, seek refuge and a new life on the Normanby coast where Simone accepts employment with a brilliant but reclusive toy maker called Lazarus Jann. In the shadows of Cravenmoore Manor lurks a mystery that leads the family into a twisted and unpredictable series of events.

When Lazarus tells the children that 'You mustn't believe everything you see', they could not have predicted the inexplicable horror they were about to live through. Irene, her friend Ishmael and Dorian must battle their own fears in order to find the truth behind the tales told by the local villagers and the past exposed through the diary of a woman who is said to have drowned years before.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carlos Ruiz Zafón was born in Barcelona. He is one of the world's most-read and best-loved writers. His work has been translated into more than forty languages, garnering numerous international prizes and reaching millions of readers. *The Watcher in the Shadows* is the fifth of his novels to be published in English.

**BEFORE READING**

1. Research the term Doppelgänger. As you read, keep track of how it is used throughout the novel. **L, A, R**
2. Research gothic literature. What are the features of gothic literature? Create a power point for the class on the features of gothic literature. **(ACELT1722) LT, R**
3. Ruiz Zafón draws on tradition of suspense and gothic fiction. Read Edgar Allan Poe's *Fall of the House of Usher*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill or Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. What are the features of their writing? As you read *The Watcher in the Shadows*, make note of features that you recognise these texts have in common? **(ACELT1722) LT, R**

WHILE READING

1. What do you understand after reading the opening letter? Make a list of questions that the letter raises for you? **(ACELT1771) LT, R**
2. What features of gothic horror does *The Watcher in the Shadows* draw on? **(ACELT1774) LT, R**
3. Choose a chapter of the novel and make a list of similes and metaphors that Ruiz-Zafón uses. What effect do they have? **(ACELT1637) L, T, R**
4. Find examples of personification in the novel and explain their effect. **(ACELT1637) L, T, R**
5. Draw a map of the setting including key locations, where events occurred and add quotations that depict those locations. **LY, R**
6. Consider the various ways that shadows are used in the novel? Choose 3 examples and write a paragraph that explores the impact that this has on the whole text. **(ACELA 1561) LA, R**
7. Other than the obvious physical differences, what other differences can you see between Blue Bay and Paris? **LT, R**
8. '...they could idle away the rest of the year like Aesop's lazy grasshopper and survive the winter' P.49 Research the story of Aesop's grasshopper. Why is the analogy used? **(ACELT1774) LT, R**
9. Initially Cravenmoore seems welcoming. In what way and at what point does this change? **(ACELT1641) LT, R**
10. 'The stairs rose in a byzantine spiral that seemed to defy gravity, progressively twisting around on itself like the access route to the dome of a large cathedral.' P.143 What is the symbolism of the spiral stairs? **(ACELT1637) LT, R**
11. Explore the irony of the line 'Masks reveal a person's true face...' P.185 **(ACELT1637) LT, R**
12. What does it mean 'to lose your marbles'? P.193 Would you say that this was true of Lazarus? **(ACELT1629) LT, R**

AFTER READING**Characters**

1. Research the biblical story of Lazarus. Having read the story, what parallels are drawn between the character and his namesake? **(ACELT1629) LT, R**
2. Which characters do you consider vulnerable and why? **(ACELT1620) LT, R**
3. Make a list of the key characters and find quotes that best describe them. What words are generally associated with each character? **(ACELT1547) LA, R**
4. In what way are Simone and Lazarus alike? In what way are Ishmael and Irene alike? How does this influence the way we view them? **(ACELT1620) LT, R**
5. Consider the way that the writer influences the way we respond to characters. **(ACELA1561) LA, R**
6. In what way does the relocation to Blue Bay change the behaviour of the children? Find evidence that supports your thoughts. **(ACELA1561) LA, R**
7. What colours are associated with the characters and what does this tell us about them? **(ACELA1561) LA, R**
8. Through his boat, the writer links Ishmael with Homeric journeys. Do some research and consider why this might be so. **(ACELT1774) LT, R**
9. The novel depicts families that have been broken or divided in a range of ways. In what way do family connections influence the way we see characters? **(ACELT1621) LT, R**
10. The shadow is presented as a character in its own right. How does the writer give it life? **(ACELA1547) LA, R**

Style and Structure

1. In what way is the structure used to build suspense in the novel? **(ACELT1641) LA, R**
2. Throughout the novel, Ruiz-Zafón is very specific about dates of events. Why do you think he does this? **(ACELT1622) LT, R**
3. What are intertextual references? Find examples in the novel and consider why they are included? **(ACELT1774) LT, R**
4. Write a paragraph of your own that could be included in the novel and include a new intertextual reference. **(ACELT1635) LT, W**
5. Re read the passage where Hannah meets the shadow PP. 62–7. In what way does the writer create drama in these pages? **(ACELT1641) LT, R**
6. What is the purpose of weaving in the letters, stories and diaries? **(ACELY1735) LY, R**

Themes**Reality and Illusion**

1. What is more frightening in the novel? Reality or illusion? **(ACELT1637) LT, R**

- How does the writer use shadows to blur the line between reality and illusion? (ACELT1637) **LT, R**
- In what way is myth used in the text to raises questions about what is real and what is not? (ACELT1637) **LT, R**

Good and Evil



- Find the references to angels in the novel. In what way is the image of the angel portrayed differently at various stages and why? (ACELT1637) **LT, R**
- Lazarus is sometimes shown as good and sometimes evil. Find quotes from the novel that depict him in each way. (ACELT1627) **LT, R**
- What references are made to the evils in the world they are living in? (ACELT1637) **LT, R**

Nature





- How is the natural environment used to create suspense and illusion in the novel? (ACELT1641) **LT, R**
- Ruiz-Zafón uses storms frequently throughout the novel. Why, and what is the impact? (ACELT1637) **LT, R**
- Write a short story that uses nature and the environment to create drama and suspense. (ACELT1638) **LT, W**
- How does Ruiz-Zafón bring life into the forest and to what effect? (ACELT1622) **LT, R**

'The wind scratched at the shutters...' P.99




Consider the way that nature and man-made creations merge throughout the story. (ACELT1622) **LT, R**

paper the reports would be from a larger local town newspaper.)  

You could do this by hand or use a computer to give it an appropriate layout, including a suitable headline. **LT, W**

- Create a book trailer for *The Watcher in the Shadows*. Create a storyboard and/or make use of multimedia to present it. Have a class viewing of the completed trailers and write reviews of each other's finished products. If you were the publisher, which would you choose to market the book and why? **LT, W, L**  
- Deliver a book reading for a younger audience. Choose a key passage which you believe will encourage them to want to reads more. Consider how you deliver the reading and add appropriate drama to it. Listen to each other's delivery and offer feedback on the overall impact the reading had. **LT, W, L**  

RESPONDING

- 'In a world of rats they'd happened on an angel.' P.7 Who are the 'rats' and who are the 'angels' in *The Watcher in the Shadows*? **LT, W** 
- In the opening Ruiz-Zafón writes 'This was the beginning of the Sauvelles' spectacular fall into the real world.' P.6 In what way does the real world and fantasy become blurred in the novel? **LT, W**
- Lazarus tells Irene and Dorian 'You mustn't believe everything you see.' P.25 In what way is this evident in the novel? **LT, W**
- In what way does Ruiz-Zafón create mystery and suspense in the novel? Make a list. Use this list to write your own mystery story drawing on the devices that Ruiz-Zafón uses. **LT, W** 
- How is the concept of the doppelganger repeated throughout the novel and why? **LT, W**
- 'Loneliness creates strange labyrinths in the mind.' P.82 In what ways is this story a 'strange labyrinth'? **LT, W**
- There can be both good and evil in one person. Discuss **W, LT** 
- Write a series of newspaper reports about the events in Blue Bay. (Obviously as there was no local