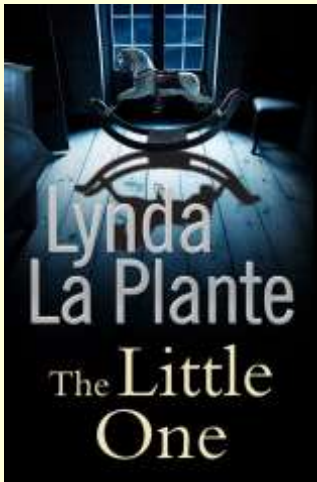


The Little One – Creating atmosphere



The Little One by Lynda La Plante starts:

“Barbara Hardy stared out of her office window at the heavy grey sky. It had been raining all day and London looked dreary and depressing.”

The writer’s use of descriptive language helps to create atmosphere. It also gives the reader a better idea of why characters act the way they do.

Listen to or read the first chapter of *The Little One* on BBC Skillswise:
bbc.co.uk/skillswise/learners/quick-reads/adult-learning-article-quick-reads-the-little-one

Descriptive language

Throughout the story, the writer uses adjectives and adverbs to describe people, places and actions to add atmosphere.

Adjectives

Compare the following sentence with and without adjectives:

Barbara Hardy stared out of her office window at the **heavy grey** sky.

Barbara Hardy stared out of her office window at the sky.

In the above sentence **sky** is a **noun** or ‘naming word’. **Adjectives** describe **nouns**.

The adjective **heavy** suggests Barbara is feeling the weight of the world on her shoulders and **grey** is a colour often linked to low mood.

Adverbs

Compare the following sentence with and without an adverb:

She tried to breathe **deeply**.

She tried to breathe.

In the above sentence **breathe** is a **verb** or ‘doing word’. **Adverbs** describe **verbs**.

The adverb **deeply** suggests Barbara is trying to calm herself.

Factsheet Entry 3