**Do now:**

1. Write a sentence to describe a sad day using personification.
2. What was Oliver forced to do by Sikes?
3. What do we call the technique where something is compared to something else using ‘like’ or ‘as’?

**Key words**

**symbol –** a thing that represents something else. for example, the colour green often represents jealousy

**lynch mob –** an angry group of people who intend to kill someone for committing a crime, without sending them to trial in court first

**justice (noun) –** fairness, being reasonable

**conscience –** a person’s inner sense of right and wrong

**Summary:** Sikes has murdered Nancy for betraying him and is on the run from the police. He sees visions of Nancy’s dead eyes which disturb him greatly. He returns to London to find a hiding place and when he reaches Fagin’s house, a lynch mob chases him out of the house to be arrested. Sikes grabs a rope to try and escape from the roof, but instead ends up accidentally hanging himself to death.

**Sikes feels guilty and has begun hallucinating about the murder of Nancy. There are not literally ‘twenty violent deaths’: this is a metaphor to show that even though Sikes has run away from the police, he cannot escape his own guilty conscience.**

**Extract: The Lynch Mob**

**The metaphor of a ‘ghost’ shows that Sikes feels haunted by his wrongdoings, and foreshadows his impending death.**

**This imagery shows the negative effects that guilt has on Sikes’ appearance, making him look ill.**

**Eyes are often used in literature as a symbol representing guilt. These eyes may be Nancy’s, the eyes of the public or maybe even God’s, judging Sikes for his sins.**

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| Every object before him, substance or shadow, still or moving, took the **semblance** of some fearful thing. **Let no one talk of murderers escaping justice: there were twenty violent deaths in one long minute of that agony of fear.** There was a shed in a field he passed, that offered shelter from the dark night. Now a terrible vision came before him.**Widely staring eyes appeared in the darkness. There were but two, but they were everywhere, torturing him.** He was in such terror as none but he can know, trembling in every limb, cold sweat starting from every pore, when suddenly there arose on the night-­‐wind the noise of distant shouting, and the roar of voices mixed with alarm and wonder.…**White-­‐faced, sunken-­‐eyed, hollow-­‐cheeked, with wasted flesh,** and short, thick breath: **the very ghost of Sikes arrived in London at Fagin’s den.**…‘Help!’ shouted the [Artful Dodger], in a voice that split the air. ‘He’s in here! Break down the door!’‘Damn you!’ cried the desperate **ruffian**, menacing the crowd. ‘Do your worst! I’ll get you yet!’The infuriated mob roared to the officers to shoot him dead. Voices took up the cry for a ladder, and hundreds echoed it. Some called for ladders, some for sledgehammers, some roared and some lit more torches; all pressed forward in a throng of angry madmen.‘Give me a rope, a long rope,’ cried the murderer. ‘I may drop into Folly ditch, and clear off that way. Give me a rope, or I shall do more murders.’ Panic-­‐stricken, the boys pointed to a rope, and the murderer hurried up to the roof. He looked out over the roof-­‐tops. The tide was out, the ditch a bed of mud. The crowd roared and cursed, and it seemed as if the whole city had poured out its population to curse him. The cries and shrieks of those who were pressed almost to suffocation, or trampled down and trodden under foot in the confusion, were dreadful. The **ferocity** of the crowd meant the impossibility of escape. He sprang up, determined to make one last effort for his life by dropping into the ditch and escaping in the confusion. Roused to new strength and energy, he set his foot against the stack of chimneys, and rested one end of the rope firmly round it, and with the other made a strong noose, so he could let himself down to the ground. At that very instant, he uttered a yell of terror**: ‘The eyes again!’** in an unearthly screech. Staggering as if struck by lightning, he lost his balance and tumbled off the chimney. The noose was on his neck. It ran with his weight, **swift as an arrow**, twenty metres, and tightened like a bowstring. The old chimney quivered with the shock, but stood bravely before giving way. **The murderer hung lifeless, then fell, striking his head against a stone, which dashed his brains out.** |



**The word ‘labyrinth’ makes the streets seem like a maze that Oliver will not be able to escape from.**

**This simile implies that the noose travelled with great speed, showing the reader that death is quick for Sikes.**

**Answer the following questions on what you have just read. Remember to write in full sentences, using effective punctuation.**

1. Why can Sikes feel Nancy’s eyes “everywhere, torturing him”?
2. Who do you think is making the noise of “distant shouting” and the “roar of voices” that Sikes can hear?
3. Whose house does Sikes try and hide in?
4. Why does Sikes choose to try and escape via the roof?
5. What is the effect of the simile “swift as an arrow”?

**Analytical paragraph: How does Dickens show the idea of guilt in this extract?**

**Model paragraph**

In the extract, Dickens explores Bill Sikes’ guilt for committing murder through Nancy’s eyes: “they were everywhere, torturing him”. **In other words**, Sikes is hallucinating because he feels guilty for killing his innocent girlfriend**. More specifically**, the verb ‘torturing’ shows that even though Sikes managed to run away from the lynch mob who want to kill him, he cannot escape the judgement of his own conscience.

**Your turn (at least two paragraphs)…**