Unit 9 — Short Fiction in the Classroom — Teacher copy

Track E · Klasse 9 · Niveau E

Niveau E

1. Reading

Read the text and use it for the activities below.

Reading — *The Found Letter* (extract)

By the time June found the letter, her grandmother had been dead for six years. The letter was sealed and unaddressed. It had been written, June was almost certain, in the days before her grandmother had stopped writing entirely. The handwriting was the same — except for one shaky line at the end, which June read three times before she put the letter back into the box. She did not open it that Tuesday. By the next Sunday, she had decided.

Grammar — past perfect with time conjunctions

Use **past perfect** for the earlier of two past events.

- *By the time June found the letter, her grandmother **had been** dead for six years.*
- *Before she opened it, she **had read** it three times.*
- *After she **had decided**, she stopped checking the box.*

2. Practise

Niveau E — controlled

1. Past perfect: *(by the time / I / arrive / the film / start)* → ___ .
2. Choose tense: When she found the letter, her grandmother _____ (be) dead for six years. (was / had been)

Niveau E — productive

3. Build 3 past-perfect sentences from a story of your choice (real or invented).

3. Your turn

Literary response, 180 words. Read the extract above. Answer in writing: *Who is June? What is the conflict? What is the theme? Which one detail is doing the most work?* Use 3 past-perfect structures.

Sample

By the time June found the letter, her grandmother had been dead for six years. June is, I imagine, someone in her late teens — old enough to be trusted with the box, young enough that the loss still moves through her unfinished. The conflict is small but heavy: she must decide whether to open the letter. The theme is what the dead leave us, and what we owe them. The detail that does the most work is the shaky line at the end — three words that tell us this letter was written in a body already failing. The past perfect throughout the passage builds the layered time the story needs: the grandmother had stopped writing, the letter had been written, June had read it three times. By the next Sunday, she had decided. The story trusts us not to ask, yet, what she decided.

4. Further reading / listening

- Project Gutenberg — short stories at A2/B1 level.
- Penguin Modern Classics — extracts and notes.

5. Teacher answer key

Controlled. 1. *By the time I arrived, the film had started.*

2. had been.

Productive. 3. Open.