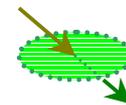


CREATIVE  
WRITING ↔ SCIENCE



**Activity 3**

25 – 100 minutes

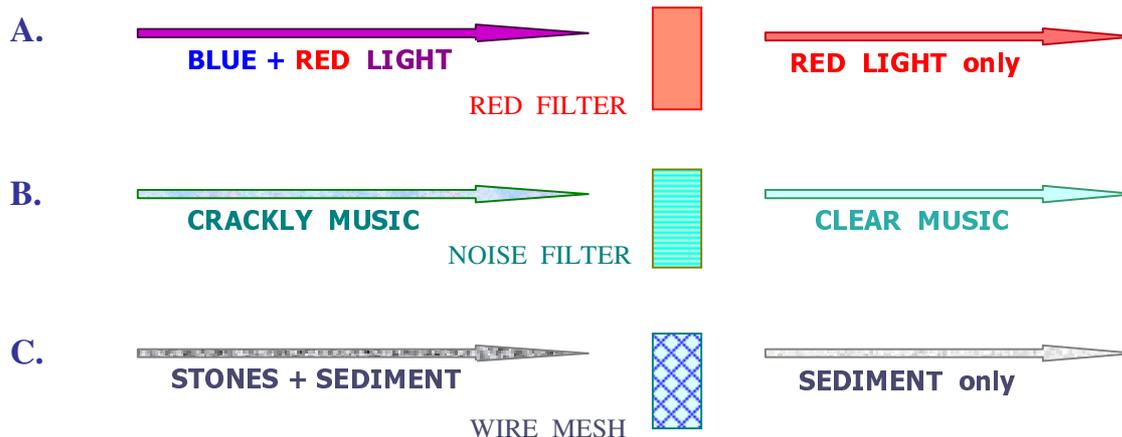
**STUDENT HANDOUT**

## FILTERS

**AIM.** To put an imaginative ‘slant’ on familiar objects and events via a scientific ‘filter’.

**Suitable for:** Year 11 + ; creative writing courses/ MAs; adult writers. Youngest users **will** need guidance.

1. In any form you wish (poem, short story, a scene in a play, journal notes...) begin to describe a key event in your life: an intense moment, something from childhood, a vital meeting...
- 
2. Now examine the following examples of how a filter works in science or engineering...



If possible, find out about other kinds of filter used in science and technology (either from resources provided by your teacher or, later, in a library or on the internet).

3. Revisit the piece you wrote above, in ‘1’. **Rewrite** it using any of the three filters (A, B or C):



**USING Filter A** = seeing your experience through a **red** filter, which means thinking about any kind of ‘redness’ in it (such as angry words, anything to do with blood, sunsets, and so on...)

**USING Filter B** = describing the experience only in terms of what was **quiet, still, pure**, etc...

**USING Filter C** = sticking with the **tiniest details** or things (say) a child or a spy might notice.

If you’re unsure how to do this, look at the examples below – or ask for help.

**Case Study** Notes produced in ‘1’: “My mother marched me to the bathroom and scrubbed me with soap...”

**Example of rewrite, using Filter ‘A’** (= anything red in it – you can interpret ‘redness’ however you want to):

“Mum’s hands were rough, raw from years at the sink. Now that colour was in her face too, struggling to get me up the stairs. *Look at the state of you*, she said. *Where’s that blood from? Get in the bath and stay away from that troublemaker.* She meant Tom O’Brien. Tommy, with his ruddy hair, his redder spirit...”

**Example of rewrite, using Filter ‘B’** (= clean, simple, pure): “Mum’s face shone. Skin wax-like, unmarked, white as soap. Every surface in that bathroom – tile, tub, my mother’s face – was a complexion of her one light...”

**Example of rewrite, using Filter ‘C’** (= only the fine details get through): “That fine line of scum round the tub, where dad had had his bath. Still that faint whiff of tobacco off his skin. I watched the level rise as mum’s hands, cobwebbed with fine red lines, lowered me in. The cracked, dirtied soap was a pure-white scone with raisins...”

### **DISCUSSION** (older/ more experienced groups)

Redo the exercise using other kinds of filter, taken from science if possible.

Was the ‘filter approach’ useful or interesting? Could it be a good tool when editing new material? Why? Can you see ways in which this approach might help you to structure a piece of work, or to generate focus or variation of style?