

Northanger Abbey
by Jane Austen

Chapter Thirteen: A Letter from Isabella

Author: Adrian Tennant
Level: Beginner – pre-intermediate
Age: Teenagers / adults
Time needed: 30 minutes approx

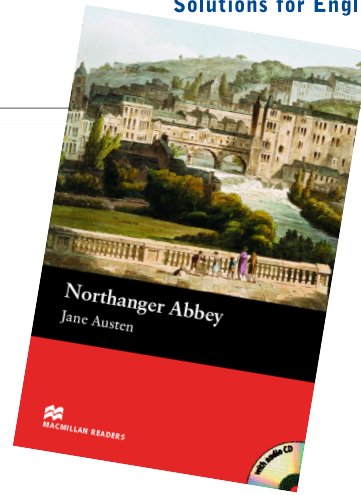
Activity 1

- 1 Start by eliciting adverbs of frequency from the students and write them up on the board (e.g. always, usually, sometimes)
- 2 Then ask your students to put them in order with the most frequent on the left and the least frequent on the right (100% always to 0% never).
- 3 Now ask your students to listen carefully and write down the number of times they hear each of the following adverbs of frequency: *always, often, sometimes, never.*
- 4 Play the whole of the letter from Chapter Thirteen from *My dearest Catherine* to *Your loving friend, Isabella.*
- 5 Put students in pairs and get them to compare their answers.
- 6 Now tell the students you will play the letter again and this time they should write down what each adverb refers to.
- 7 Play the recording.
- 8 Put the students in pairs and have them compare their answers before checking as a class.

Answers:
always = 0; often = 1; sometimes = 1; never = 3
often – Isabella often saw Captain Tilney.
sometimes – She must enjoy herself sometimes.
never – She will never love anybody but James. (Catherine's brother); She never liked Captain Tilney and she never goes to balls anymore.

Extension activity: Habits

On the board write up the following adverbs of frequency: *always, often, sometimes, never.*



Ask students to imagine the daily life of one of the characters in *Northanger Abbey* and to write four sentences using each of the adverbs. Monitor and help with vocabulary. In groups or as a class, ask students to read their sentences. Ask the rest of the group or class to comment on whether they think the sentence is true, e.g. Student: *Isabella always goes to bed early.* Class: *No, she doesn't. She sometimes goes to balls.*

Activity 2

- 1 On the board write the following questions:
Why did Isabella write to Catherine?
How does she feel?
What does she want Catherine to do?
What do you think Catherine will do?
- 2 Ask students to listen to Chapter Thirteen and answer the questions.
- 3 Play the recording.
- 4 Put students in pairs and get them to compare their answers.
- 5 Monitor and play the recording again, if necessary.

Extension: Love stories

Ask students to try and think about other famous 'love stories' they know from books or films, e.g. *Romeo & Juliet*. Put students in groups and ask them to talk about these love stories and see how much they can remember. Then ask groups to tell the class about the love story.

Chapter Thirteen: A Letter from Isabella

Transcript

On Friday morning, two things happened. Henry came back to Northanger Abbey and a letter arrived for Catherine. The letter was from Isabella.

My dearest Catherine,

My family will leave Bath tomorrow. I hate this place. All my friends have left. James is in Oxford, but he has not written to me. Why not? I will never love anybody else.

Catherine, please write to James. Did I make him unhappy? I do not know. Will he write to me? Then everything will be well again.

Another man has left Bath too - Captain Tilney. I hate him. I often saw him, but I never liked him. I only like your dear brother.

I never go to balls now, but I went to the theatre last night. I must enjoy myself sometimes.

Please, please write to your brother. And write to me too.

Your loving friend,

Isabella

Catherine showed the letter to Eleanor and Henry.

'I understand,' Catherine said. 'Captain Tilney did not love Isabella. She will be sad.'

'No, Miss Morland,' Henry said. 'Isabella will not be sad. She did not love my brother, Frederick. They were both wrong. Write to your brother, James. Forget Isabella Thorpe.'

The next day was Saturday. General Tilney went to London. But Henry stayed at Northanger Abbey. 'I will go back to Woodston next Saturday,' he said.

Catherine was happy. She was with her two dear friends.

