Before reading the story

1- Discuss in groups the following questions

a- Do you like stories, in books or films, about crime investigations and detectives? Why (not)?

b- Who is the writer of the Sherlock Holmes stories? (Choose from the options) What do you know about him?
   - Oscar Wilde
   - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
   - Edgar Allan Poe

c- Have you ever read or seen any Sherlock Holmes stories before? Did you like it? Why (not)?

d- What do you know about Sherlock Holmes? Complete the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sherlock Holmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>city / address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>method of investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e- The title of the story you are going to read is *The Speckled Band*. What do you think the story is about?
While reading the story

Chapter 1: Helen’s Story

2. Complete the following statements.

- The narrator is ............................................................................................................................................
- The main characters are ............................................................................................................................
- Helen looked for Holmes’ help because .....................................................................................................
- Helen and Julia didn’t have a happy life after their mother died because ............................................
- As regards Julia’s death, the police ............................................................................................................
- Helen’s situation now was similar to Julia’s at the time of her death. The similarities are ......................

3. Put in order these events from the night of Julia’s death.

   a. Helen called for her stepfather.
   b. Helen heard a whistle.
   c. Julia cried: “Help me, Helen, I’m dying!”
   d. Helen heard a noise like metal falling.
   e. Helen heard her sister scream.
   f. Helen ran into the corridor.
   g. Julia went into her bedroom.
   h. Helen threw her arms round her sister.
   i. Julia opened her bedroom door.
   j. Julia fell to the ground.
   k. Julia locked her bedroom door.
   l. Julia screamed: “The speckled band!”

4. Imagine you are a detective and have to help Helen. Think about the following questions.

   a. What do you think happened to Julia?
   b. What do you think was making the whistling sound?
   c. What do you think the speckled band might be?
   d. What do you think will happen to Helen?
5. Are the following statements True or False. Correct the false ones.

a. Dr Roylott didn’t need the girls’ money because he received £750 a year from his dead wife.
b. Helen had to move into her sister’s bedroom because there was a problem in her room’s wall.
c. There was bell-rope over Julia’s bed for calling a servant, but it didn’t work.
d. There was an air-vent on the wall between Julia’s room and Helen’s.
e. Dr Roylott kept a cat in a large metal box in his room.
f. Holmes realized that Helen was in danger.
g. Holmes knew that there was an air-vent between the two rooms because Helen had told him.
h. Julia’s bed was fixed to the floor, under the bell-rope.
i. Holmes wanted Helen to spend the night in Julia’s room.

6. At Dr Roylott’s house, Sherlock Holmes found five clues. What are they?

- Clue 1: ...........................................................................................................
- Clue 2: ...........................................................................................................
- Clue 3: ...........................................................................................................
- Clue 4: ...........................................................................................................
- Clue 5: ...........................................................................................................

7. Holmes and Watson discovered the truth about Julia’s death and Helen’s danger. And you? Take into account all the clues you have so far and discuss the following questions with your partner.

- How did Julia die?
- Who killed her?
- What is going to happen to Helen?
- What about your predictions in act. 4? Do you still think the same? Were you wrong about anything?
Chapter 3: *Death in the Night*

8. Match the words in each column to make phrases in order to write a brief summary of the final chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1- quiet</th>
<th>2- terrible</th>
<th>3- speckled</th>
<th>4- bell</th>
<th>5- wait</th>
<th>6- quiet</th>
<th>7- die</th>
<th>8- metal</th>
<th>9- air</th>
<th>10- call</th>
<th>11- dead</th>
<th>12- metal</th>
<th>13- drink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a- rope</td>
<td>b- box</td>
<td>c- silently</td>
<td>d- sound</td>
<td>e- band</td>
<td>f- immediately</td>
<td>g- cry</td>
<td>h- vent</td>
<td>i- whistle</td>
<td>j- milk</td>
<td>k- back</td>
<td>l- body</td>
<td>m- falling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading the story

9. Discuss the following questions in groups.

a- What role did “the speckled band” play in the story?
b- In what way was Sherlock Holmes responsible for Dr. Roylott’s murder in the story?
c- What role did the gypsies serve in this story?
d- Dr. Roylott was killed by his own collection of creatures (the speckled band.) How is this an appropriate end to the story?

What other stories have you read that involve an animal or invention killing its owner?
e- Can you add anything else to the chart about Holmes in activity 1?
10. Check how much you remember from the story.

- Go to the following site and do the *The Speckled Band* quiz:
  

11. Complete the following chart about methods of investigating crimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sherlock Holmes</th>
<th>Modern day forensic scientists</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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