

Emerald City Reading Comprehension

'Good gracious me!' Aunt Spiker said, 'What's that awful noise?'

Both women swing round to look. The noise, of course, had been caused by the peach crashing through the fence that surrounded it, and now, gathering speed every second, it came rolling across the garden towards the place where Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker were standing.

The gaped. They screamed. They started to run. They panicked. They both got in each other's way. They began pushing and jostling and each one of them was thinking only about saving herself. Aunt Sponge, the fat one, tripped over a box that she'd brought along to keep the money in and fell flat on her face. Aunt Spiker immediately tripped over Aunt Sponge and came down on top of her. They both lay on the ground, fighting and clawing to get up again, but before they could do this the mighty peach was upon them.

There was a crunch. And then there was silence.

Write the answers in full sentences:

1. What did the peach crash through?
2. What was the peach rolling towards?
3. Write 3 things that the Aunts did when they saw the peach rolling.
4. Which Aunt tripped over a box?
5. What did Aunt Spiker trip over?
6. What do you think made the 'crunch' noise?
7. What do you think was happening inside the peach at this time?

CHALLENGE

Write 3 'find it' questions for your teacher to answer.

BIG BEN GETS A BATH!

People from all over the world come to London and visit Big Ben but one week this August, they would have seen an unusual sight!

Five highly-trained abseiling experts started cleaning all four clock faces on 18th August. It will be the clock's first scrub for 4 years. Experts think it will take a week to complete the cleaning so long as the weather stays fine.

The Houses of Parliament clock (nicknamed Big Ben), which was built in 1859, will also be checked for damage to the dials. Each clock face is made up of 312 pieces of opal glass, which must be treated carefully. The hands of the clock were made in copper because it is lighter than other metals.

To keep the climbing cleaners safe, the clock's hands have been frozen in the midday position.

DID YOU KNOW?

Big Ben's real name is the Great Clock of Westminster which is at the top of the Elizabeth Tower (named after the Queen). The Elizabeth Tower is part of the Houses of Parliament.

1. Where is Big Ben?
2. What year was Big Ben last cleaned in?
3. Over 250 pieces of glass are used in Big Ben. True or false?
4. What material was chosen to make the hands of the clock and why?
5. How have they made sure the cleaners will not be in danger?
6. How many days will it take to finish the job?
7. What is the correct name for the building the clock is at the top of?

From 'World of Warriors – A New Hero' by Curtis Joblin

'Get a blooming move on!'

Dad's voice echoed through the tiny flat, sending shockwaves resonating through Trick Hope's body. The thirteen-year-old lay for a moment longer, thinking about the day ahead, before swinging his legs out from beneath the covers. He shambled to his feet, scratched and stretched. Hooking the vertical blinds aside, he peered out of the window. London sprawled before him.

Trick lifted the lucky pendant round his neck to his lips, giving it a swift ritual kiss before letting it fall back on to his chest. He

After squeezing into the jeans, he tugged on the shirt – still buttoned from the night before – and slipped the knotted tie over his head like a noose.

He stepped into his once-white trainers, then walked over to the shelves beside the door. They were loaded with his comic collection, weeklies bought religiously from Super Freaks in Soho.

Trick wasn't looking at the comics, though. His focus was on the terrarium nestled between the piles of back issues. There was no movement within the glass tank; the foliage and webs were motionless. Shelob had clearly been hungry in the night, polishing off the last of her crickets.

'You'll be late!'

Trick rolled his eyes, making no attempt to quicken his pace. He shrugged his blazer on, the maroon sleeves threadbare from the various scrapes he'd got himself into over the years. Lifting the flap on his backpack, he checked the contents: a half-empty box of Tic Tacs, a tatty exercise book and a couple of biros. Hardly the ingredients for academic

success. Trick shrugged. What had school ever really taught him, apart from how to run and hide? He swung the bag over his shoulder and headed out of his bedroom.

Retrieving Information

- 1) Use a dictionary to find the definitions for
 - a) resonating
 - b) ritual
 - c) terrarium
- 2) Find and copy **one** word that shows that Trick's blazer is old.
- 3) Find and copy **one** word that shows that Trick never forgets to buy his magazines

Making Inferences

- 4) What type of creature lives in the terrarium and how do you know?
- 5) Why do you think Trick kisses his necklace?
- 6) Is Trick's room tidy? Give 2 pieces of evidence to support your answer.

Writer's Choices

- 7) Why has the writer chosen to describe the knotted tie as "like a noose"? What does this tell us?
- 8) Why has the author selected words like "shrugged" and "shambled" to describe how Trick moves?

Challenge Question (extended answer)

- 9) Describe what you think Trick might be like at school, using quotes from the text to support your answer.