

Reading Tasks

Task 1:

The Secret Garden Inferences Story Extract

Taken from 'The Secret Garden' by Frances Hodgson Burnett, Chapter 1, p.7 and 8.

'How queer and quiet it is,' she said. 'It sounds as if there was no one in the bungalow but me and the snake.'

Almost the next minute she heard footsteps in the compound, and then on the veranda. They were men's footsteps, and the men entered the bungalow and talked in low voices. No one went to meet or speak to them, and they seemed to open doors and look into rooms.

'What desolation!' she heard one voice say. 'That pretty, pretty woman! I suppose the child, too. I heard there was a child, though no one ever saw her.'

Mary was standing in the middle of the nursery when they opened the door a few minutes later. She looked an ugly, cross little thing and was frowning because she was beginning to be hungry and feel disgracefully neglected. The first man who came in was a large officer she had once seen talking to her father. He looked tired and troubled, but when he saw her he was so startled that he almost jumped back.

'Barney!' he cried out. 'There is a child here! A child alone! In a place like this! Mercy on us, who is she?'

'I am Mary Lennox,' the little girl said, drawing herself up stiffly. She thought the man was very rude to call her father's bungalow 'A place like this!' 'I fell asleep when everyone had the cholera and I have only just wakened up. Why does nobody come?'

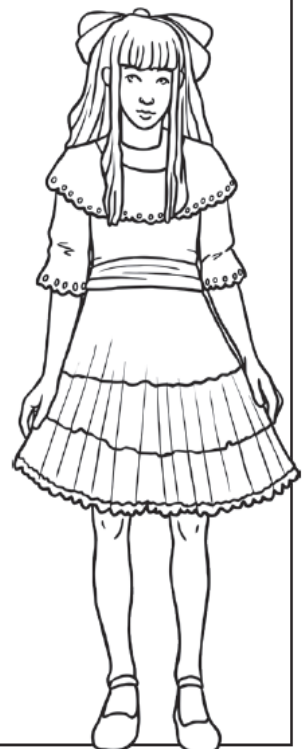
'It is the child no one ever saw!' exclaimed the man, turning to his companions. 'She has actually been forgotten!'

'Why was I forgotten?' Mary said, stamping her foot. 'Why does nobody come?'

The young man whose name was Barney looked at her very sadly. Mary even thought she saw him wink his eyes as if to wink tears away.

'Poor little kid!' he said. 'There is nobody left to come.'

It was in that strange, sudden way that Mary found out that she had neither father nor mother left; that they had died and been carried away in the night, and that the few native servants who had not died also had left the house as quickly as they could get out of it, none of them even remembering that there was a Missie Sahib. That was why the place was so quiet. It was true that there was no one in the bungalow but herself and the little rustling snake.'



The Secret Garden Inferences

L.O: Drawing inferences and justifying them with evidence.		
Character	What is the character like at this moment?	What evidence do you have? Choose a part of the story that shows this.
Mary Lennox	What she looks like:	
	How she acts:	
The large officer	What he looks like:	
	How he acts:	
Barney	What he looks like:	
	How he acts:	

Summarising Information

Task 2: L.O. Identify the main points in a text and summarise them

Read this excerpt from 'The Secret Garden' p.116 (ch 10)

When he saw Mary he held up his hand and spoke to her in a voice almost as low as and rather like his piping.

'Don't tha' move,' he said. 'It'd flight 'em.'

Mary remained motionless. He stopped playing his pipe and began to rise from the ground. He moved so slowly that it scarcely seemed as though he were moving at all, but at last he stood on his feet and then the squirrel scampered back up into the branches of his tree, the pheasant withdrew his head, and the rabbits dropped on all fours and began to hop away, though not at all as if they were frightened.

'I'm Dickon,' the boy said. 'I know tha'rt Miss Mary.'

Then Mary realised that somehow she had known at first that he was Dickon.

Who else could have been charming rabbits and pheasants as the natives charm

Then Mary realised that somehow she had known at first that he was Dickon.

Who else could have been charming rabbits and pheasants as the natives charm snakes in India? He had a wide, red, curving mouth and his smile spread all over his face.

'I got up slow,' he explained, 'because if tha' makes a quick move it startles 'em. A body 'as to move gentle an' speak low when wild things is about.'

He did not speak to her as if they had never seen each other before, but as if he knew her quite well. Mary knew nothing about boys, and she spoke to him a little stiffly because she felt rather shy.

Activity 1:

Underline or highlight the most important words in this text.

TIP - This should be no more than about 20 words.

Activity 2:

Turn this page over and write about what you have been reading – without peeking!

Task 3:

The Robin who Showed the Way

An extract from The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

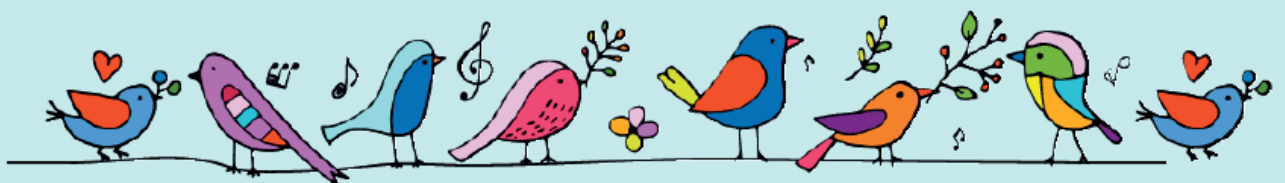
"You showed me where the key was yesterday," she said. "You ought to show me the door today; but I don't believe you know!"

The robin flew from his swinging spray of ivy on to the top of the wall and he opened his beak and sang a loud, lovely trill, merely to show off. Nothing in the world is quite as adorably lovely as a robin when he shows off – and they are nearly always doing it...

...One of the nice little gusts of wind rushed down the walk, and it was a stronger one than the rest. It was strong enough to wave the branches of the trees, and sprays of untrimmed ivy hanging from the wall. Mary had stepped close to the robin, and suddenly the gust of wind swung aside some loose ivy trails, and more suddenly still she jumped towards it and caught it in her hand. This she did because she had seen something under it – a round knob which had been covered by the leaves hanging over it. It was the knob of a door.

She put her hands under the leaves and began to pull and push them aside. Thick as the ivy hung, it nearly all was a loose and swinging curtain, though some had crept over wood and iron. Mary's heart began to thump and her hands to shake a little in her delight and excitement. The robin kept singing and twittering away and tilting his head on one side, as if he were as excited as she was. What was this under her hands which was square and made of iron and which her fingers found a hole in?

It was the lock of the door which had been closed ten years, and she put her hand in her pocket, drew out the key, and found it fitted the keyhole.





Questions about *'The Robin Who Showed The Way'*

Section 1 - RECALL

1. What did the robin do to show off?

2. What plant was covering the door?

3. *How long did Mary think the door had been closed?*

Section 2 - VOCABULARY

1. *'...sprays of untrimmed ivy ...'*

What does the word *untrimmed* mean?

2. Do you think that Mary likes the robin?

Find and copy two words from the text that show this.

_____ and _____

3. *'What was this under her hands which was square and made of iron and which her fingers found a hole in?'*

What effect does ending this paragraph with a question have on the reader?

Section 3 - INFERENCE

1. Do you think the robin knew the way to the door? Circle one.

YES

NO

Why do you think this?

2. Why do you think Mary followed the robin, stepping closer to him?

3. How do you think Mary is feeling as she pushed the ivy leaves aside.

Use words or phrases from the text to explain your answer.

4. How do we know that Mary was expecting to find the door?

Section 4 - SEQUENCING AND PREDICTING

1. Number the events from 1–4 below to show the order that they happened.

The robin flew to the top of a wall.

Mary took out the key.

Mary discovered a round knob.

A gust of wind rushed down the walk.

2. What do you think Mary might discover behind the door?

Task 4:

Tom's Midnight Garden

Page 130/1 L.O. Drawing inferences – resource

Tom was still standing helplessly beside her, when Abel thudded up. Abel saw the blood and then groaned aloud; he picked Hatty up in his arms and then began to carry her towards the house. Tom went with them.

Then Abel stopped suddenly. He half-turned round, so that he faced the spot where Tom was. Through all the numbness of his horror at what happened, Tom realized that Abel was looking at him, not through him; and now he was beginning to speak to him. 'Get you gone!' said Abel, hoarsely.

Tom stared back at him; neither of them budged.

'Get you back to Hell, where you come from! I know you. I've seen you always, and thought best to seem deaf; but I've known you, and known you for what you are!'

Tom ignored all, except that Abel could hear him and therefore could answer him. 'Oh!' he cried, 'do you know – is Hatty alive, or is she dead?'

'Aye,' said Abel, 'you've tried to kill her often enough – her that had neither mother nor father nor home here – nothing but her innocence, against you devilry with bow and arrows and knives and high places. Now, I say, get you gone!'

Tom did not go; but Abel, still carrying Hatty, began to back away, across the lawn towards the house. As he went, he repeated in a loud voice that prayer which Tom had thought to be only a grace after meat: '...May the Lord keep me from all the works of the Devil, that he hurt me not.' Abel's voice shook; and he stumbled with his burden as he felt his way ever backwards, with his eyes fixed upon Tom, up the garden doorstep, and through the garden door. The garden door was slammed, and Tom heard the sound of the bolt going home.

Then Tom woke from amazement. He ran forward to the door and flung himself upon it, wildly beating his fist on the wood, and calling first upon Abel to let him in, and then upon Hatty. The door remained shut; his crying and knocking brought no one. Of those that might have heard him and let him in, it seemed that one would not, and the other could not.

L.O. Drawing inferences	
Choose a word from p.130/1 that shows...	Which word shows this?
...Tom couldn't help.	
...Abel has been shouting very loudly.	
...Tom wasn't listening.	
...wonder or shock.	
...Tom threw himself.	

Task 5:

Tom's Midnight Garden

Summarising Information

L.O. Identify the main points in a text and summarise them.

Read this excerpt from 'Tom's Midnight Garden' p.153 (ch 19)

They all sat round the breakfast-table: Alan Kitson with his newspaper; his wife with a long letter from her sister, Tom's mother; Tom himself with a letter from Peter. Tom read his letter with one hand curved around the top, to prevent any - even accidental - overlooking.

'Dear Tom,

BEWARE! Mother is writing to Aunt Gwen to say that you can come home at the end of the week and this time you really are to. I think Mother will say that you must come because I miss you so much but I don't want you to come away. I like all you write in your letters. Tell me some more. I wish I were there but Mother and Father say no.

I wish we had trees and a river near and a high wall. I wish I were there.

'Yours, Pete.'

Tom sighed; he would have liked to bring Peter, if only for a little, to the reach of his wishes.

Activity 1: Underline or highlight the **most important words** in this text.

TIP - This should be no more than about 20 words.

Activity 2: Turn this page over and write about what you have been reading – without peeking!

Task 6:

Garden Birds

Why do Birds Matter?

Birds aren't just there to look pretty; they help the environment too in the following ways:

- They help plant life by scattering seeds. This means that seeds get to travel to different places and grow in other places.
- They control insect growth as many birds eat insects. Without birds eating them, there would be a dangerously high number of insects.
- Some birds, like magpies and crows, eat dead animals. This gets rid of the rotting animals which could cause diseases.



Numbers of Common Garden Birds

The number of starlings has greatly declined in recent years. The reason could be that farming has made it more difficult for them to find their favourite food – the crane fly larvae.

According to the results of the **Big Garden Birdwatch**, house sparrows are the most widely spotted bird in the UK and have been for the past 16 years running. Despite this, the number of house sparrows has dropped massively since the 1970s. This could be because of cats or air pollution due to more cars being used. Fortunately, over the past decade, there has been an increase in house sparrows reported although their numbers are still much lower than they were.



RSPB: The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - a charity that protects British birds.



Big Garden Birdwatch A yearly event where people tell the RSPB which birds they see. The information is gathered to see if there are any changes in bird populations.

There has also been an increase in less well-known birds, such as fieldfares. One reason for seeing more fieldfares in gardens seems to be that the cold weather has made them leave the countryside and look for food in gardens.

At the beginning of 2019, there were more sightings of goldfinches and redwings. A warmer winter meant more of these tiny birds survived.

Migration

Some birds migrate from the UK during the winter months and return when the weather becomes warmer. Swifts and swallows migrate to Africa, sometimes flying 200 miles in a day. Many die from starvation, exhaustion and storms.

Migrate - move to live in another area.

British Birds



Robins:

- have a bright red breast;
- are very aggressive and will defend their territory;
- sing all year round;
- can be seen in British gardens all year round.

Magpies:

- have a loud, chattering cackle;
- can be easily seen with their black and white feathers;
- hunt for leftover food and dead animals;
- are important insect controllers.



Blue Tits:

- have bright yellow and blue feathers;
- lay eggs between the end of April and May;
- male and female blue tits look the same;
- in winter, family flocks join up with other blue tits to find food together.

Questions

1. How do birds help the environment? List **three** ways.

2. Which is closest in meaning to the word **declined**? Tick **one**.

- ☐ In partnership
- ☐ below
- ☐ reduced
- ☐ risen

3. What is the Big Garden Birdwatch?

4. Why do you think the RSPB started the Big Garden Birdwatch?

Give **two** reasons for your answer.

5. Read the second paragraph of the **Numbers of Common Garden Birds** section. Why has the author used the word **fortunately**?

6. Why has there been an increase in the number of fieldfares spotted in gardens?

7. Tick the boxes to say whether the sentences are true or false.

Sentence	True	False
Some birds migrate from the UK during the summer months.		
Robins are aggressive birds.		
Magpies eat lots of insects.		
Blue tits lay their eggs at the end of June.		

8. Read the **British Birds** section. Which bird do you like best and why?
