

Realistic Fiction: Comprehension Practice 2

Read this extract from 'The Secret Garden' by Frances Hodgson Burnett and answer the questions.

Mary is a girl who has been sent to live with her uncle.

She had been lying awake, turning from side to side for about an hour, when suddenly something made her sit up in bed and turn her head towards the door listening. She listened and she listened.

'It isn't the wind,' she said in a loud whisper. 'This isn't the wind. It is the crying I heard before.'

The door of her room was ajar and the sound came down the corridor, a far-off faint sound, of crying. She listened for a few minutes and each minute she became more and more sure. She felt as if she must find out what it was. She put her foot out of bed and stood on the floor.

5

1) Number the events below from 1 to 6, in the order that they happen.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Mary gets up. | 6 |
| Mary thinks she hears a sound. | 3 |
| Mary is finding it hard to get to sleep. | 2 |
| Mary decides she has to know what the noise is. | 5 |
| Mary wonders what the noise is. | 4 |
| Mary is in bed. | 1 |

2) Look at lines 4-5. What letter does the apostrophe (') replace?

The letter 'O'

3) Give one phrase that tells you that Mary is having trouble sleeping?

turning from side to side

4) Give one quotation that tells you that this is not the first time Mary has noticed the sound.

"It is the crying I heard before."

5) Look at line 6. Give one word that means 'a little bit open'.

ajar

Now read the next part of the story, and answer the questions.

There was a candle by her bedside and she took it and went slowly out of the room. The corridor looked very long and dark, but she was too excited to mind that. The sound had come up the passage. So she went on with her dim light, almost feeling her way, her heart beating so loud that she fancied she could hear it. The far-off, faint crying went on and led her.

10

She stood in a corridor and could hear the crying quite plainly, though it was not loud. It was on the other side of the wall at her left and a few metres farther on there was a door. She could see a glimmer of light coming from beneath it. Someone was crying in that room, and it was quite a young Someone. So she walked to the door and pushed it open, and there she was standing in the room!

15

It was a big room with ancient furniture in it. There was a low fire glowing faintly on the hearth* and next to it, a huge double bed, and on the bed lay a boy, crying pitifully.

20

Glossary

the hearth: the fireplace

6) Look at lines 10–14.

(a) Give one word that means 'not bright'. **dim**

(b) The text tells you that Mary was excited (line 11). Give another phrase from the text that tells you this.

Her heart beating so loud

(c) What led Mary to the boy's room?

The crying sound

7) Give an irregular past tense verb from line 15. Write the present tense of the verb.

Irregular past tense verb: **stood - could - was**

Present tense: **stand - can - is**

8) (Lines 15–16)

Look at this sentence: 'She stood in a corridor and could hear the crying quite plainly, though it was not loud.'

(a) Give two examples of pronouns from the sentence above.

she , it

(b) What type of word is crying in the sentence above?

Circle the correct answer

- a. an adjective b. a noun c. an adverb d. a preposition

(c) Give one word from the quote above which means 'clearly'.

plainly

9) What does the use of an exclamation mark (line 19) tell us about how Mary is feeling?

excited / brave / proud of herself / delighted

10) Give one powerful adjective from line 20.

ancient

11) What genre do you think this story is? Circle the correct answer

- a. informational text
b. non-fiction
c. instructional text
d. real life story

