

Fiction: Comprehension Practice 4

Read Text A, Part 1, in the insert, and answer questions 1–5.

Part 1

Tom has a new friend – a small dragon who visits him at Dragonrise. Dragonrise is the time of night when dragons wake up.

At Dragonrise that night, Tom noticed that the dragon seemed unusually excited. Instead of settling down comfortably on the eiderdown¹ for a talk, he twitched his tail from side to side every few seconds, blowing showers of sparks, like tiny red sequins, from his nose. 5

‘I think we’d do better on the floor tonight,’ Tom suggested at last. ‘I don’t know how I could explain things to Mummy if I get holes burned in my eiderdown. You’re very fiery. Is something the matter?’ 10

The dragon climbed, not down to the floor but up onto the windowsill. ‘A dragon can’t help but be fiery on a night like this.’ He swept the curtains apart with an eager paw, and flattened his nose against the glass. ‘Just look at that sky.’ As he gazed up at the inky blackness, he let out a windy sigh that made the glass in the windowpane seethe and bubble. 15

Glossary

¹eiderdown – a thick cover for a bed

1) Give one word that tells us that this is not Tom’s first visit from the dragon. **unusually (excited)**

2) In line 9 there are two words with an apostrophe: we’d and don’t.

Write the words in full including the missing letters.

we would

do not

3) Why does Tom say they might be better on the floor?

Because he thinks the dragon might burn the bed / eiderdown.

4) The dragon opened the curtains quickly. What phrase tells us this?

swept the curtain apart

5) The writer uses the word inky to describe the blackness. Why?

To emphasize the darkness / blackness

Because it looks like black ink

Now read Part 2, and answer questions 6–11.

Part 2

‘Stop,’ cried Tom in dismay, flinging the window wide open. A hole in the glass would be even worse than one in the eiderdown. ‘You must be more careful or we’ll get into trouble.’ 20

The dragon looked a little guilty, but not for long. ‘It’s the dark of the moon. The sight of a black sky always takes a dragon that way, Tom. It’s in our blood, I’m afraid. I tell you what: we’ll go up and sit on the roof instead of staying cooped up here. Then it won’t matter how excited I get.’ 25

‘On the roof? I could never get up there.’

‘It’s easy. Just hold onto my tail and we’ll be off.’

Tom began to say that he was sorry but of course he could do no such thing because his parents were not in favour of children climbing on the roof at night, or even in the day – but the dragon was already half out of the window. 30

6) Give one word that tells us that Tom spoke loudly.

cried

7) Why does Tom open the window?

Because he wants to stop the dragon from making a hole in it / the glass.

8) The dragon is not very worried about what Tom says. Give one phrase that tells us this.

(The dragon looked) a little guilty but not for long.

9) Give a two-word phrase which means shut in.

cooped up

10) The dragon says it will not matter if he gets excited up on the roof. Why?

Because there is nothing to burn / damage / set fire to (up there).

11) Read lines 29-31.

What does Tom say? Tick one box.

'I am very sorry,' said Tom.

☒

'He is very sorry,' said Tom.

☐

'I was very sorry,' said Tom.

☐

'He was very sorry,' said Tom.

☐

Now read Part 3, and answer questions 12–16.

Part 3

‘Come back,’ cried Tom in panic, making a grab at the green tail.

Then suddenly he wasn’t leaning on the windowsill any longer: he was clinging to something green and scaly that hung over the edge of the guttering² above the bedroom window. He hardly had time to feel surprised at this – and no time at all to feel scared – before he was sitting up on the ridge of the roof with the dragon beside him. 35

It was a moment or two before he could remember how his voice worked. ‘How...how did we get here?’ he managed to say after swallowing hard. 40

The dragon held out his paw, palm up, in explanation. ‘Suction pads. They stick onto things,’ he said, seeing that Tom was still staring at him round-eyed.

Glossary

²guttering – an open pipe to catch rain from a roof

12) Look at line 33.

How does the beginning of this line connect to the previous sentence?

Tom doesn't want the dragon to leave the bedroom / go out of the window / go up to the roof / Tom wants the dragon to stay in the bedroom.

13) Look at lines 34–38.

Find one word that tells us that Tom was holding onto the dragon's tail very tightly. **clinging**

14) Read lines 39–40. How does Tom feel?

any adjective that suggests a negative feeling of shock, e.g.
shocked, anxious, afraid, frightened.

15) Give an irregular past tense verb from line 41. Write the present tense of the verb.

Irregular past tense verb: held

Present tense: hold

16) Look at lines 41–42. What kind of word is:

They: pronoun

Round-eyed: adjective

Now answer questions 17–19 about the whole text.

17) Give two features of the story-writing used in this text. Tick two boxes.

an interesting or exciting event

☒

a change from present to past time

☐

use of direct speech between characters

☒

a detailed description of a new setting

☐

use of short sentences to build up excitement

☐

18) Do you think the dragon is nice to Tom? Tick one box.

If **Yes**

The evidence is: He gives Tom an adventure / a nice surprise / He tries not to set fire to Tom's bedroom or house / He tells Tom about dragons / He makes sure Tom doesn't fall.

If **No**

The evidence is: He is dangerous / He breathes sparks / He nearly sets fire to the eiderdown / damages the window / He scares Tom / He puts Tom in danger.

19) What kind of boy do you think Tom is? Give evidence from the text.

Kind: he doesn't tell the dragon off when it nearly sets fire to the eiderdown / "I think we'd do better on the floor tonight"

Sensible: he is trying to stop the dragon damaging things in his room / "I don't know how I could explain things to Mummy if I get holes burned in my eiderdown"

Brave: he doesn't make a fuss when he ends up on top of the roof next to the dragon / "How did we get up here?" he managed to say after swallowing hard.'

Careful/cautious: he doesn't want to hold onto the dragon's tail as it takes him up to the roof / "Stop," cried Tom in dismay...'

Responsible: because he doesn't know how to explain the damage

created by the dragon to his parents / "I don't know how I could explain things to Mummy if I get holes burned in my eiderdown."