

## COMPREHENSION 1

1. What was the weather like at the start of the story? (Retrieval question.)
2. What evidence is there to suggest Alma is happy at the beginning of the story? (Inference question.)
3. Find 'an eerie metallic creak pierced the silence of the winter's day' what do you think that sound was? (Explaining question.)
4. Look at the paragraph beginning '...There it stood'. In what ways does the author build excitement? Explain your answers as fully as you can. (Explaining question.)
5. What does 'bewilderment' mean? (Vocabulary question.)

### Trapped

Peacefully, the crisp, white snowflakes tumbled towards the earth, above the sleepy Barcelona suburb, blown by a blustery wind, which whistled through the labyrinth of dark alleys and huddled houses. Alma tried her best to dart and dodge in between each flake, causing her to bounce all over the cobbled path. Her pale pink gilet was the colour of her rosy cheeks and her small button nose, which had been exposed to the chilly weather for just a few minutes too long. Rested on her head, sat a grey bobble hat - warm and snug. This young girl had not a care in the world as her arms waved about playfully and she continued to skip through the cascading snow.

As Alma continued down the tight alleyway, she suddenly skidded to a halt; her eyes were drawn towards a wall. The wall was decorated with the names of boys and girls; each carefully written in white chalk. Some names were large and crooked; others were straight and small. Staring at each and every signature, Alma's face curved into a smile. Carefully, she picked up the little stump of chalk that rested on the stone floor below the wall. "How did this get here?" she muttered under her breath, with delight. Before she knew it, she had etched her own name, 'Alma', on the grey canvas. Alma took a deep breath and gazed up at her name adoringly, dropping the chalk back on to the floor. Just at that moment, an eerie metallic creak pierced the silence of the winter's day. Alma no longer felt alone and was suddenly compelled to turn around...

There it stood. A doll. However, it was not only a doll, but also it looked strangely familiar. Alma loved dolls. But this doll...this doll was something very different. It was an identical image of herself: the pale pink gilet, the rosy cheeks, the small button nose, and the grey bobble hat sat upon its head. It stood proudly behind a dusty window in an old run-down shop, of which Alma was sure had been empty just a few minutes earlier. A frosty chill shot down Alma's spine, yet this chill had nothing to do with the cold weather. Her feet were pulled towards the window, where the doll had just appeared. Looking down at her were two glassy, blue eyes. Alma took in every inch of the doll's body and face; her identical eyes wide and her mouth forged open. Despite her bewilderment, she looked down at her own clothes once more, in disbelief, taking her eyes off the doll for just a split second, but when she looked back up towards the window once again, the doll had vanished...

## COMPREHENSION 2

1. Find- 'the egg yolk sun swam in a sea of clear blue'. What season do you think it is and why? (Inference question.)
2. What evidence is there to suggest that the boy was scared in the second paragraph? (Inference question.)
3. Look at the paragraph beginning 'Frantically...' How can you tell the boys wanted to get out of the forest quickly? (Inference question.)
4. Look at the paragraph beginning 'So there we were,' find and copy words that suggest it was getting late. (Retrieval question.)
5. What do you think might happen next in the story? (Prediction question.)

### The Hidden Lodge

A twig snapped in the distance. A bush rustled. Footsteps. Someone was coming! *Who could it be?* Frightened, we slipped silently out of the cabin. The smell of damp leaves filled the air. It was only in the half-light of the setting sun that I noticed how small the boy was. I hadn't even asked him his name, but I knew we were in danger- imminent danger. Trembling, we dug our bodies into the nearest shrub. Scratching and scraping, tearing and bruising, the thorn bush dug into our clothes and skin as we struggled further into the dark abyss of the thick, dense bushes. My heart hammered in my chest as footsteps crunched closer. Sweat had formed on the boy's forehead and it was now trickling down the side of his red face. Any second now, we would be discovered. Every heart beat drew them a step closer to where we were concealed. Suddenly, to my horror, they began to search the bushes. I closed my eyes. A shriek of laughter called out in the distance and heavy footsteps echoed away. I tried to remember how I'd got myself caught up in this mess....

It had been a perfectly normal day. The egg yolk sun swam in a sea of clear blue; there wasn't a breath of wind so my friends and I had decided to head towards the woods. Laughter filled the air as we played our usual game of 'manhunt'. Feeling particularly pleased with my hiding place, I gazed around. Tangles of branches arched up above me, covering the sky. Although it was still the afternoon, the light had been suffocated from above. The eerie, gloom made me feel uneasy. It was quiet. Too quiet. Beneath my feet I noticed something peculiar. Breadcrumbs were scattered on the floor, which was littered with rotten leaves. *What could that be?* I wondered to myself. Bemused, I followed the breadcrumbs- it was a trail! When I reached the end, I noticed an old, log cabin nestled between the bushes. Then a shadow darted across the forest floor. Intrigued, I ventured into the sharp, menacing bushes. That's how it happened. I'd slipped into the cabin, thinking it would be derelict and abandoned, but it wasn't. A pale, thin boy, who had a wild look in his eyes, nearly attacked me as I walked into the cabin. Within minutes, I understood what had happened: he'd been kidnapped. He'd only just finished telling me what had happened to him, when we heard the noise.

So, there we were, covered in cuts and scratches, face down in the earth, waiting motionless. Holding our breath, we listened intently to the noiseless forest. The silence was deafening. Twilight was closing in and it would soon be dark. I nudged the boy in the darkness and without a word we nodded in agreement. Cautiously, we squeezed back out through the bushes and in the opposite direction of the footsteps. Frantically, we ran. With a sense of urgency, we plunged deeper into the forest, letting the shadows swallow us. Not once did we look back...just kept running, arms pumping, legs burning. As we ran, we slashed through the branches desperately searching for a way out.

### COMPREHENSION 3

1. What had Mikey Maloney told them all last term? (Retrieval question.)
2. Who do you think Mr McGann is? Support your answer with evidence from the text. (Inference question.)
3. Mr McGann describes Joe Black as 'sparky' what do you think this means? (Vocabulary question.)
4. Why do you think the author has written the words 'he and 'them' in an italic font? (Inference question.)
5. What do you think might happen next in the story? (Prediction question.)

### Spirit by Sally Christie

'I saw a real live fairy,' he said, 'and I took it home in a bag.' Well what would you think if someone said that? If it was someone you knew- a friend - you might say they were joking. But nobody knew Matt Barker. No one could guess why he'd said what he'd said. Was he attention-seeking? Was he a show-off? He didn't look the type. They wanted to laugh, but that was against the rules. You had to respect what anyone said. And yet they felt *he* was laughing at *them*. Was he trying to make them look stupid? Taking advantage?

The one thing they knew for certain was that he wasn't telling the truth. And that was the problem. In the Truth Game, you had to. If you chose to open your mouth (and you might well not, but if you did) the rule was that any words that came out of it had to be true. If people broke that, then they'd better not play. As Mr McGann was fond of saying, he could equally well have called it the Trust Game- because truth and trust are so closely connected.

When Mikey Maloney had told them last term he'd done seventy-nine keepy-uppies, round the back of his house, they'd all had to trust that he really had (he had) because no one - not even Dip Jay or Joe Black - had been there.

Mr McGann had a right to stop the game. He could do that now. But he didn't want the new boy to think that that was all there was to it. He could feel the anger around him, and several people had put their hands up.

Joe Black, a nice enough lad, thought Mr McGann, but very sparky; what would he ask? Something challenging. Something to show he was nobody's fool. *This fairy, where did you find it, then? How did you catch it?*

**Comprehension – Persuasive letter, Whales in Captivity**

1) Find and copy **one word** that informs us of Sea Parks' purpose for keeping the killer whales.

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**1 mark**

2) Up to how many miles can a killer whale swim per day?

75 miles

125 miles

100 miles

150 miles

**1 mark**

3) Find and copy **one word** that shows what a whale is not born to do.

\_\_\_\_\_

**1 mark**

4) **Draw** lines to match the following words to their definitions:

captivity

To break something.

breaching

Making someone feel embarrassed.

restricting

Put a limit on.

humiliating

Being imprisoned or confined.

**2 marks**

5) List **three** arguments used by Jenny Pierce to persuade Sea Parks that keeping killer whales in captivity is wrong.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2 marks**

6) Tick **one** box to complete this sentence.

*Whales living in captivity typically live ...*

happier lives.

shorter lives.

healthier lives.

**1 mark**

7) Look at paragraph 3. How would Jenny Pierce feel if she was a whale at Sea Parks? **Use evidence** from the text to justify your answer.

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**2 marks**

8) *By keeping killer whales in captivity, Sea Parks are violating basic animal rights.*

Do you agree with this statement? **Use evidence** from the text to justify your answer.

Yes

No

Yes and no

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**3 marks**

9) If you were the owner of sea parks, how would you respond to this letter?



**2 marks**

14 Dunbar Drive  
Earley  
Reading  
Berkshire  
RG5 4HA

**Persuasive letter – Whales in captivity**

Date: 12/01/2014

Re: Killer whales in captivity

Dear Sea Parks,

I am writing to complain about your policy of keeping killer whales in captivity for entertainment purposes at your venues. I strongly feel that you are not only breaching the most basic of animal rights by keeping the whales in your pools but also believe that you are harming them in the process too.

Killer whales are very large animals that, by their very nature, need vast room to swim and hunt within. It is a well-known fact that they can swim up to 100 miles a day whilst in the wild and I believe that you are restricting this instinct by holding them in small pools at your parks. Surely it must frustrate the whales and cause them stress being held in captivity like this.

In my opinion, making the whales perform to audiences on a daily basis is a cruel practice and one that you should be deeply ashamed about. Killer whales were not born to perform and should not need to be bribed to do the tricks that you ask of them. Would you enjoy being made to perform for food on a daily basis? Would this not be humiliating? I ask that you think carefully about the impact that these shows have on the whales' lives and put yourself in their shoes for a moment or two to consider how they must be feeling every single day.

Finally, I was shocked to find out recently that whales living in captivity typically live shorter lives than those in the wild. How do you feel knowing that you are responsible for this? It is not right that you are allowed to be involved in affecting the whales' lengths of life in this way.

In summary, I believe that you need to stop your shameful practice and release the whales back into the wild as soon as possible. It is outrageous that you have been allowed to get away with this for such a long time and I will do all I can to help ensure the safe release of the whales back into their natural habitat.



Jenny Pierce