

# The Mystery of Hawfull House

## Fiction

### Content domain focus:

- 2b** retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction
- 2d** make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
- 2g** identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases

### Text summary

'The Mystery of Hawfull House' is a short story about a gang of children, led by Danny, who decide to explore the abandoned and apparently haunted Hawfull House.

As they look around the house, they discover evidence that suggests someone has been there. Suddenly, a group of actors arrive at Hawfull House to make a film. Danny reveals the gang's presence and volunteers them to take part in the film.

### Unit summary

The questions in this unit mainly focus on straightforward information retrieval and making inferences. Children also explore how the author's choice of language enhances the meaning as the story unfolds.



### Teaching prompts

- Explore the children's experience of reading mystery stories. What do they expect to happen in that type of story?
- Remind them that when they read, it can be like solving a mystery as they find the clues that an author has left in the story to help them fully understand what is happening. Discuss how these clues can be found in the language that the author uses, as well as in the details and descriptions they give.
- Discuss with the children how they can make links between their own experiences and other stories they have read, or films they have seen, in order to make inferences. Suggest that they try to visualise settings and characters as they read.

### Revisiting the text

Ask the children to:

- draw pictures of Hawfull House
- role-play the gang's arrival at the house
- work in small groups to dramatise the story
- hot-seat Danny, exploring how he felt when he realised someone had arrived at Hawfull House
- invent a suitable name for Danny's gang
- prepare to read aloud the story, using expression to add drama.



## Answers

Links to content domain requirements are in brackets after the answer.

1. Danny [2b]
2. He wants to explore Hawfull House. [2d]
3. They thought he was mad./They thought it was a bad idea because people said the house was haunted. [2d]
4. Because they had solved a mystery. [2d]
5. in the evening [2b]
6. Any three of: overgrown garden; windows were broken or missing; the roof sagged in the middle; weed-covered drive; the house smelled of dust and damp; cobwebs trailed across my face. [2g]
7. through the front door [2b]
8. Any of: Danny whispered; we crept through the gates; soft as shadows, we slipped inside. [2g]
9. The hall was lit up by the sweep of headlights [2d]
10. They are making a film. [2d]



## Assessment

The children are secure in their ability to retrieve information if they can explain the strategies they used and why they used them.

They can make reasonable inferences if they are able to make connections to their own experiences.

If the children can explain how the language chosen by the author has helped them to understand the story more fully, they are able to understand how meaning is enhanced through choice of words.

### Next steps

Display relatively short passages on the IWB and challenge the children to find specific words, phrases and information as quickly as they can.

Use atmospheric pictures of places to develop the children's descriptive vocabulary. Involve them in writing descriptions, based on the images, that involve using the senses to help a reader fully appreciate the setting. Explore how thinking about a reader when they write can help them to appreciate an author's craft when they themselves are readers.

Use cloze procedure activities to focus the children's attention on how the choice of language has an impact on the reader and their understanding.