

Teacher's Notes



Nanny McPhee & THE BIG BANG

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Welcome to the Popcorn ELT Readers series, a graded readers series for low-level learners of English. These free teacher's notes will help you and your classes get the most from your Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang Popcorn ELT Reader.

Level 3

Popcorn ELT Readers level 3 is for students who are reading confidently in English, based on a 300 headword list. Basic knowledge of the simple past tense is built upon at this level.

Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang has a total story wordcount of 1149 words.

Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang – synopsis

Nanny McPhee uses her magic to teach children important lessons about good behaviour. Nanny McPhee is very ugly, but as the children learn the lessons, her looks improve.

Mrs Green and her children Norman, Megsie and Vincent are looking after the family's farm while Mr Green is fighting in the Second World War. Life is difficult, and it becomes a lot worse when the children's spoilt cousins, Cyril and Celia, come to stay. All the children start fighting. Luckily, Nanny McPhee arrives just in time.

Meanwhile, Mr Green's brother, Phil, is badly in debt. How can he persuade Mrs Green to sell the farm? First he lets out the piglets that she plans to sell, but the children find them. Then Phil writes a telegram saying that Mr Green is dead. But Norman is suspicious. He goes to London with Cyril and Nanny McPhee and discovers that it isn't true. When they arrive home, a bomb lands in a field on the farm. Megsie and Nanny McPhee manage to defuse the bomb before it explodes.

Nanny McPhee knows that the children will now behave themselves. Her job is done. As she leaves, Mr Green arrives home from the war.

Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang – the film

Released: 2010

Also known as: *Nanny McPhee Returns*

Genre: fantasy comedy

Suitable for: children with parental guidance

Actors: Emma Thompson (Nanny McPhee), Maggie Gyllenhall (Mrs Green), Rhys Ifans (Phil Green)

Other Nanny McPhee films:
Nanny McPhee (2005)

For ideas on watching extracts from the DVD in class, see pages 3, 5, 6 and 11 of these notes.

Popcorn ELT Readers

Teacher's Notes

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Meet ... the people in *Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang*

The 'Meet ...' page introduces students to the main characters in the story.

This page is recorded on the CD.

Meet ... the people in *Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang*

Nanny McPhee loves children. Some children need her but don't want her. She must stay with those children and help them. Then she has to go.

Nanny McPhee

Megsie

Norman

Vincent

Celia

Cyril

Norman, Megsie and Vincent Green live on a farm. Their father is fighting in the war.

Mrs Green is Norman, Megsie and Vincent's mother. Before the war she loved living on a farm. Now everything is different. She needs more time and more money.

Mrs Green

Phil

Phil doesn't like farms and he doesn't like working. His brother is the father of Norman, Megsie and Vincent.

The pigs live on the farm. They are the Greens' favourite animals.

The pigs

Before you read ...
Cyril and Celia are going to live on the Greens' farm. Are they going to be happy there? What do you think?

Cyril and Celia live in London. They are very rich. Their mother is Mrs Green's sister.

- 1 Before looking at the book, ask students *Do you know the films about Nanny McPhee?* If anyone knows and likes the films, talk briefly in L1 about why they like them.
- 2 Look together at the front cover of the book. Ask *How many people can you see? (Six) What animals are there? (Teach pigs if necessary.) Is the woman beautiful? (No) Then ask students to guess: Who is she? Are all the children brothers and sisters? Are they nice children or horrible children?* Listen to students' ideas.

OR

- Pre-teach *farm*. Tell students (in L1) they're going to see part of a film about two children who go to stay with some other children on a farm. Tell them to think about the answers to these questions as they watch: *Are the children rich? Are they nice? Do they like their new home?* Show the scene when the

cousins arrive at the farm (DVD scene 3). Afterwards, discuss the questions as a class.

- 3 Look at the 'Meet ...' page with your class and ask some questions about the characters in the pictures, e.g. *Who is wearing pink? Who has got a funny tooth?*
- 4 Pre-teach *war and fight*. (These words also appear on the 'New Words' page.) Read the page out to the class or play the CD.
- 5 Students close their books. Play a game of *Who Am I?* For example, say *I live in London. Cyril is my brother.* Students say *You're Celia.* Continue with information about the other characters. With stronger classes, ask students to take over your role.
- 6 Read the 'Before you read' question with your class. Ask any students who haven't seen the film to predict the answer.



New Words



This page is recorded on the CD.



The words on this page are available as flashcards, see pages 12–17 of these notes.

The 'New Words' page presents up to ten new words that are included in the story, but are not on the headword list. There is usually a piece of conversational language at the end.

New Words



What do these new words mean? Ask your teacher or use your dictionary.

dead



The animal didn't move. It was **dead**.

jam



I love eating **jam** with my bread.

stick



He likes walking with a **stick** in his hand.

army



People in the **army** have to wear green and brown.

farm



A lot of animals live on the **farm**.

letter



My mum's got lots of old **letters**.

war



There was a big **war** from 1939 to 1945.

mud



He walked in the **mud**.

bomb



The **bombs** were very dangerous.

fight



Sometimes, the children **fight**.

Verbs

Present	Past
break	broke
eat	ate
fall	fell

What does the title *Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang* mean? Ask your teacher.

- 1 Look at the 'New Words' page with your class. Say *All these words are in the story. Which words do you know?* They should remember *war*, *fight* and *farm* from the 'Meet ...' page.
- 2  Play the recording of the words and sentences on the CD. Elicit the meaning of each word in L1 or translate for the class.
- 3 The conversational language on this page is *Watch out!* We use this to tell someone to be careful. Ask students to repeat the phrase after you.
- 4 Look at the 'Verbs' box. The irregular pasts of *break*, *eat* and *fall* occur in the story, in addition to the past forms on the syllabus. Say the new past forms and students repeat. Elicit simple example sentences, e.g. *My favourite chair broke, so now I can't sit on it.*
- 5 Ask *What does the title mean?* Explain to your students in L1 that a *bang* is a very loud noise, for example the noise that a bomb makes.

- 6 Do some vocabulary activities to practise the new words (see suggestions below).

Vocabulary Activities

- Stick the flashcards around the classroom. Say a word and students point or run to the correct flashcard.
- Play a game of charades or pictionary, in groups or as a whole class. One student chooses a word and mimes or draws it for the rest of the group. The first student to guess correctly has the next turn.
- Put the class into two teams. Two students, one from each team, stand in front of you. Hold up a picture flashcard. The first student to say the word wins a point for their team. Continue with other students and other flashcards.

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Using the story with your class

- The story is recorded on the CD.

The story can be read in a number of ways, depending on the size, age and language level of your students and the teaching time available. The following are some suggestions for ways of reading the story. You may want to combine several of these.

Teacher-led reading

This can work well with younger students. Read the story out loud to your class, or use the CD. If possible, allow your class to sit close together on a mat when you read the story to them. Remember to give the students plenty of time to process what they are hearing. As you read, emphasise the words which carry most meaning, and pause at the end of each sentence.

Children love to hear the same stories again and again, and repetition supports language learning. Reading the same story several times can be very useful.

Autonomous reading

It is important that students learn to read autonomously. Decide on a period of time each week when students can practise silent reading in class – or perhaps ten minutes at the start or end of every lesson. This will encourage the habit of reading and will motivate students to continue reading in their own time. Younger students can take their readers home and read a page or chapter to their family. This will give them a strong sense of ownership of the story.

Group or pair reading

Students take turns in reading a sentence, paragraph or page of the story to each other in small groups or pairs. Encourage them to help each other with pronunciation of new words. This can be a useful reinforcement task once students are already familiar with the story.

Before reading a section of the story you could:

- Warm up with a vocabulary activity (see page 4).
- Discuss what has happened in the story so far.
- Show students a picture from the next part of the story and ask them to guess (in L1) what is happening.
- Copy several pictures from the next part of the story. Give a set of the pictures to small groups of students. They guess the order in which the pictures will appear.
-  Play students a short section of the DVD, showing an event that they are going to read about or a character that they are going to meet. For example, play the scene when Nanny McPhee comes into the room where the children are fighting (DVD scene 5). Freeze the frame on Nanny McPhee and ask *Who is this? What colour are her clothes? What does she look like? Do the children listen to her?* Play again, stopping as soon as she hits the floor with her stick. Ask *What is going to happen now?* Listen to students' predictions.

Tip Set up a class library of graded English readers and give students the opportunity to choose their own stories from time to time. This will encourage them to be more involved in their own reading.



After reading a section of the story you could:

- Point to a character in a picture and ask questions, e.g. *Who is this? Is she nice or horrible? What does she do?*
- Give students one of the chapter quizzes on page 7 of these notes.
- Ask students to write quiz questions about the story. Give them some examples, e.g. *He is Rory's brother and he wants money. Who is he? (Phil) Where do Norman, Megsie and Vincent live? (On a farm)* They ask and answer their questions in groups or as a whole class.
- Predict what is going to happen next.
- Ask students to write captions for the pictures in the section of story that they've just read.

After finishing the story you could:

- Do the activities at the back of the reader.
- Ask students to make a list of words from a particular category used in the story, e.g. action verbs or things in nature (*cave, nest, valley*).
-  Divide the class into groups and give each group a word that is used regularly in the story. You might want to create an action for each word. Play the CD, or read the story aloud. Each time students hear their word, they stand up and sit down again or do the action. For example, give groups the words *car, farm* and *mud* for Chapter 1.
-  Play a short film extract to focus on British culture, e.g. the scene where Nanny McPhee takes Norman and Cyril through London (second half of DVD scene 12). Tell students to remember as much as they can. After watching, ask *Where are they? (London)*. Then ask students to tell you what they saw and write a list on the board. Talk about anything of cultural interest that students mention. Show the extract again to see how much students remembered.

CULTURAL INFORMATION

Buckingham Palace (the big building with the red-coated soldiers in front) is the home of the British Queen. During the Second World War her father was King.

The statue that takes off its hat is **Lord Nelson** (1758–1805), one of Britain's most famous war heroes. He lost an arm and an eye in sea battles. His statue is on the top of a tall column in Trafalgar Square in central London.

Red buses, red postboxes and big **black taxis** are still common in London today. **Red phone boxes**, however, are rare now because most people use mobile phones.

- In small groups, ask students to think of a new ending for the story. They either write, draw or roleplay the final scene.
- Ask students to write a short review of the reader. Write on the board:
I thought the story of Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang was ...
I liked I didn't like reading about ...
My favourite character was ... because ...
Ask students how they might complete these sentences and write their ideas on the board. They use this as a framework for writing their review. They could also give the story a score out of ten, depending on how much they enjoyed it.



Using film extracts in class

- Use short extracts (two or three minutes maximum).
- Give students something to do or think about as they watch.
- Ask them questions about the extract they have just seen.
- Allow them time to talk about what they have just seen.



Chapter Quizzes (Answer key, page 10)

Chapter 1

Circle the correct words.

- 1 Cyril and Celia come to the farm because London is dangerous / they like it.
 - 2 Cyril likes *mud* / *jam*.
 - 3 Mrs Green thinks that Farmer MacCreadie is going to buy *the pigs* / *the farm*.
 - 4 Phil wants to *live on the farm* / *have more money*.
 - 5 The children *stop* / *don't stop* fighting when they see Mrs Green.
-

Chapter 2

Who says this?

- 1 'I'm here because you need me.' Nanny McPhee.....
 - 2 'All animals are nicer than Celia.'
 - 3 'The baby pigs aren't here!'
 - 4 'Here's £20 for them.'
 - 5 'Oh no! I need a better idea.'
-

Chapter 3

Put the sentences in the correct order.

- a Mrs Green opens a letter.
- b Mrs Green starts writing her name on Phil's papers.
- c Norman, Cyril and Nanny McPhee go to London.
- d Mrs Green and the children eat outside.
- e Nanny McPhee goes away and Rory Green comes home.
- f Cyril's father says, 'Mr Green isn't dead.'



Real World

This page is recorded on the CD.

The **Real World** page provides students with cross-curricular or cross-cultural information linked to the content of the reader.

Real World

Living on a farm

A lot of our food comes from farms. We talked to some children about living on a farm.

hen
I help with the hens on our farm. I give them their food every day. Sometimes I wash the hen house too. I love the animals on our farm, but sometimes it's too quiet. We don't live near the cinema or big shops.
Mia, 10
What doesn't Mia like about living on a farm?

cow
When I'm not at school, I take food to the cows. It's great! The cows are a lot of work for my dad. He has to milk them at five o'clock in the morning and again in the evening. He never goes away from the farm for a night because of the cows.
Kyle, 13
How does Kyle help on the farm?
Would you like to live on a farm? Why / why not?

strawberries
My mum and dad have a fruit farm. From June to September, people come here and pick the fruit. I pick it too. If people buy my fruit at our shop, I can have some of the money.
Megan, 11
When do people pick the fruit?
What do these words mean? Find out.
food cinema pick milk fruit

1 With books closed, ask *Where do the Greens live? (On a farm)*. Ask students in L1 if they have ever visited a farm, and elicit what farms are for (producing food). See if students can tell you in English some animals or crops you often find on a farm (e.g. *hens for eggs, potatoes*). Write them on the board.

2 Tell students to open their books at page 26. Which things did they expect to see? Which were a surprise? Ask students to read each section, or read and listen to the CD, and write down the answers to the questions.

Answers

Kyle takes food to the cows.
Mia doesn't like living in a quiet place.
People pick the fruit from June to September.

3 Look at the word box. Ask students if they know what these words mean.

4 Give each student a copy of the 'Project' worksheet (see page 9 of these notes). Explain that they are going to create their own farm. They use their imagination, and do some research in books or on the Internet to complete the text about their farm and the animals, fruit or vegetables on it. Then they draw a birds-eye view of the farm and draw or stick in pictures of the farm animals or crops. They could also show the farmer at work.

5 Display the projects around the classroom for other students to read. After this, you could tell students to keep their completed project worksheets in a 'Real World' section of their readers folder.

Real World: Project

Cross-curricular
content area:
Science

My Farm



The name of my farm is

On the farm there are

We also have

Every day, the farmer has to

.....

.....



Answer Key

After you read (page 28)

- 1 a Celia
b Cyril
c Norman, Megsie and Vincent's father (Rory Green)
d Cyril's father
e Nanny McPhee
f Rory Green
- 2 a X b X c ✓ d X e ✓ f X



Where's the popcorn?

Tell your class that the popcorn logo is hidden in the reader.
Can they find it? (Answer: page 15)

Multiple intelligence activities (pages 29–32)

Puzzle time! (pages 29–30)

1 Linguistic intelligence

- a jam c war e army
b farm d letter

CODEBREAKER

*f ~a /y \$w <r !t +m %l @j =e

2 Logical intelligence

- 7 Seven pigs are flying.
5 Five pigs are in the water.
9 Nine pigs are in the mud.
8 Eight pigs are under the car.

3a Spatial intelligence



The activities on pages 29–32 are designed to cater for students' multiple intelligences and learning styles.

3b Linguistic intelligence

- i) Her eyes are the same.
ii) Her face is different.
iii) Her hair is the same.

4 Linguistic intelligence

- a) bed – iii) dead
b) arm – ii) farm
c) ten – iv) pen
d) war – i) door

Chapter Quiz Answer Key (Teacher's notes, page 7)

Chapter 1

- 1 London is dangerous 4 have more money
2 jam 5 don't stop
3 the pigs

Chapter 2

- 1 Nanny McPhee 4 Farmer MacCreadie
2 Megsie 5 Phil
3 Norman

Chapter 3

- a 2 b 5 c 3 d 1 e 6 f 4



Imagine ...

Kinaesthetic intelligence

- 1  Tell students that they are going to act out some scenes from the story. If you have time, play the two scenes from the film (when Cyril and Celia arrive at the farm in DVD scene 4, and when Mrs Green starts running up the lane in DVD scene 19). Tell students to notice the characters' actions and voices so that they can act them out later.
- 2 Say *Open your books at page 31*, and put students into groups of four. They choose one of the scenes and decide who is going to play which part. Then they practise acting it out in their groups. If you have time, give them a chance to do the other scene too.
- 3 Clear a large space in the centre of the classroom. Call up each group in turn to act out a scene.
- 4 Students vote on the best group performance.

Chant

Musical intelligence

- 1  This page is recorded on the CD.
- 1  Say *Open your books at page 32*. Read the chant or play the CD and ask them to read and listen carefully.
- 2  Divide the class into two groups (boys and girls if you have a mixed class) and call the two groups Norman and Megsie. Ask the Norman group to say the first two lines of each verse, and the Megsie group to say the second two lines. Play the CD or say the chant yourself. Students say it at the same time. Practise several times, then groups swap lines.
- 3 Invite some students to come to the front of the class and be Vincent, a pig, and the other characters mentioned in the chant. They act out the chant while the rest of the class say it again.

Flashcards



army

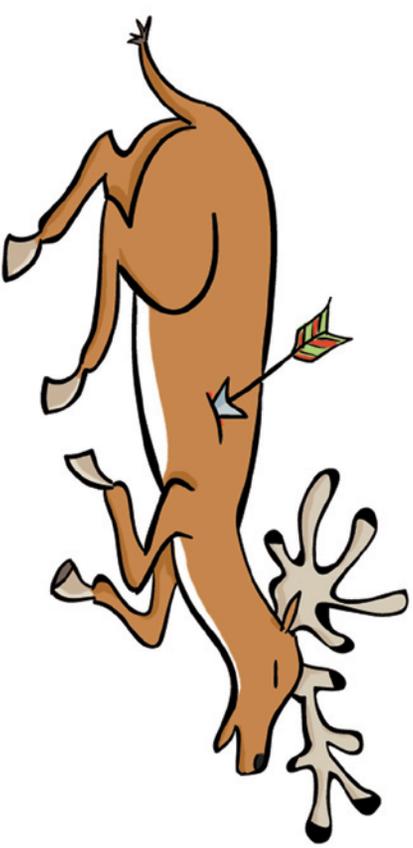
People in the **army** have to wear green and brown.



bomb

The **bombs** were very dangerous.

Flashcards



dead

The animal didn't
move. It was **dead**.



farm

A lot of animals live
on the **farm**.

Flashcards



fight

Sometimes, the
children **fight**.



jam

I love eating **jam** with
my bread.

Flashcards



letter

My mum's got lots
of old **letters**.



mud

He walked in the
mud.

fold

fold

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Flashcards



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stick

He likes walking with
a **stick** in his hand.

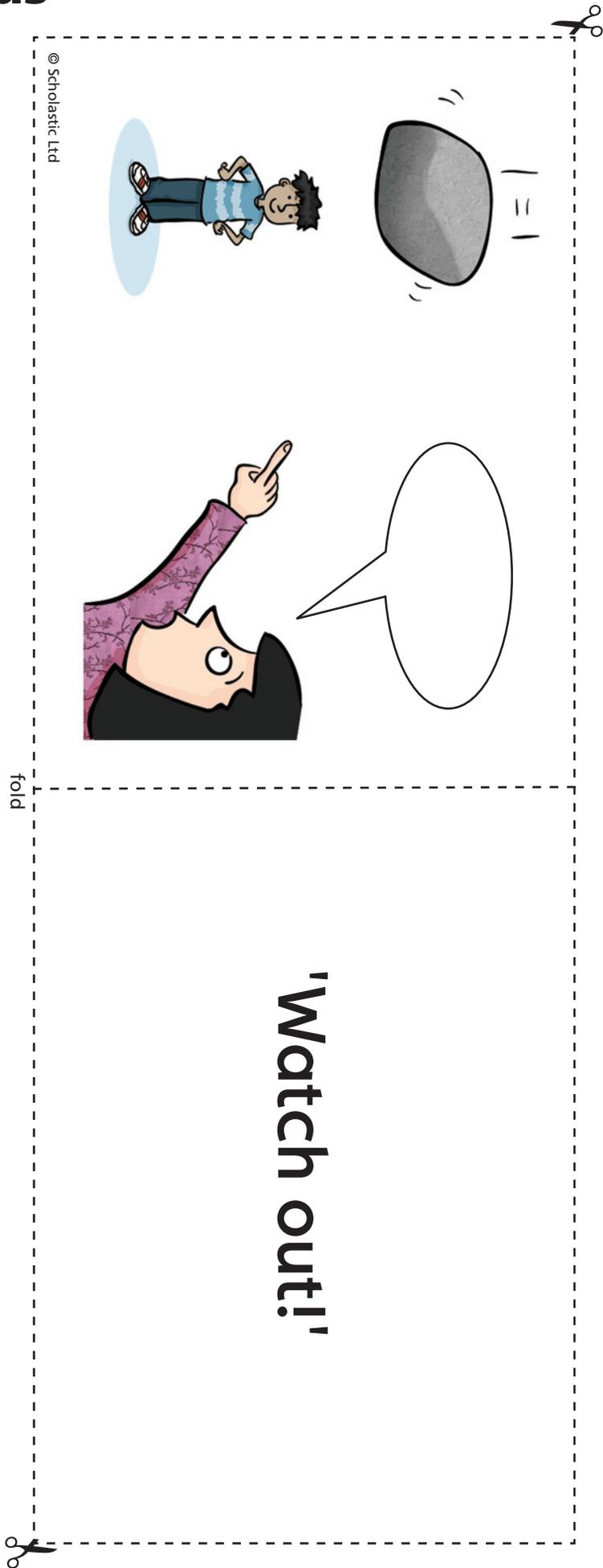


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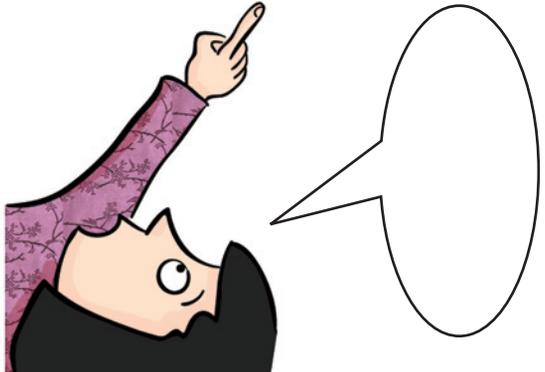
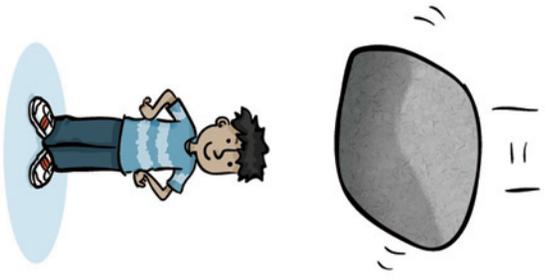
war

There was a big **war**
from 1939 to 1945.

Flashcards



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fold

'Watch out!'