

Beware of the Mist

PM Level 30

Sapphire

Text Type Narrative (Imaginative)

Running Words 9246



Preparing for Guided Reading

Prior knowledge

- Have students share any experiences of attending educational activities with actors dressed up as historical figures.
- Ask students to share any prior knowledge of the Roman Empire.

Orientation to the text

- Max and his family have just flown from Australia to England on holiday. When they visit a local museum near Hadrian's Wall, Max attends an educational session with an actor dressed as a Roman legionary. Max and the actor, Jefficus, soon find themselves getting lost in the mist and travelling back in time and into the Roman army themselves. After some authentic experiences of Roman military life, Max and Jefficus eventually find their way back to the present through the same mist that took them away from it.

Building the Balanced Reader

Grammatical conventions

- Discuss the author's use all of long, rhythmic sentences and repetition to create humour and vivid word pictures, e.g. in the first paragraph on p. 5.
- Observe the use of dashes to set off information in complex sentences, e.g. *So when it finally stopped raining – well, not completely stopped, but sort of, almost stopped raining – Gran pushed Mum, Dad and me firmly out of the door.* (p. 6)

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary

bakehouse, barbarian, barracks, Brigantes, contubernium, dagger, exhibition, fort, legionaries, mist, rations, Roman, soldiers, tortoise, tunic, weapons

Spelling

- Discuss the name *Jefficus*. Do students think this is a real Roman name, or an adaptation of a modern-day name, with the Roman suffix *-icus* added?

Visual literacy

- Have students look at the illustration on p. 54 and analyse the characters' facial expressions to offer thoughts about how they feel about the smell of their dinner.

Focusing on the book – guided reading

- Ask students why they think Gran warned Max about the mist.
- Discuss what a Roman mile is, and how it compares to a modern-day kilometre (approximately 1.5 kilometres to the Roman mile).
- After reading p. 11, pause and have students offer thoughts as to what a *Jefficus* might be.
- Pause after reading p. 22 and ask students why they think Max is disappointed to have been assigned the role of townspeople. What does Jefficus mean when he responds with, "*What's this? Mutiny?*"
- As they read, have students pause and discuss whether the events at the wall could really have happened. Have them identify interesting facts from the story about the Roman way of life at the time Hadrian's Wall was built.
- After reading pp. 53–55, talk about the fact that people's tastes have changed over the centuries. Discuss the fact that fish sauce was a very popular Roman delicacy.

Comprehension

- Where had the family flown to and from? (*Literal*)
- Would it have taken a long time to build Hadrian's Wall? (*Inferential*)
- Why will Jefficus "never forget to *never* go for a nice walk on the wall on a misty day"? (*Applied Knowledge*)

Follow-up activities

- Ask students to prepare a humorous diary account by a Roman soldier patrolling the wall.
- Have students suppose that Max did not escape. Ask them to present a new ending to the story. Would Max have eventually settled in and enjoyed his new life?
- Have students prepare a recount detailing how Max explained his experience to Gran.

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Learning Intentions

- We are learning to understand that many people share their experiences to help others.
- We are learning to understand more complex language effects in narrative texts.

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Success Criteria

- I can learn from the experiences of others and share my experiences with them.
- I can understand and use more complex language effects when I write narrative texts.

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Guided Reading Notes

Student's name	Reading focus	Observations/notes	For follow-up