

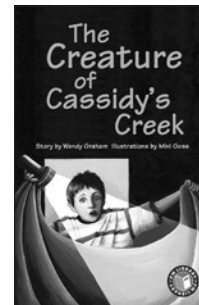
The Creature of Cassidy's Creek

PM Level 25

Emerald

Text Type Narrative

Running Words 1468



Preparing for Guided Reading

Orientation to the text

- There's a weird noise in Gran's cellar, so Sebastian bolts the door. In the night he hears another noise, and finds the door ajar. Next morning, he notices a half-eaten apple, a spilt vase of flowers, and a curtain hanging off its rail. Later, the bolt on the cellar door is locked again, but Gran explains that she closed the door. Sebastian climbs a tree and sees movement in the front window of the house. Then he discovers a possum in the cellar. The mystery is solved, but Sebastian realises that while he was up in the tree the possum had been locked in the cellar – so what could the movement in the window have been? (The answer is revealed in the pictures on pp. 19 and 32 – there is a second possum in the house!)

Prior knowledge

- Look at the cover illustration and read the title. Flick through the book and draw students' attention to the illustrations. Read the chapter titles on the contents page, and ask students to predict what type of story this might be (i.e. a mystery) and what it may be about.

Building the Balanced Reader

Grammatical conventions

- An ellipsis is used on pp. 4, 8, 26 and 31. Discuss their purpose and ask students why the author may have used the ellipses.
- Varying sentence length for effect – note the short sentences on p. 8 that increase tension in the story. Discuss with students whether these are, in fact, true sentences.
- Locate a range of prepositions used at the beginning of phrases.
- Note the use of adverbs, many ending in -ly, to enrich the text by adding meaning to the verbs.
- Identify similes that liken one object with another, using *as* or *like*, e.g. *like the brush of a cat's tail*.

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary

abruptly, alarming, definite, explanation, flurry, hurriedly, imagination, impression, jangle, matted, muffled, peculiar, release, remarked, rickety, securely, suspected, vanishes, weird

Spelling

- Draw students' attention to words that contain a silent letter, so they can monitor their spelling of these words, e.g. *knocked, whole, stretched*.

Visual Literacy

- Discuss the illustrator's colour palette in various parts of the text. Note the limited colours used for scenes that occur in the cellar.
- Talk about the eyes that can be seen in the illustration on p. 23.

Focusing on the story – guided reading

- Ask students to read silently to p. 4 and identify the main character and the setting. Discuss their responses.
- Allow students to share reading aloud to the end of Chapter 2, then ask, *Which events made Sebastian have strange feelings about the noise? What has the author done to build up the suspense?*
- Ask students to skim p. 12 and identify the groups of words that tell where Sebastian told Gran about the music, where Gran placed the plates, and where she poured the honey. Add these prepositions to a class list.
- Have students read to the end of Chapter 4, then ask, *What further events alarmed Sebastian? What explanations has Sebastian considered to explain these strange events? Ask students what they think about these feelings and actions.*

Comprehension

- What was the first mysterious event Sebastian noticed? (*Literal*)
- Why would the piano music have stopped abruptly in the night? (*Inferential*)
- What might have caused the movement in the house? (*Applied Knowledge*)

Follow-up activities

- Ask students to conduct some research about possums. Include information about how they move, where they hide, what they eat and how difficult and dangerous it can be to catch them. Discuss why Sebastian and his Gran were taking the possum all the way to the forest to release it.
- Encourage students to draw a 4x5-frame cartoon that retells the story.

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Learning Intentions

- We are learning to understand themes that are explored through events that occur in the text.
- We are learning to make predictions about the text and can use prior knowledge to discuss potential solutions to the problem encountered by the characters.

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Success Criteria

- I can identify themes that relate to events that take place in the text.
- I can use prior knowledge and experiences to predict a resolution to the problem that occurs in the text.

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Guided Reading Notes

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