

The Magic Finger (continued)

For months I had been telling myself that I would never put the Magic Finger upon anyone again – not after what happened to my teacher, old Mrs Winter.

Poor old Mrs Winter.

One day we were in class, and she was teaching us spelling. 'Stand up,' she said to me, 'and spell cat.'

'That's an easy one,' I said. 'K-a-t.'

'You are a stupid little girl!' Mrs Winter said.

'I am not a stupid little girl!' I cried. 'I am a very nice little girl!'

'Go and stand in the corner,' Mrs Winter said.

Then I got cross, and I saw red, and I put the Magic Finger on Mrs Winter good and strong, and almost at once ...

Guess what?

Whiskers began growing out of her face! They were long black whiskers, just like the ones you see on a cat, only much bigger. And how fast they grew! ...

Of course the whole class started screaming with laughter ...

And when she turned around to write something on the blackboard we saw that she had grown a *tail* as well! It was a huge bushy tail!

I cannot begin to tell you what happened after that, but if any of you are wondering whether Mrs Winter is quite all right again now, the answer is No. And she never will be.

... Well, the Magic Finger was now upon the whole of the Gregg family, and there was no taking it off again.

The Magic Finger, Roald Dahl



Copy and finish the sentences.

- 1 Mrs Winter was teaching _____.
writing spelling
- 2 _____ had the Magic Finger put on her.
Mrs Winter A cat
- 3 _____ grew out of Mrs Winter's face.
A tail Whiskers
- 4 The whole class started _____.
laughing crying

5 Read this section from the story again.

'Stand up,' she said to me, 'and spell cat.'

'That's an easy one,' I said. 'K-a-t.'

'You are a stupid little girl!'

Mrs Winter said.

'I am not a stupid little girl!'

I cried. 'I am a very nice little girl!'

- Write three things this tells us about the girl.

- 6 Write what you think happens next to Mr Gregg, Philip and William.



Plenary

- As a class or group, review the children's answers to the questions. Encourage them to explain why they came up with the answers they did – what evidence did they find in the extract or pictures?
- Encourage the children to think about how they might react in the situation described in the story: firstly if they were the girl; and secondly if they were Philip. Hot-seating could be used for this.

WRITE

Questions

Introduce this extract as a continuation of *The Magic Finger*. Where possible, this extract is intended to be used for individual or small group work.

Round-up

- As a class or group, review the children's answers to the questions.
- Encourage the children to discuss whether they are enjoying the story so far. Why?
- Discuss techniques used by the author that help to sustain the reader's interest.
- Obtain a copy of the book to continue reading the story so the children can discover what happened to the Greggs!

ICT

Answer guidance

The first four questions establish whether the children can identify the main elements in this extract. Ask the children to answer the questions individually, copying the sentences and adding the missing words.

- Mrs Winter was teaching *spelling*.
- Mrs Winter had the Magic Finger put on her.
- Whiskers grew out of Mrs Winter's face.
- The whole class started *laughing*.

Check the children's understanding of the extract by asking further questions: What was the girl asked to spell? What colour were the whiskers that grew out of Mrs Winter's face? What was the tail on Mrs Winter like? Did Mrs Winter ever return to normal?

- The children may recognise that the girl is confident ('That's an easy one'), that she isn't very good at spelling ('K-a-t'), and that she believes in herself ('I am not a stupid little girl!' 'I am a very nice little girl!').

Discuss their answers in a group, encouraging them to take turns to speak and listen to others' conclusions.

- Encourage children to use the information provided in the second extract to make an educated guess at what will happen to Mr Gregg, Philip and William. Less able children

can draw and label their ideas.

Extra

- PCM8a** can be used as an extension to question 5. The children are asked to surround a picture of the girl with as many descriptive words as possible, including terms that refer to her appearance and the characteristics she has shown in both the extracts.
- PCM8b** supports and extends question 6. It asks the children to think about why the author has moved from writing about the Gregg family to writing about Mrs Winter. How does this flashback help the reader predict what might happen to the Gregg family?