

Shared reading

SECTION

3

Extract 1

- Highlight the layout of dialogue in the first extract – for example, punctuation, indentation and variety of direct-speech tag words such as *confessed, said, inquired, continued, chorused*.
- Ring the adverbs that modify tag words and actions: *nastily, icily, miserably, (glared) meaningfully, hastily (blew)*. Discuss how these help readers to visualise the characters and accentuate characters' feelings.
- Ring the italicised words, *Something* and *witch* and then read aloud the sentences in which they appear, adding extra stress to the italicised parts, to show how font format guides readers as

to the author's intention.

- Examine the rhetorical nature of Miss Hardbroom's question and what it conveys to the girls, as well as her use of the first-person pronoun *we*. Ask: *How does this belittle the girls?* (It is condescending and patronising.)
- Highlight effective verbs, comparing their emotive quality alongside simpler verbs. For example, compare *leap (out of the window)* with the verb *jump*; compare *(black hair) scragged back* with *brushed back*; compare *Miss Hardbroom glared* with *looked*; compare *dived (under the bedclothes)* with *hid*.

Extract 2

- Examine how the excitement and celebration builds up through detailed attention to sequenced actions. List the stages of Mildred's preparation (*1. Smooths robes, 2. Says good-bye to kitten, 3. Puts on her hat* and so on).
- Ask: *How might Class One feel as the youngest and newest participants?* Consider the evidence, such as, they are the last class to set off; they are the only class without cats (as they are still only kittens); they've never seen Miss Hardbroom in her festive robes and with loose hair before now.
- Discuss which aspects of the text show the

girls' increasing familiarity with the school. For example, underline *H.B.*, their nickname for Miss Hardbroom.

- Draw attention to Miss Hardbroom's reprimand to Mildred's and Maud's whispered conversation, which immediately puts them in their place as the youngest, most inexperienced participants of the Hallowe'en celebrations.
- Encourage the children to compare the illustration with the text. Although the characters are in silhouette, how can the children recognise Miss Hardbroom, Mildred and Maud?

Extract 3

- Underline the girls' traditional response to Miss Cackle's arrival, *Everyone stood up*. Ask: *Do children still do this today when someone important walks into a room?* (Perhaps every day at school or at special gatherings.) Discuss why people sometimes stand when someone important walks in. (It is a display of respect.)
- Highlight the use of the word *certain* (*a certain young member of the school*). Explain how this singles out Mildred for distinction and merit. Compare the word's use in Chapter

Three: *a certain young witch named Ethel* – also distinguishing the character from others, but instead for negative behaviour.

- Underline all the sentences and phrases that describe Mildred's embarrassment before the word is actually used. Ask how Miss Cackle's words imply Mildred's apparent discomfort and then circle *don't be shy*.
- Highlight the use of quotation marks around *the heroine*. Ask why they are used (to indicate that Mildred is a reluctant recipient of the title).

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