



# **Year 9**

## **The Landlady**

### **Home Learning**



## English – The Landlady

**This work book can be completed alongside your Year 9 into 10 Learning Journey for English**

### Work to be completed

- ☐ Pre-reading Activity -
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Vocabulary
- ☐ Fill in the blank summary
- ☐ Comprehension questions
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Vocabulary
- ☐ Fill in the blank summary
- ☐ Comprehension questions
- ☐ The presentation of the landlady
- ☐ Your interpretation and opinion
- ☐ Stretch – these tasks are optional

### Resources / links to help with work:

- ☐ Comic strip version of the story in this booklet
- ☐ Film adaptation of The Landlady (24 mins approx.):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWhBej5r07o>
- ☐ Shorter adaptation of The Landlady (8 mins approx.):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTy6FZmOQNc>
- ☐ <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-landlady/summary-and-analysis>

### Support:

These workbooks have been designed for you to work through them independently. There are several support resources available through the links above and further help inside this booklet.

However, if you have really tried but are still stuck or do not understand what is being asked, please email your English teacher with clear details of the subject, page number and question/issue that you have.

This support pages at the end have been designed to help you with each section of this work booklet should you need it. These are designed to keep your English brain active and engaged – they are not designed to make you worried! Your teachers expect you have a good attempt at each question to the best of your ability – they are not expecting perfection. If you are finding anything particularly difficult then follow school guidelines about how to seek specific help.

### Why is the work in this booklet important to complete?

*This work is important to complete because you will be building your vocabulary, imagination and reading/writing skills. We have chosen a story we think will capture your imagination and that you will enjoy. It is also written by one of the most successful children's authors. The reading skills you will be building will have a positive impact on all your subjects.*

## The Landlady

### 1. Pre-reading activity

Imagine you are looking for a place to stay when you see this house with the sign outside. You look in. What do you see inside? What sort of place is it? Who is inside? Would you stay there? Why /why not?



## 2. Reading

Section 1 of a story called *The Landlady* by Roald Dahl.

### Section 1

Billy Weaver had travelled down from London on the slow afternoon train, with a change at Swindon on the way, and by the time he got to Bath it was about nine o'clock in the evening and the moon was coming up out of a clear starry sky over the houses opposite the station entrance. But the air was deadly cold and the wind was like a flat blade of ice on his cheeks.

'Excuse me,' he said, 'but is there a fairly cheap hotel not too far away from here?'

'Try The Bell and Dragon,' the **porter** answered, pointing down the road. 'They might take you in. It's about a quarter of a mile along on the other side.'

Billy thanked him and picked up his suitcase and set out to walk the quarter-mile to The Bell and Dragon. He had never been to Bath before. He didn't know anyone who lived there. But Mr Greenslade at the Head Office in London had told him it was a **splendid** city. 'Find your own lodgings,' he had said, and then go along and report to the Branch Manager as soon as you've got yourself settled.'

Billy was seventeen years old. He was wearing a new navy-blue **overcoat**, a new brown **trilby hat**, and a new brown suit and he was feeling fine. He walked briskly down the street. He was trying to do everything **briskly** these days. Briskness, he had decided, was the one common characteristic of all successful businessmen. The big shots up at Head Office were absolutely fantastically brisk all the time. They were amazing.



**porter** – a person who carries luggage

**splendid** – lovely, nice

**overcoat** – formal coat

**trilby hat** - see picture

**briskly** - quickly

**porches** – covered bit at the front of a building

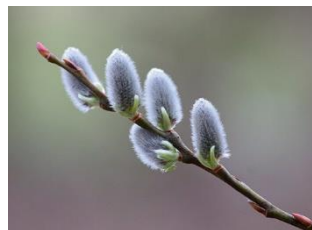
**pillars** – see picture

There were no shops on this wide street that he was walking along, only a line of tall houses on each side, all of them identical. They had **porches** and **pillars** and four or five steps going up to their front doors, and it was obvious that once upon a time they had been very **swanky residences**. But now, even in the darkness, he could see that the paint was peeling from the woodwork on their doors and windows, and that the handsome white **facades** were cracked and **blotchy** from neglect.



Suddenly, in a downstairs window that was brilliantly **illuminated** by a street-lamp not six yards away, Billy caught sight of a printed notice **propped** up against the glass in one of the upper panes. It said BED AND BREAKFAST. There was a vase of **pussy-willows**, tall and beautiful, standing just underneath the notice.

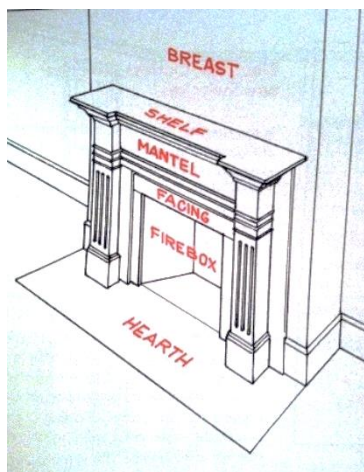
He stopped walking. He moved a bit closer. Green curtains (some sort of velvety material) were hanging down on either side of the window. The pussy-willows looked wonderful beside them.



He went right up and **peered** through the glass into the room, and the first thing he saw was a bright fire burning in the **hearth**. On the carpet in front of the fire, a pretty little **dachshund** was curled up asleep with its nose tucked into its belly. The room itself, so far as he could see in the half-darkness, was filled



with pleasant furniture. There was a baby-grand piano and a big sofa



and several **plump** armchairs; and in one corner he spotted a large parrot in a cage. Animals were usually a good sign in a place like this, Billy told himself; and all in all, it looked to him as though it would be a pretty decent house to stay in. Certainly it would be more comfortable than The Bell and Dragon.

**swanky** – stylish and expensive

**residences** – places to live

**facades** – the front part of the building

**blotchy** – covered with marks or spots

**illuminated** – lit up

**propped** – leaned against, supported by something else  
**pussy-willows** – see picture

**peered** – looked with concentration

**hearth** – the floor of a fireplace (picture)

**dachshund** – dog (picture)

**plump** - round

**congenial** – pleasing because you have similar interests

**boarding house** – a private house providing food

On the other hand, a pub would be more **congenial** than a **boarding-house**. There would be beer and darts in the evenings, and lots of people to talk to, and it would probably be a good bit cheaper, too. He had stayed a couple of nights in a pub once before and he had liked it. He had never stayed in any boarding houses, and, to be perfectly honest, he was a tiny bit frightened of them. The name itself conjured up images of watery cabbage, **rapacious landladies**, and a powerful smell of **kippers** in the living-room.

After **dithering** about like this in the cold for two or three minutes, Billy decided that he would walk on and take a look at The Bell and Dragon before making up his mind. He turned to go.



And now a **queer** thing happened to him. He was in the act of stepping back and turning away from the window when all at once his eye was caught and held in the most **peculiar** manner by the small notice that was there. BED AND BREAKFAST, it said. BED AND BREAKFAST, BED AND BREAKFAST, BED AND BREAKFAST.

Each word was like a large black eye staring at him through the glass, holding him, compelling him, forcing him to stay where he was and not to walk away from that house, and the next thing he knew, he was actually moving across from the window to the front door of the house, climbing the steps that led up to it, and reaching for the bell.

He pressed the bell. Far away in a back room he heard it ringing, and then at once - it must have been at once because he hadn't even had time to take his finger from the bell-button - the door swung open and a woman was standing there. Normally you ring the bell and you have at least a half-minute's wait before the door opens. But this

**dame** was like a **jack-in-the-box**. He pressed the bell - and out she popped! It made him jump.

She was about forty-five or fifty years old, and the moment she saw him, she gave him a warm welcoming smile.

'Please come in,' she said pleasantly. She stepped aside, holding the door wide open, and Billy found himself automatically starting forward into the house. The **compulsion** or, more accurately, the desire to follow after her into that house was extraordinarily strong.



and somewhere to stay

**rapacious** – greedy

**landladies** – the lady who owns a property and charges people to stay there

**kippers** – a type of fish that is eaten (picture)

**dithering** – trying to make his mind up

**queer** - strange

**peculiar** - strange

**dame** – the woman who owns the B&B (landlady)

**jack-in-the-box** – toy where you wind up a handle on the side of a box and a toy springs out

compulsion

'I saw the notice in the window,' he said, holding himself back.  
 'Yes, I know.'  
 'I was wondering about a room.'  
 'It's all ready for you, my dear: she said. She had a round pink face and very gentle blue eyes.  
 'I was on my way to The Bell and Dragon,' Billy told her. 'But the notice in your window just happened to catch my eye.'  
 'My dear boy: she said, 'why don't you come in out of the cold?'

'How much do you charge?'  
 'Five and sixpence a night, including breakfast.'  
 It was fantastically cheap. It was less than half of what he had been willing to pay.  
 'If that is too much: she added, 'then perhaps I can reduce it just a tiny bit. Do you desire an egg for breakfast? Eggs are expensive at the moment. It would be sixpence less without the egg.'  
 'Five and sixpence is fine: he answered. 'I should like very much to stay here.'

'I knew you would. Do come in.'  
 She seemed terribly nice. She looked exactly like the mother of one's best school-friend welcoming one into the house to stay for the Christmas holidays. Billy took off his hat, and stepped over the **threshold**.

'Just hang it there: she said, 'and let me help you with your coat.'

There were no other hats or coats in the hall. There were no umbrellas, no walking-sticks -nothing.

'We have it all to ourselves,' she said, smiling at him over her shoulder as she led the way upstairs. 'You see, it isn't very often I have the pleasure of taking a visitor into my little nest.'

The old girl is slightly **dotty**, Billy told himself. But at five and sixpence a night, who gives a damn about that? 'I should've thought you'd be simply **swamped** with **applicants**,' he said politely.

'Oh, I am, my dear, I am, of course I am. But the trouble is that I'm **inclined** to be just a **teeny weeny** bit choosy and particular - if you see what I mean.'

Ah, yes.'

'But I'm always ready. Everything is always ready day and night in this house just on the off-chance that an acceptable young gentleman will come along. And it is such a pleasure, my dear, such a very great pleasure when now and again I open the door and I see someone standing there who is just exactly right.' She was half-way up the stairs, and she paused with one hand on the stair-rail, turning her head and smiling down at him with pale lips. 'Like you,' she added, and her blue eyes travelled slowly all the way down the length of Billy's body, to his feet, and then up again.

On the first-floor landing she said to him, 'This floor is mine.'

**threshold** - point of entry

**dotty** – slightly mad

**swamped** – overwhelmed – have lots of

**applicants** – people wanting to stay there

**inclined** – has a preference or tending to (often) do something

**teeny weeny** - small

**flight** – part or level of stairs

<p>They climbed up a second <b>flight</b>. 'And this one is all yours,' she said. 'Here's your room. I do hope you'll like it.' She took him into a small but charming front bedroom, switching on the light as she went in.</p> <p>'The morning sun comes right in the window, Mr Perkins. It is Mr Perkins, isn't it?'</p> <p>'No,' he said. 'It's Weaver.'</p> <p>'Mr Weaver. How nice. I've put a <b>water-bottle</b> between the sheets to air them out, Mr Weaver. It's such a comfort to have a hot water-bottle in a strange bed with clean sheets, don't you agree? And you may light the gas fire at any time if you feel chilly.'</p> <p>Thank you,' Billy said. 'Thank you ever so much.' He noticed that the bedspread had been taken off the bed, and that the bedclothes had been neatly turned back on one side, all ready for someone to get in.</p> <p>'I'm so glad you appeared,' she said, looking <b>earnestly</b> into his face. 'I was beginning to get worried.'</p> <p>'That's all right: Billy answered brightly. 'You mustn't worry about me.' He put his suitcase on the chair and started to open it.</p> <p>'And what about <b>supper</b>, my dear? Did you manage to get anything to eat before you came here?'</p> <p>'I'm not a bit hungry, thank you,' he said. 'I think I'll just go to bed as soon as possible because tomorrow I've got to get up rather early and report to the office.'</p> <p>'Very well, then. I'll leave you now so that you can unpack. But before you go to bed, would you be kind enough to pop into the sitting-room on the ground floor and sign the <b>book</b>?'</p> <p>Everyone has to do that because it's the law of the land, and we don't want to go breaking any laws at this stage in the <b>proceedings</b>, do we?' She gave him a little wave of the hand and went quickly out of the room and closed the door.</p> <p>Now, the fact that his landlady appeared to be slightly <b>off her rocker</b> didn't worry Billy in the least. After all, she was not only harmless there was no question about that but she was also quite obviously a kind and generous soul. He guessed that she had probably lost a son in the war, or something like that and had never got over it.</p>	<p><b>water-bottle</b> – flat water bottle filled with</p> <p><b>earnestly</b> – seriously</p> <p><b>supper</b> – dinner</p> <p><b>book</b> – guest-book</p> <p><b>proceedings</b> – something that requires an official way of doing something</p> <p><b>off her rocker</b> - crazy</p>
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### 3. Vocabulary

**Copy, cover, check these definitions**

<b>captivated</b> - somebody whose interest is held
<b>weary</b> - looks tired
<b>protagonist</b> - main character in a story
<b>alights</b> - gets off a transport (e.g. a train)
<b>quaint</b> - attractively unusual or old-fashioned
<b>accommodation</b> - a place to stay

<b>lodging</b> - temporary accommodation
<b>showers</b> - a flow of something (e.g. compliments or praise)
<b>appeal</b> - power of attracting and being interesting
<b>transfixed</b> - not moving because you are amazed or scared
<b>compelled</b> - forced to do something
<b>decline</b> - refuse, say no to
<b>senile</b> - showing weakness of the mind caused by old age
<b>suspicious</b> - not trusting somebody
<b>inn</b> - a pub with accommodation
<b>décor</b> - the way a place has been decorated and furnished
<b>peculiar</b> -strange

#### **4. Fill in blank – Section 1**

**Using some of the words you have just learnt and your knowledge of the story so far, fill in the blanks.**

The story is about a young \_\_\_\_\_ called Billy Weaver who travels to Bath to look for affordable \_\_\_\_\_ for his boss Mr Greenslade. When he \_\_\_\_\_ from the train, he is advised to go find a nice pub and \_\_\_\_\_.

Along his route (journey), he notices the poor conditions of many of the buildings and compares it to London. All of a sudden, he is \_\_\_\_\_ by a quaint, little \_\_\_\_\_. The place has a nice feeling and \_\_\_\_\_. He wants to find the pub but is \_\_\_\_\_ by the inn's appeal.

Consequently, he feels compelled to ring the doorbell of the inn and an old, \_\_\_\_\_ lady answers almost immediately. The lady \_\_\_\_\_ him with kindness and offers a cheap price that is hard to decline. Billy enters the place and is given a room on the first floor.

Billy settles in the room while the lady asks him to sign the guest book downstairs. Billy finds her a bit \_\_\_\_\_ as she keeps commenting on his age and how handsome he is. Billy is \_\_\_\_\_ but he tells himself she is just \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **5. Comprehension Questions**

1. How is Billy Weaver described at the beginning of the story?
2. What attracts Billy to the B and B? What aspects of the B and B makes him think it's a good place to stay?
3. Why did Billy not go to the pub?
4. What was unusual about the way the landlady responded to the doorbell? Why is this significant?
5. What aspects of the landlady's appearance and voice make her seem trustworthy?
6. What are the first signs that the landlady is very odd?

## 6. Section 2

So a few minutes later, after unpacking his suitcase and washing his hands, he **trotted** downstairs to the ground floor and entered the living-room. His landlady wasn't there, but the fire was glowing in the **hearth**, and the little **dachshund** was still sleeping in front of it. The room was wonderfully warm and cosy. I'm a lucky **fellow**, he thought, rubbing his hands. This is a bit of all right.

He found the guest-book lying open on the piano, so he took out his pen and wrote down his name and address. There were only two other entries above his on the page, and, as one always does with guest-books, he started to read them. One was a Christopher Mulholland from Cardiff. The other was Gregory W. Temple from Bristol.

That's funny, he thought suddenly. Christopher Mulholland. It **rings a bell**.

Now where on earth had he heard that rather unusual name before?

Was he a boy at school? No. Was it one of his sister's numerous young men, perhaps, or a friend of his father's? No, no, it wasn't any of those. He **glanced** down again at the book.

Christopher Mulholland  
Gregory w. Temple  
Bristol

231 Cathedral Road, Cardiff  
27 Sycamore Drive,

As a matter of fact, now he came to think of it, he wasn't at all sure that the second name didn't have almost as much of a familiar ring about it as the first.

'Gregory Temple?' he said aloud, searching his memory.

'Christopher Mulholland ...?'

'Such charming boys,' a voice behind him answered, and he turned and saw his landlady **sailing** into the room with a large silver tea-tray in her hands. She was holding it well out in front of her, and rather high up, as though the tray were a pair of **reins** on a **frisky** horse.

'They sound somehow familiar,' he said.

'They do? How interesting.'

'I'm almost positive I've heard those names before somewhere. Isn't that queer? Maybe it was in the newspapers. They weren't famous in any way, were they? I mean famous cricketers or footballers or something like that?'

'Famous,' she said, setting the tea-tray down on the low table in front of the sofa. 'Oh no, I don't think they were famous. But they were extraordinarily handsome, both of them, I can promise you that. They were tall and young and handsome, my dear, just exactly like you.'

Once more, Billy glanced down at the book. 'Look here,' he said, noticing the dates. 'This last entry is over two years old.'

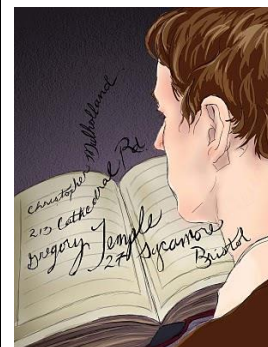
'It is?'

**trotted** – walked quickly

**dachshund** - dog

**hearth** – floor of a fireplace

**fellow** – man



**rings a bell** – sounds familiar, like he has heard them before but can't remember where

**glanced** - looked

**sailing** – entered as if she was starting a journey

**reins** – the leather strap used to control the movement of horses

**frisky** - energetic

'Yes, indeed. And Christopher Mulholland's is nearly a year before that -more than three years ago.'

'Dear me,' she said, shaking her head and heaving a dainty little sigh. 'I would never have thought it. How time does fly away from us all, doesn't it, Mr Wilkins?'

'It's Weaver,' Billy said. 'W-e-a-v-e-r.'

'Oh, of course it is?' she cried, sitting down on the sofa. 'How silly of me. I do apologise. In one ear and out the other, that's me, Mr Weaver.'

'You know something?' Billy said. 'Something that's really quite extraordinary about all this?'

'No, dear, I don't.'

'Well, you see -both of these names, Mulholland and Temple, I not only seem to remember each one of them separately, so to speak, but somehow or other, in some peculiar way, they both appear to be sort of connected together as well. As though they were both famous for the same sort of thing, if you see what I mean -like. ..well ...like **Dempsey and Tunney**, for example, or **Churchill and Roosevelt**.'

'How amusing,' she said. 'But come over here now, dear, and sit down beside me on the sofa and I'll give you a nice cup of tea and a ginger biscuit before you go to bed.'

'You really shouldn't bother,' Billy said. 'I didn't mean you to do anything like that.' He stood by the piano, watching her as she **fussed about with** the cups and saucers. He noticed that she had small, white, quickly moving hands, and red fingernails.

'I'm almost positive it was in the newspapers I saw them,' Billy said. 'I'll think of it in a second. I'm sure I will.'

There is nothing more **tantalising** than a thing like this which **lingers** just outside the borders of one's memory. He hated to give up.

'Now wait a minute,' he said. 'Wait just a minute. Mulholland Christopher Mulholland ...wasn't that the name of the Eton schoolboy who was on a walking-tour through the West Country, and then all of a sudden. ...'

'Milk?' she said. 'And sugar?'

'Yes, please. And then all of a sudden..., 'Eton schoolboy?' she said, 'Oh no, my dear, that can't possibly be right because my Mr Mulholland was certainly not an Eton schoolboy when he came to me. He was a Cambridge undergraduate. Come over here now and sit next to me and warm yourself in front of this lovely fire. Come on. Your tea's all ready for you.' She **patted** the empty place beside her on the sofa, and she sat there smiling at Billy and waiting for him to come over.

He crossed the room slowly, and sat down on the edge of the sofa. She placed his teacup on the table in front of him.

'There we are,' she said. 'How nice and cosy this is, isn't it?'

Billy started sipping his tea. She did the same. For half a minute or so, neither of them spoke. But Billy knew that she was looking at him. Her body was half-turned towards him and he could feel her

**Dempsey and Tunney** - two of the best fighters (boxers) of the 1920s

**Churchill and Roosevelt** – leaders of UK and USA during World War Two

**fussed about with** – needlessly moving or using them

**tantalising** - teasing or exciting

**lingers** – stay in a place longer than necessary

**patted** – touch quickly (as if indicating he should sit there)

eyes resting on his face, watching him over the rim of her teacup. Now and again, he caught a **whiff** of a **peculiar** smell that seemed to **emanate** directly from her person. It was not in the least unpleasant, and it reminded him well, he wasn't quite sure what it reminded him of. Pickled walnuts? New leather? Or was it the corridors of a hospital?

'Mr Mulholland was a great one for his tea,' she said at length.

'Never in my life have I seen anyone drink as much tea as dear, sweet Mr Mulholland.'

'I suppose he left fairly recently,' Billy said. He was still **puzzling his head** about the two names. He was positive now that he had seen them in the newspapers in the headlines.

'Left?' she said, arching her brows. 'But my dear boy, he never left. He's still here. Mr Temple is also here. They're on the third floor, both of them together.'

Billy set down his cup slowly on the table, and stared at his landlady. She smiled back at him, and then she put out one of her white hands and patted him comfortingly on the knee. 'How old are you, my dear?' she asked.

'Seventeen.'

'Seventeen!' she cried. 'Oh, it's the perfect age! Mr Mulholland was also seventeen. But I think he was a **trifle** shorter than you are, in fact I'm sure he was, and his teeth weren't quite so white. You have the most beautiful teeth, Mr Weaver, did you know that?'

'They're not as good as they look,' Billy said. 'They've got simply **masses of fillings** in them at the back.'

'Mr Temple, of course, was a little older,' she said, ignoring his remark. 'He was actually twenty-eight. And yet I never would have guessed it if he hadn't told me, never in my whole life. There wasn't a **blemish** on his body.'

'A what?' Billy said.

'His skin was just like a baby's.'

There was a pause. Billy picked up his teacup and took another sip of his tea, then he set it down again gently in its **saucer**. He waited for her to say something else, but she seemed to have **lapsed** into another of her silences. He sat there staring ahead of him into the far corner of the room, biting his lower lip.

'That parrot,' he said at last. 'You know something? It had me completely fooled when I first saw it through the window from the street. I could have sworn it was alive.'

'Alas, no longer.'

'It's most terribly clever the way it's been done,' he said. 'It doesn't look in the least bit dead. Who did it?'

'I did.'

'You did?'

'Of course,' she said. 'And have you met my little Basil as well?'

She nodded towards the dachshund curled up so comfortably in front of the fire. Billy looked at it. And suddenly, he realized that this animal had all the time been just as silent and motionless as the parrot. He put out a hand and touched it gently on the top of

**whiff** – a smell that is only smelt for a moment

**peculiar** - strange

**emanate** - spread out from

**puzzling his head** – trying to think about how he knew the names

**trifle** – little bit

**masses of fillings** – lots of fillings (holes that have been filled by the dentist) in his teeth

**blemish** – a small mark or spot

**saucer** – small plate to rest a tea cup

**lapsed**- went into

<p>its back. The back was hard and cold, and when he pushed the hair to one side with his fingers, he could see the skin underneath, greyish-black and dry and perfectly <b>preserved</b>.</p> <p>'Good gracious me,' he said. 'How absolutely fascinating.' He turned away from the dog and stared with deep admiration at the little woman beside him on the sofa. 'It must be most awfully difficult to do a thing like that.'</p> <p>'Not in the least,' she said. 'I <b>stuff</b> all my little pets myself when they pass away. Will you have another cup of tea?'</p> <p>'No, thank you,' Billy said. The tea tasted faintly of bitter almonds, and he didn't much care for it.</p> <p>'You did sign the book, didn't you?'</p> <p>'Oh, yes.'</p> <p>'That's good. Because later on, if I happen to forget what you were called, then I can always come down here and look it up. I still do that almost every day with Mr Mulholland and Mr ... Mr...'</p> <p>'Temple,' Billy said. 'Gregory Temple. Excuse my asking, but haven't there been any other guests here except them in the last two or three years?'</p> <p>Holding her teacup high in one hand, <b>inclining</b> her head slightly to the left, she looked up at him out of the corners of her eyes and gave him another gentle little smile.</p> <p>'No, my dear,' she said. 'Only you.'</p>	<p><b>preserved</b> - kept in its original state</p> <p><b>stuff</b> (called taxidermy) - filling, and supporting the skins of dead animals with lifelike effect</p> <p><b>inclining</b> – tilting, leaning or turning away/towards</p>
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## 7. Vocabulary

### Copy, cover, check these definitions

<b>log</b> - recording (guest book here)
<b>familiar</b> well known or seen before
<b>enquires</b> ask for information
<b>piece (verb)</b> put together
<b>evades</b> escape or avoid something
<b>residing</b> living or to be present somewhere
<b>previous</b> existing or occurring before in time or order
<b>stuffs</b> filling, and supporting the skins of dead animals with lifelike effect
<b>sinisterly</b> giving the impression that something harmful or evil is happening or will happen
<b>strike a chord</b> cause something to remember or feel something
<b>recall</b> remember
<b>spooks</b> frightens, unnerves

## **8. Fill in the blanks section 2**

**Using some of the words you have just learnt and your knowledge of the story so far, fill in the blanks.**

When Billy looks at the \_\_\_\_\_, he sees two previous entries – Mr Mulholland and Mr Temple. Both names \_\_\_\_\_ a chord in his memory but Billy cannot \_\_\_\_\_ them exactly. He thinks he might have heard about them over the news. However, both entries are at least 2-3 years old.

When Billy \_\_\_\_\_ about them, the old lady \_\_\_\_\_ the question but finally tells him that they are still \_\_\_\_\_ on the fourth floor. He also learns that the old lady \_\_\_\_\_ her old pets. This all \_\_\_\_\_ Billy and he starts to \_\_\_\_\_ the mystery together. The name sounded \_\_\_\_\_ because Mulholland was a boy who went missing a couple of years ago.

Billy also finds the taste of the tea a bit weird and realises that he has been drugged. When he asks the lady about the time since her last visit, she smiles at him. After a pause, she \_\_\_\_\_ reveals that Billy was her first visitor in 2 years.

## **9. Comprehension Questions**

1. We are told that the landlady has a particular smell. Can you think what she might smell of and why it is significant?
2. What does the landlady mean when she says, 'They're on the third floor, both of them here together'?
3. Why is it frightening when the landlady says Mr Temple hadn't 'a blemish on his body' and had perfect skin 'just like a baby's'?
4. What do we learn about the parrot?
5. What do you think the landlady means when she says 'I stuff all my little pets myself when they pass away?' How might this relate to Billy?

## **10. The presentation of the landlady**

**Read the quotations and statements and decide whether these things portray the landlady in a positive (good) or negative (bad) way.**

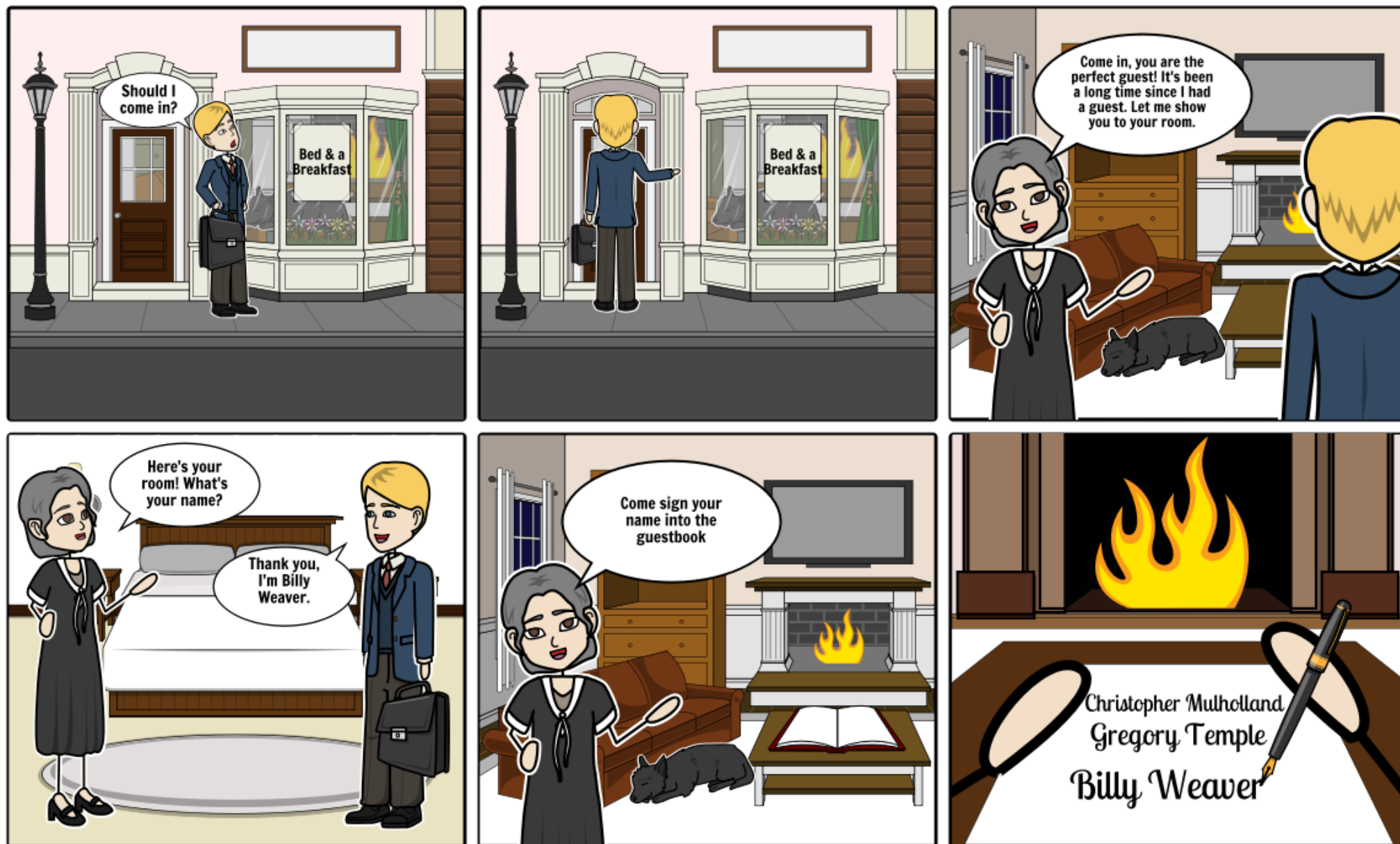
- ☐ "She had a round pink face and very gentle blue eyes"
- ☐ The landlady prepares a warm bed for Billy
- ☐ The landlady serves strange tasting tea which could be poison
- ☐ She says, "I stuff all my little pets"
- ☐ "She looked exactly like the mother of one's best friend"
- ☐ The landlady seems quite crazy
- ☐ The other boys who stayed in the B&B went missing
- ☐ She calls Billy 'my dear'

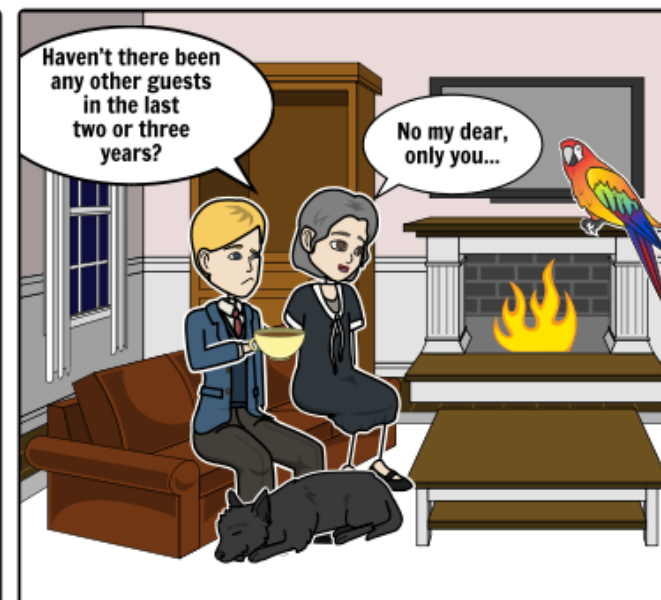
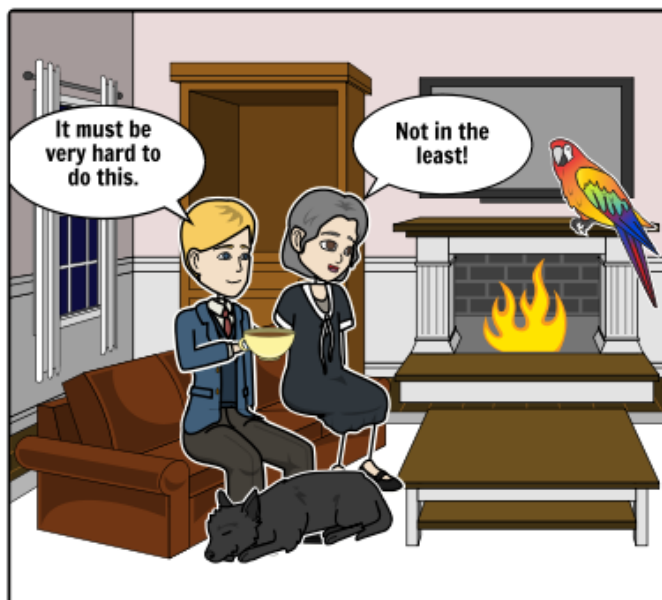
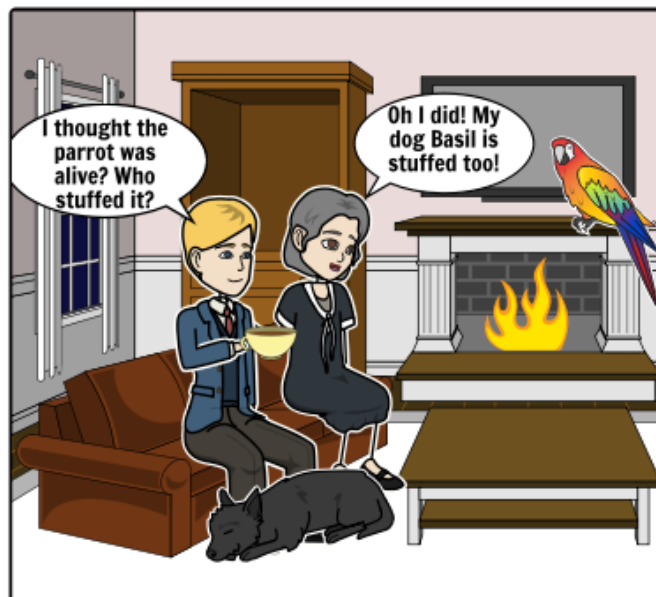
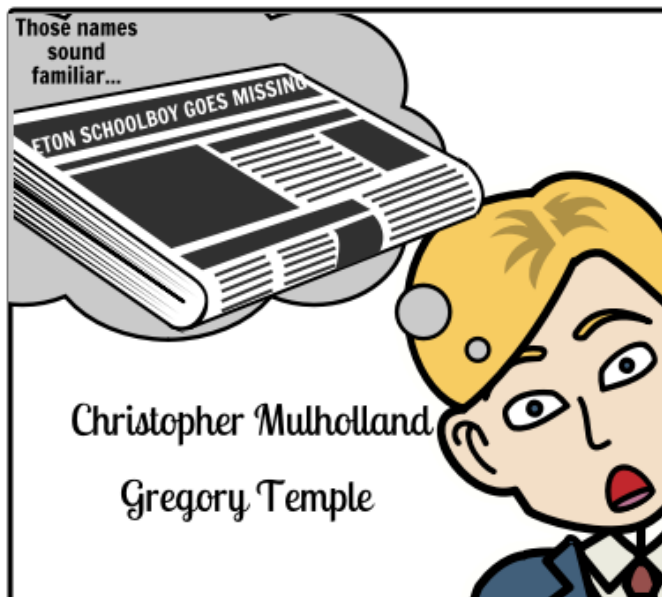
Positive description	Negative description

## **11. Your interpretation and opinion**

**What do you think happened to Billy? Use evidence from the story to support your answer.**

## Support Resource – Comic Strip version





**Stretch – Break down the structure of the story into this organiser.**



**Event 2**

**Climax**

**Event 1 -**

**Event 3**

**Beginning-**  
Characters –

Setting –

Situation -



**Resolution**

## Stretch Menu

- ☐ Complete the organiser and use it to create a storyboard of the story
- ☐ Complete the organiser and use it to rewrite the story from the landlady's perspective.
- ☐ Complete the missing poster activity below
- ☐ Write your own story about another victim of the landlady. He must also be a young gentleman. Why will he be visiting Bath? Would he also be compelled to stay there? Will he recognise the names in the guestbook? Will she serve him tea? Will he try to escape? Will he make it out of there or face a similar fate to Billy?
- ☐ Write a story about the landlady's life before she owned a Bed and Breakfast
- ☐ Imagine a detective has been sent to the landlady's Bed and Breakfast to investigate the disappearance of Billy. Write a story about what he will find when he gets there and his conversation with the landlady. Will she allow him to look around without a warrant? Will she serve him tea? Will he make it out of there?

## **Missing Poster Activity**

Using relevant details from the text, produce a 'Missing, can you help?' poster for Billy Weaver.

### **Research**

Look at the example of the 'missing' text that you have been given. Work with a partner to answer the following questions.

- What presentational features can you identify?
- What do you notice about the tone and content of the writing?
- Who is the audience?

### **Planning**

Re-read the opening pages of the story.

Make brief notes on the following:


who has gone missing, and his age	
where he had travelled from, how he had travelled and where he was travelling to	
what time he arrived there	
any sightings of Billy in Bath	
details of his clothing	

You will need to invent details we are not given by the writer. Make up Billy's:

hair colour and hair length	
eye colour	
build	

Now think about what Billy's family would like to say to him, how would they persuade him that it's ok to get in touch and, hopefully, to come home?

Now produce a poster for missing teenager, Billy Weaver.

<h1>MISSING</h1>	
	<b>ADDITIONAL DETAIL</b>  NAME : HEIGHT : WEIGHT : AGE : EYES : HAIR : UNIQUE SIGN :  [PUT OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION HERE]
	<b>LAST SEEN :</b> TEXT 1 TEXT 2 TEXT 3
	<b>IF YOU HAVE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT (Phone Number)</b>
<b>HELP US PLEASE</b>	

## Answers

### 4. Fill in the blanks summary of section 1

The story is about a young **protagonist** called Billy Weaver who travels to Bath to look for affordable **accommodation** for his boss Mr Greenslade. When he **alights** from the train, he is advised to go find a nice pub and **lodging**.

Along his route, he notices the poor conditions of many of the buildings and compares it to London. All of a sudden, he is **captivated** by a **quaint**, little **inn**. The place has a nice feeling and **décor**. He wants to find the pub but is **transfixed** by the inn's appeal.

Consequently, he feels compelled to ring the doorbell of the inn and an old, **weary** lady answers almost immediately. The lady **showers** him with kindness and offers a cheap price that is hard to decline. Billy enters the place and is given a room on the first floor.

Billy settles in the room while the lady asks him to sign the guest book downstairs. Billy finds her a bit **peculiar** as she keeps commenting on his age and how handsome he is. Billy is probably **suspicious** but he tells himself she is just **senile**.

## **5. Comprehension Questions**

### **1. How is Billy Weaver described at the beginning of the story?**

#### **Answers:**

- **Bill is described as somebody who is not that well-travelled as he 'had never been to Bath before.**
  - **Bill is seventeen years old and is 'wearing a new navy- blue overcoat, a new brown trilby hat, and a new brown suit' This could indicate that he has just started work if he has new smart clothes and is young.**
  - **He is concerned about being brisk because he thinks it is a 'common characteristic of all successful businessmen' which could show he is ambitious and wants a career as a businessman.**
- 2. What attracts Billy to the B and B? What aspects of the B and B makes him think it's a good place to stay?**

#### **Answers:**

- **Billy noticed the vase of flowers which were 'beautiful' and 'wonderful' next to the 'green curtains'. He liked the décor and probably thought it looked inviting.**
  - **He saw a 'bright fire' which would indicate it is cosy and warm.**
  - **He also thought that the animals were a 'good sign' possibly because it shows the owner is caring although he later learns that these are stuffed!**
  - **He thought it would be 'more comfortable' than a pub.**
- 3. Why did Billy not go to the pub?**

#### **Answers:**

- **Even though he decided to go to the pub, his eye 'was caught and held in the most peculiar manner by the small notice that was there.'**
- **He felt like each word on the sign was 'a large black eye staring at him through the glass, holding him, compelling him, forcing him to stay where he was and not to walk away from that house.'**
- **He did not really know why but this compelled him to go and ring the doorbell.**
- **It could be that he was being put under some kind of spell by the landlady to compel him to stay.**

4. What was unusual about the way the landlady responded to the doorbell? Why is this significant?

Answers:

- It was unusual how the landlady opened the door almost immediately before he had even taken his finger from the bell-button.
- This is unusual because it looks like she was waiting for him even though she is not busy and had not even had customers in over a year.
- It could even be further evidence that she was staring at him and compelling him to stay if she was that close to him when he changed his mind.

5. What aspects of the landlady's appearance and voice make her seem trustworthy?

Answers:

- She calls him 'dear boy' which implies she is kind and caring.
- Also, 'She looked exactly like the mother of one's best school-friend welcoming one into the house to stay for the Christmas holidays..' This makes her seem familiar, welcoming and trustworthy.

6. What are the first signs that the landlady is very odd?

Answers:

- The speed she answered the doorbell was suspicious as it seemed like she was waiting for him and compelling him to come in.
- She likes that they are alone together which could mean she has bad intentions.
- She is choosy about her lodgers – most inn owners would need the money to keep it running and wouldn't discriminate to just 'young gentlemen'.
- She comments on how he 'just right' and stares him up and down 'slowly' but doesn't explain what makes him right.

## 8. Fill in the blanks summary of section 2

When Billy looks at the log, he sees two previous entries – Mr Mulholland and Mr Temple. Both names strike a chord in his memory but Billy cannot recall them exactly. He thinks he might have heard about them over the news. However, both entries are at least 2-3 years old.

When Billy enquires about them, the old lady evades the question but finally tells him that they are still residing on the fourth floor. He also learns that the old lady stuffs her old pets. This all spooks Billy and he starts to piece the mystery together. The name sounded familiar because Mulholland was a boy who went missing a couple of years ago.

Billy also finds the taste of the tea a bit weird and realises that he has been drugged. When he asks the lady about the time since her last visit, she smiles at him. After a pause, she sinisterly reveals that Billy was her first visitor in 2 years.

## 9. Comprehension Questions

1. We are told that the landlady has a particular smell. Can you think what she might smell of and why it is significant?

**Answers:**

- She smells of 'pickled walnuts', 'new leather' or 'the corridors of a hospital'. This could be because she uses chemicals to stuff her animals (or guests!).
  - She could smell like this because she has put a poison in his tea which also tastes 'faintly of bitter almonds, and he didn't much care for it'. He is realising that he could be drugged here.
2. What does the landlady mean when she says, 'They're on the third floor, both of them here together'?

**Answers:**

- She could mean that they are still guests at her lodging.
  - It could also mean that she has stuffed them and kept them up there together like she keeps her pets.
3. Why is it frightening when the landlady says Mr Temple hadn't 'a blemish on his body' and had perfect skin 'just like a baby's'?

**Answers:**

- It is frightening that she knows what Mr Temple's skin looks like because it would have been under his clothes. It could be that she drugged them and then stuffed them. During the process of stuffing, she would have seen what their skin looked like.
  - Billy is clearly frightened or worried because he just 'sat there staring ahead of him into the far corner of the room, biting his lower lip.'
4. What do we learn about the parrot?

**Answers:**

- We learn that the parrot was a pet of the landlady and she has stuffed it now.
  - This could add to Billy's suspicions as he also realises that his tea tastes funny, that the last guests, from years ago are still there on the third floor and that the landlady knows what Mr Temple's skin looks like.
5. What do you think the landlady means when she says 'I stuff all my little pets myself when they pass away?' How might this relate to Billy?

**Answers:**

- The landlady means that she uses a process of filling and supporting the skins of dead animals with lifelike effect. She could want to keep them as a reminder of them if she misses them.
- However, this might relate to Billy as he has his suspicions that she has also stuffed the two previous guests so he is in danger!

**10. The presentation of the landlady**

Read the quotations which describe the landlady. Decide whether they are positive or negative descriptions and put them in the positive or negative column.

Positive description	Negative description
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<input type="checkbox"/> “She had a round pink face and very gentle blue eyes”	<input type="checkbox"/> The landlady serves strange tasting tea which could be poison
<input type="checkbox"/> The landlady prepares a warm bed for Billy	<input type="checkbox"/> She says, “I stuff all my little pets”
<input type="checkbox"/> “She looked exactly like the mother of one’s best friend”	<input type="checkbox"/> The landlady seems quite crazy
She calls Billy ‘my dear’	<input type="checkbox"/> The other boys who stayed in the B&B went missing

## Pupil Work Booklet 1

### English – The Landlady

#### Support Page

*These page has been designed to help you with each section of this work booklet should you need it. These are designed to keep your English brain active and engaged – they are not designed to make you worried! Your teachers expects you have a good attempt at each question to the best of your ability – they are not expecting perfection. If you are finding anything particularly difficult then follow school guidelines about how to seek specific help.*

*For EAL support go further down to find your own language.*

*Metinde daha aşağıda kendi dilinizde yardım olacaktır.*

*在文本中，您将在您自己的语言中提供帮助。*

*در زبان خود به شما کمک می کند تا بیشتر در متن قرار دهید.*

**Top Tip:** If you have access to a printer it may help you to print out even just the story part of the text to be able to refer back when answering your questions.

Firstly see if you can find someone who can **read the text aloud** with you – you can take it in turn to read the paragraphs and check understanding as you go along – use your finger to follow along with the text. After each paragraph ask yourself these questions:

- Have we met any new characters?
- What are they like?
- What do I think might happen next?

**Top tip:** If you have access to a phone or Skype/iPad maybe you could call a friend or family member and share the reading online.

## **Sections 1-4**

If you need help with these (and have really given it your best shot) you can use the answers at the end of the booklet to help you – but have integrity, try yourself first!

### **Section 5**

- Q1. Read p.4 to find your answer (**Tip:** Look near the hat picture).
- Q2. Read p.5 to find your answer (**Tip:** Look under the pillars picture).
- Q3. Read the bottom of p.5 and the middle of p.6 (**Tip:** look near the fish picture) to find your answer.
- Q4. The answer is on p.6 near the Jack-in-a-Box picture.
- Q5. The answer is near the bottom of p.5 and the top of p.6.
- Q6. Look near the bottom of p.7 – how does the landlady look at Billy in a way that is very strange? How would you feel if someone you had only just met looked at you in this way?

## **Sections 6-8**

If you need help with these (and have really given it your best shot) you can use the answers at the end of the booklet to help you – but have integrity, try yourself first!

### **Section 9**

- Q1. Look at the top of p.17 for your answer. Why might she smell of these things? Once you have read the whole story and know the truth about the landlady, what do these smells make you think of?
- Q2. Look at p.17. Why might the other two guests still be there if they arrived one and three years ago and there is no sign of their coats in the hallway? Once you know what the landlady does to her animals this seems a clear warning sign!
- Q3. Should somebody you hardly know have a good understanding of what *all* your skin looks like?
- Q4. Look in the bottom third of p. 17 where it begins 'That parrot...' for your answer.
- Q5. Look at p.18. What about what Billy has just learned could be very frightening and dangerous for him and his safety?

## **Section 11: Your interpretation and opinion**

It may be useful to know here that the poison cyanide tastes like almonds! Look at p.18. Why is this important?

Why is it unusual that Billy thinks he has heard of the other two guests for the same reason and linked to newspapers? Could it be that he read about them going missing and they were never found? Use a quotation from p.15 and/or p.16 to help you. What do you think happened to them given that by the end of the short story we learn that the landlady stuffs her dead animals so that she can keep them forever?

## **Stretch Sections**

You can attempt all or some of these in any order you choose. Well done if you make it to the stretch – great work!

### **Story Summary: The Landlady**

Billy Weaver, a seventeen-year-old British teenager who wanted to be a businessman, stumbled upon a boarding-house saying BED AND BREAKFAST that had a parrot and a sleeping dachshund. Billy was deciding whether he should stay there or at a pub when the sign seemed to attract him towards the boarding-house. When he rang the doorbell, a 50-year-old woman opened the door. Billy discovers that the boarding-house was extremely cheap, and finds that the woman was slightly out of her mind, but very nice. Billy went to put his name in the guest-book and found only two names, Christopher Mulholland, and Gregory W. Temple, names which Billy had heard before. The old landlady invited Billy for some tea, and Billy was racking his mind about the names. He then realized that Mulholland was an Eton schoolboy who disappeared many years before. The landlady assured Billy that her Mulholland was a Cambridge undergraduate. She added some sugar to Billy's tea, which tasted bitter, indicating that the sugar was most likely cyanide. The landlady was talking about how perfect Billy and the two other guests were when Billy stated that he realized that the parrot he saw before was stuffed, and so was the sleeping dachshund. The landlady stated that she stuffs all her pets when they die. Billy asks whether she had any guests since the two gentlemen. The landlady replied, "No, my dear. Only you." We realise she is about to kill Billy and stuff him too!