

Year 4 Reading

All children

Date: Tuesday 14th July 2020

LO: To read and summarise a piece of text

Task:

Read or share chapter 32-33 of 'Demon Dentist' (The text is below the task).

How do Alfie and Winnie work together? What do they find? Can they rescue Gabz?

Your tasks for this week are to read and enjoy the rest of the Demon Dentist! When you have finished the chapters, discuss what has happened with someone else. If you have finished and have time, you can do a reading puzzle!

Demon Dentist by David Walliams chapter 32-33

The Lower Depths

For many years coal mining in the town had been extinct. The mine itself had been boarded up. It stood there, ugly and unloved, in an ocean of its own slurry. To keep trespassers out, a huge metal fence encircled the mine. The fence was topped with a crown of barbed wire. Signs screaming...



Alfie knew where there was a little hole in the fence. The older kids at school would often talk about it. Strange as it might seem, the old deserted mine held a fascination for many of the local youngsters. At the very least, it was somewhere for them to go of an evening to drink and smoke and snog, away from the prying eyes of grown-ups.

The hole in the fence was child-sized, not biglady-sized, so Alfie thought it safest for Winnie to try and crawl through first. However, as soon as she tried to squeeze through, her clothes became caught on the metal edges of the wire.

"Help me, boy! I'm stuck!" she shrieked.

Alfie surveyed the scene. The social worker did not look at her most dignified.

“What do you want me to do?” he asked.

“Push!” she implored.

Alfie took in her position. All he could now see of his social worker were her more than ample buttocks.

“Where?” he asked innocently.

“My booty!”

Reluctantly he placed his hands on Winnie’s abundant bum.

“PUSH!” she cried.



Using all his weight, Alfie pushed the woman’s bottom, his feet slipping and sliding on the wet mud just outside the wire fence. Nothing. He took a deep breath and made another huge effort. It was a bit like pushing a car. But eventually Winnie passed through the hole.

Unfortunately her clothes did not.

The multicoloured jacket, top and leggings remained hanging on the ends of the cut wire. It took a few moments for Winnie to realise she was now only in her underwear. “It’s suddenly become rather chilly...” she muttered to herself at first, as she struggled to her feet. Finally, she looked down and saw that she was standing there in her bra and knickers. The bra was quite the biggest Alfie had ever seen. It looked like it could comfortably hold two footballs, and was bright orange. The knickers, that might have doubled as a child’s play tent, were a shocking shade of pin
“Oh my!” Winnie cried. The poor lady looked dreadfully embarrassed.



As fast as he could, Alfie untangled Winnie's clothes from the fence. To respect her modesty, he turned his head away as he passed the now-torn garments through the hole.

"Oh, thank you, young Alfred," said Winnie, as she snatched it from him. Alfie didn't turn his head back until all the grunting and groaning as she struggled to put the dress back on had stopped. The social worker gave a deep sigh of relief, before telling Alfie, "Not a word of that to anyone, please!"

"Of course not, Winnie!" said Alfie, not sure he would quite be able to keep it secret forever.

"I wasn't wearing matching underwear today!" she exclaimed. "Oh, the shame of it!"

From where they stood, the pair could just see how the now dispersing trail of smoke ended exactly at the entrance to the mine. At the opening rested a huge metal cage, which itself housed a giant lift. In its long-lost days as a working mine, the lift would have taken Alfie's dad and all the other miners deep underground. Hundreds of metres down, in the dark tunnels, they would do their arduous work. Once upon a time, coal was the country's main source of energy. So for hours upon hours the miners would work, dig and chisel and drill, to bring chunks of the mineral to the surface. That was how Dad developed the terrible problem with his

breathing. Over the years, all that dust from drilling the coal had become embedded in his lungs.

"The witch must have taken Gabz straight down there," said Alfie, as they raced across the rubble to the mine entrance. "My dad told me there is only one way down – in the lift. We have to go after them..."

Winnie held on to Alfie's hand to steady herself. It wasn't easy running on such loose ground in wedges. "Alfred, you're not going nowhere..."

"What?" answered Alfie. He hadn't come all this way for nothing.

"An old deserted mine!" Winnie exclaimed. "No, no, no. It's far too dangerous. And as your social worker I have a duty of care..."

Alfie couldn't hide his frustration as they finally reached the huge metal cage that housed the lift. "But if we don't go after the Tooth Witch now, who knows what she will do to Gabz?"

He traced his hand over the old controls that were caked in a decade of grime, searching for a button that might bring the lift up to the surface.

"Come away from there, boy!" shouted Winnie. "This instant!"

Like most kids being told not to do something, Alfie pretended not to hear. Eventually he found the large green button which must call the lift. Jamming his finger on to it, he pressed and pressed again, but the lift didn't make a sound. The power must have been cut off when the mine closed all those years before.

"See!" said Winnie. "There is no way down. Now the best thing we can do is wait here while I call the police for help..." She fumbled in her lime green handbag for her phone.

"That PC Plank is useless!" said Alfie. "We need to rescue Gabz now!"

Using all his might, he slammed ajar the huge rusty metal door that opened on to the lift shaft. He peered down into the blackness. For all he could see, it could go down for miles. Alfie picked up a small discarded piece of coal, and dropped it. In his head he counted how many seconds until he heard the thud of it hitting the bottom.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven...

It must be hundreds of metres down.

"Come away from the edge, boy!" shouted Winnie, pulling him back sharply by his hand. Alfie shook her away, and took several paces back from the shaft.

"Oh, thank goodness..." said Winnie with a relieved sigh. Little did she know that Alfie was actually taking a run-up. As the social worker was busy tapping a number into her phone, Alfie ripped out the insides of his trouser pockets and put them over his hands to use as makeshift gloves.



"It's ringing..." announced Winnie, as she held the phone to her ear.

Just then Alfie sprinted forward as fast as he could. He took a running jump at the thick metal lift cable that was suspended from the top to the bottom of the shaft. It was greasier than he had anticipated. At first Alfie panicked, he couldn't get a grip, he started sliding down it nearly as fast as if he were falling. For a moment, he thought his short life might be over.

"Aaaaaaahhhhhh!!!!!!!" cried Alfie.

"Noooooooooooo!!!!!!!" cried Winnie.

As swiftly as he could, Alfie wrapped his legs around the cable and squeezed tight. Thankfully this slowed him to a stop. Using his hands,

little by little he lowered himself into the mine.

"Come back!" yelled Winnie. Her voice echoed deep into the mine shaft.

It was too late. Alfie had disappeared into the dark depths below.

A Cathedral of Teeth

Above him, Alfie could see the square of daylight at the top of the shaft becoming smaller and smaller and smaller. As he slid further and further down, it eventually became nothing more than a tiny speck, no larger than a star in the sky. Now he was hundreds of metres underground. The muscles in his arms were tiring fast. There was no way he would ever be able to pull himself all the way back up. The only way was down. Eventually his feet touched something below him, though it was so dark

for the life of him Alfie couldn't see what it was. It was blacker than black at the bottom of the mineshaft. **This is how dark it was...**

Despite it being pitch-black, Alfie guessed that his feet must have touched down on the top of the lift car. No doubt it had been abandoned far underground and left to rot like everything else in the deserted mine. Stamping his feet up and down, Alfie heard the rattle of the metal telling him he was right. Groping with his hands, he eventually found what had to be an escape hatch on top of the lift, opened it, and leaped down inside. Pushing another huge metal cage door aside, Alfie noticed that far off in the distance there was a glimmer of dim yellow light. Immediately he could make out a few blurred lines amongst the shadows.

Stepping out, Alfie could feel the cold stone beneath his feet; he was in one of the hundreds of mine tunnels now. There were train tracks running along it. In fact, there were miles and miles of such tracks down here. The miners would have travelled along them to do their work, and sent the mountains of coal back in the mine cars. It was essentially a miniature railway line. With the whole place deserted, they seemed more like the tracks for a ghost train.

At the far end of the tunnel, light was flickering. Alfie walked towards it, slowly and silently. As he grew closer, and shadows danced on the damp walls, he realised this was not electric light, but candlelight. At last he reached the tunnel end, and realised it opened out into a well lit cave. He peered in.

Nothing could prepare Alfie for what he saw. The cave was vast; it seemed to go on forever. Thousands and thousands of candles illuminated the space.

At first glance there was no sign of Gabz, or the witch and her cat. Dominating the cave was an impossibly long table, but there were no chairs around it. It was white, and looked more like an altar you would see in a church. A plate and a number of goblets adorned the table. All of them white. There was a huge white chandelier hanging down from the ceiling. It held hundreds upon hundreds of candles. On the walls there were mosaics, in the shapes of what looked like prehistoric letters, or some kind of code. Alfie had seen something similar in pictures of the pyramid tombs of ancient Egypt, called hieroglyphics. On one side of the

cave sat a huge imposing throne. This again was white. The throne looked big enough for a giant. It was so tall, it reached the ceiling of the cavern.



Was this some kind of temple?

Or a tomb?

Or simply a way of beating sky-rocketing house prices?

Tentatively, Alfie stepped inside the cave. He had to find Gabz, and get out of there fast. Running his fingers along one of the mosaics on the walls, looking for any secret doorways, Alfie realised the surface was surprisingly sharp. He cut the tip of one finger open on a particularly sharp bit, drawing blood, but managed to stifle his gasp just in time.

With the blood dripping from his hand, Alfie carefully made his way to the impossibly long table and peered underneath it. Taking a closer look at the table top, he realised the whole thing was made up of thousands of

tiny fragments. What were they? Very gently he touched it; like the mosaics, it felt uneven and jagged. Intrigued, he picked up the goblet and held it close to his face, examining it in the candlelight. This too was made of countless of tiny pieces. Studying it, he finally realised what he was looking at.

The goblet was made up of hundreds of teeth.



Alfie dropped it in horror and it smashed to the ground. Bending down he picked up some of the little pieces. All of them were teeth. Children's

teeth. Just like everything else in the cave – the table, the throne, the chandelier, the goblet. Everything was made entirely of teeth.

The cave was a cathedral of teeth.

A Cateethdral*.

Made-up word* **ALERT

Alfie wanted to scream at the realisation, but covered his mouth just in time. How many children in how many towns had suffered just like Alfie, to furnish the witch's lair? It must have been thousands. Tens of thousands, even. Over many years. Perhaps even centuries.



Blinking, Alfie looked to the far side of the cave, where it was deepest in shadow. Squatting there was a huge sooty cauldron, as wide as a paddling pool but much deeper. As he tiptoed over, Alfie realised the cauldron was full of some foul-smelling, thick yellow gunk. A fire was raging

underneath. The Tooth Witch was evidently cooking up her special toothpaste mix.

Just then, Alfie thought he saw something moving in the shadows and looked up. Directly above the cauldron a girl was chained by shackles of teeth to some stalactites hanging down from the ceiling of the cave.

"Gabz...?" he said.

"Alfie! Is that you?" she whispered. "I couldn't make you out in the dark. I thought you might be the Tooth Witch coming back..."

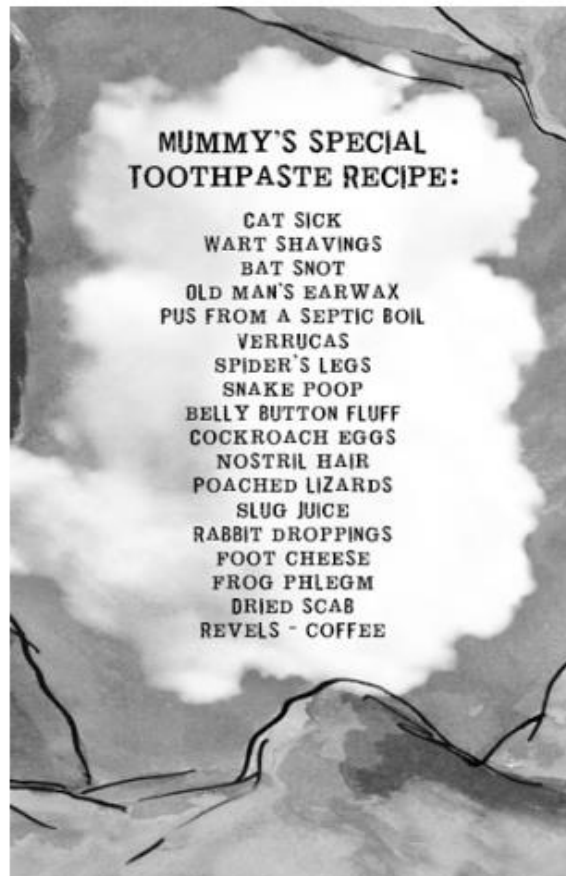
"No, no, it's me!" he said, drawing closer. "I am here to rescue you!"

"Well, you took your time!" she replied.

"Sorry, it's just..." Alfie spluttered, before realising he was getting really quite annoyed with her never-ending sarcasm. "Look, do you want to be rescued or not?"

"Shush..." hushed Gabz. "Keep your voice down! The witch can't be far away..."

"OK, OK," whispered Alfie. "How am I going to get up there to untie you?"



**MUMMY'S SPECIAL
TOOTHPASTE RECIPE:**

CAT SICK
WART SHAVINGS
BAT SNOT
OLD MAN'S EARWAX
PUS FROM A SEPTIC BOIL
VERRUCAS
SPIDER'S LEGS
SNAKE POOP
BELLY BUTTON FLUFF
COCKROACH EGGS
NOSTRIL HAIR
POACHED LIZARDS
SLUG JUICE
RABBIT DROPPINGS
FOOT CHEESE
FROG PHLEGM
DRIED SCAB
REVELS - COFFEE

“See if you can drag that throne over here...” she suggested.

“It looks heavy...”

“Well, the witch managed it.”

“Yes, but she’s a witch and has magical powers.”

Gabz gave him a stare, and he realised there was no point arguing. Alfie plodded over to the throne. At first he tried to rock it, but it wouldn’t move. Then he put his shoulder up against it. But it just wouldn’t budge.

“I’d better run to the bottom of the lift shaft and call up for help,” he whispered. “Stay right there...”

Gabz rolled her eyes. “Well, where else do you think I would be going to?”

Alfie tiptoed back to the opening of the cave. But just as he reached it he let out a scream.



“AAAAA
RRRRRR
GGGGG
HHHHHHHH!!!!!!”

The witch’s black eyes were staring right into his. Though her face was upside down. For a moment Alfie was so disorientated he didn’t know what was happening. Then he looked up to see she was hanging from the ceiling, like a bat. In her arms she held her cat, Fang, who hissed violently at him.

In that disturbing singsong voice of hers the witch said, “Now be a good boy, Alfie. Come to Mummy...”