

Brief Encounter

VIPERS worksheet

Before reading

- What might 'brief' mean? What about 'briefs'?
- What do you think this story will be about?

For the prediction questions, stop at the indicated point for each question.

Vocabulary

1. What is 'hypnosis'?
2. Suggest a more formal way of expressing 'blown away'.
3. What does 'stealing' mean in this context?
4. Define 'avidly'.
5. What does 'infuriating' mean?
6. Suggest a synonym for 'gnawing'.
7. Define 'erupted'.
8. Explain what 'hysteria' is.
9. Suggest a synonym for 'abruptly'.
10. Explain what 'dumbfounded' means.

Inference

1. Do you think Max actually expects to be hypnotised when he puts his hand up? Find evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. Is Max trying to make everyone laugh with his squirrel impression? How do you know?
3. Why do you think Max wants to tell Laura more things than she asks? Pick out phrases from the story that give us clues.
4. Was Callum being honest when he told Max he should do some modelling?
5. Why does Laura look a little anxious about Max when he wakes up?

Prediction

- *Stop at the line, 'He'd be so smug!'*
Do you think Max is going to be hypnotised or not? What might happen?

- *Stop at the paragraph ending, ' "There's something else I want to tell you." '*
What do you think is going to happen next?

Explain

1. Why would Isobel never usually volunteer to be hypnotised?
2. Why does Laura draw a black dot on the board? What will this do?
3. Why does Max do forward rolls and a cartwheel when he's pretending to be a bird?
4. Is Max's cheating strategy likely to be successful?
5. Why is Max embarrassed to find himself in just his pants given that he insisted on taking his clothes off?

Retrieval

1. What is the name of the narrator?
2. What is the school called?
3. What does Max want to do when he grows up?
4. What kind of bird does Laura ask Max to be?
5. What is Max's imaginary weapon for swatting the mosquito?
6. What kind of animal does Max imagine being?
7. What did Max do at the zoo?
8. What does Max think the headteacher should add to the school uniform?
9. What day is it, in the story?
10. Why is Callum not at school?

Summarise

- Describe Max in three words. Explain your choices with evidence from the text.
- Summarise the story in no more than ten words.