

Door

This poem is about a front door that the poet remembers from her childhood. It has an unusual, uneven rhythm and the ends of the lines do not rhyme.

Before you read

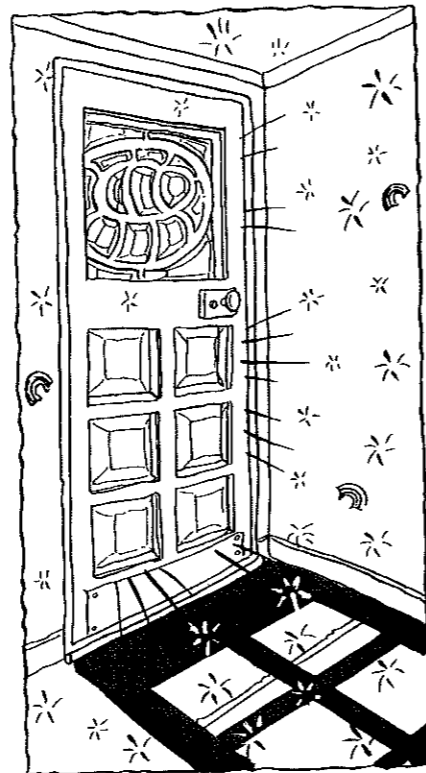
- What is your front door like?
- Sometimes, when it rains, you can see a rainbow. What colours might you see?

Read this poem

My grandmother's
Glass front door
Held a fancy pattern
Of panes, their
Heavy edges cut
On a slant; when
Sun shone through
They scattered
Some eighty little
Flakes of rainbows
Into the room,
Walking the walls,
Glowing like fallen
Flowers on the floor;
Why don't they
Make front doors that
Way any more?

Valerie Worth

DOOR



Re-read the poem

Answer the following questions.

1. Whose door is being described in the poem? _____
2. What was the door made of? _____
3. As light came through the panes of glass, it looked like **flakes of rainbows**. What do you think the author means?

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4. What did the **flakes of rainbows** remind the poet of? _____

5. Why do you think the poet liked her grandmother's front door? _____

6. Do you think the poet is grown up now, or still a child? Why? _____

7. The poet doesn't seem to like modern front doors. Explain why you think she feels that way.

8. Where else might you see sunshine through coloured glass windows? _____

9. Do you like the look of sunshine streaming through coloured windows? Give reasons for your answer.

More things to do

- Can you remember something special about when you were younger? Try to write a poem about it.
- Draw a diagram showing how light is broken up into parts as it passes through a glass prism. Label your diagram.

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Theseus slays the Minotaur

A myth is an old story (a narrative) which tells of magical happenings long ago. It usually involves gods, heroes and other imaginary men and women or creatures. This myth, like many others, comes from Ancient Greece.

Before you read

You may have heard or read other Greek myths. Can you finish any of these sentences?

Hercules was very _____.

Pegasus was a winged _____.

Midas had a _____ touch.

The Cyclops had only one _____.

Read this myth

THESEUS SLAYS THE MINOTAUR

The Minotaur was a terrible creature, half man and half bull. It lived under the palace of King Minos at Knossos in Crete. Its home was a labyrinth, a maze of passageways. No one could find the way in or out.

When the Minotaur was hungry it would bellow so loudly that the whole palace would shake. When this happened a human sacrifice had to be made to the monster, as it ate only human flesh. In its lair were piles of bones of young men and women who had been its victims.

The people of nearby Athens had been forced to send many of their sons and daughters to feed the Minotaur. King Minos was very powerful, and the Athenians had no choice but to obey his commands.

Theseus, the son of King Aegeus of Athens, was a very brave young man. He vowed he would slay the Minotaur. Old Aegeus begged him not to take the risk, but Theseus was determined to kill the monster. So, when the next victims set sail for Crete, Theseus went with them.

King Minos had a beautiful daughter named Ariadne. When she saw the handsome and brave Theseus, she immediately fell deeply in love and decided to help him kill the dreaded Minotaur.

Under cover of night she went to visit Theseus, who was in prison with the other victims.

"Take this ball of thread," she said. "Tie one end of it to the gate of the labyrinth before you go in, so you can follow it and find your way out again. If you go now you will be able to kill the Minotaur while it is sleeping. I will wait for you at the gate."

Theseus did what Ariadne had told him to do. He walked through the maze of passageways until he reached the sleeping Minotaur. Without wasting a second, he leapt upon the monster and slew it with his bare hands. Then he followed the thread back to the gate.

Ariadne and Theseus freed the other prisoners and together they made their escape from the island of Crete. All the people in Athens rejoiced that the Minotaur was dead.

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Re-read the myth

Answer the following questions.

1. • What was the Minotaur? _____

• What did it eat? _____

• Where did it live? _____

2. Who was Theseus? How did he find his way out of the labyrinth? _____

3. Do you know where Athens and Crete are? Find them on a map.

4. How do you know that Theseus was brave? _____

5. What did Theseus do which showed that he was very strong? _____

6. Why do you think that the people of Athens rejoiced that the Minotaur was dead? _____

7. Ariadne deceived her father when she helped Theseus. Do you think she did the right thing? Why? _____

More things to do

- Read some more Greek myths.
- Draw a picture of the Minotaur, imagining what it looked like.

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The storm

In a play the story is developed by characters saying things. This is called dialogue. A play also has suggestions about where the scene is set and what the characters are doing or feeling. These are called stage directions.

Before you read

- Do you remember any bad thunderstorms? How did you feel?
- What should you do if you are caught outside in a thunderstorm?

Read this play

THE STORM

Matthew and his sister Kirsty have been to the cinema and are hurrying to get home before a big storm breaks. They have no coats. The sky has become very dark. Loud thunder is heard as the play begins. The weather has changed suddenly and the children are feeling cold and frightened.

MATTHEW: Come on, Kirsty. Can't you go any faster? We'll be caught in this storm. I knew I shouldn't have taken you with me today.

KIRSTY: Matthew, wait for me. I just can't go any faster. How long have we got before the rain starts?

MATTHEW: How am I supposed to know that?! *(Lightning flashes very close to them followed by loud thunder. A strong wind begins to blow and drops of rain begin to fall.)* Run Kirsty, run! See if we can make it to that tall tree.

KIRSTY: But Matthew... you're not supposed to... OK.
(They begin to run, but the rain is pelting down. They are soon soaked through and the tree still seems a long way off. As they approach a corner, an old lady appears. Her umbrella is blown inside out.)

OLD LADY: Children, children, you must get inside and out of this terrible storm. Come into my house till it blows over. You'll be safe there.
(Matthew keeps on running but Kirsty stops.)

KIRSTY: Matthew, come back. This lady says we can go into her house until the storm has passed. Matthew! Matthew!
(Matthew doesn't stop running. The storm is so noisy that he can't hear Kirsty. Suddenly the old lady takes out a whistle and blows it loudly. Matthew stops, looks around and sees his little sister going into a house with a stranger. He races back towards them. Just as he reaches them, there is a huge flash of lightning and a deafening crack of thunder.)

OLD LADY: Come on, my boy. Come through into the hall, or at least inside the porch. Good gracious me! Just look at that!
(Matthew and Kirsty look where the old lady is pointing. The tree they had been running to has been hit by lightning.)

MATTHEW: *(very shakily)* I was running to get under that big tree. Look at it now. If I... if we... had been standing there, we wouldn't have had a chance!
(He opens his mouth to say something else but another clap of thunder drowns him out. The storm then seems to be passing.)

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KIRSTY: It's so lucky that we stopped, I can tell you.
(She looks down and finds she is holding the old lady's hand. She is still trembling.)
OLD LADY: You should never shelter under a tree during a storm. Remember, never, never! Come inside and I'll ring your parents so they can come and pick you up. Then I'll make a nice cup of tea. I think we all need one!

Re-read the play

Answer the following questions.

1. Where had Matthew and Kirsty been? _____
2. How were they caught out in the thunderstorm? _____
3. Who made the decision to shelter under the tall tree? _____
4. How did the old lady stop Matthew? _____
5. Why do you think the old lady was carrying a whistle? _____
6. Why was the old lady's umbrella turned inside out? _____
7. How did the children feel as they saw the smouldering tree? _____
8. If you were playing the part of Kirsty, what would you tell your parents when they arrived to collect you?

More things to do

Imagine you are Matthew or Kirsty. Tell the story of your storm adventure. Try to make clear how you felt.

Continued from p48

How to catch a train

Instructions provide step-by-step information on how to complete a task as well as a list of what you need.

Before you read

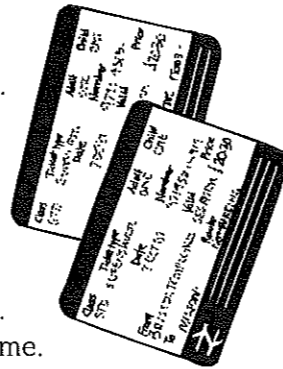
- Have you ever caught a train?
- Where was the train going to?

Read these instructions

HOW TO CATCH A TRAIN

You will need:

A single or return train ticket to your destination.
A train timetable.



What to do:

1. Choose destination.
2. Choose date and time of travel.
3. Look through timetable to find suitable train.
4. Make sure you arrive at station in plenty of time.
5. Check timetable displayed in station to make sure of:
 - time train leaves;
 - which platform train leaves from;
 - stations where train stops (make sure station you want is included).
6. Buy ticket (if you have not already bought it). Keep it with you at all times as it may be checked.
7. Walk to platform.
8. Wait for train. Do not stand too near edge of platform.
9. Wait until train stops and doors open.
10. Step into train. Move away from doorways.
11. Find seat if possible.
12. Watch out for station that is the one before your station.
13. Stay in your seat until the train stops, then go to the doors.
14. Keep well back until doors open.
15. Step out on to platform and move away from edge.

Re-read the instructions

Answer the following questions.

1. What type of ticket might you buy to ride on the train? _____
2. Why do you need to hold on to your ticket? _____
3. What three pieces of information do you need before you catch the train? _____

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4. Why do you need to stand away from the edge of the platform as the train comes into the station?

5. Why is it important to know the name of the station before the one where you want to get off?

6. Why should you keep clear of the doorways? _____

7. If you do not find a seat on the train, what should you do? _____

8. Number the following instructions in the correct order.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Move to platform to catch train. <input type="checkbox"/> | Ask for ticket to destination. <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Check you have enough money. <input type="checkbox"/> | Hand over money for ticket. <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wait for ticket. <input type="checkbox"/> | Decide if you want single or return ticket. <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. If you could take a train trip to anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why?

10. Instructions often have words left out of sentences. Write out steps 8 and 15 but include all the words that have been left out.

More things to do

Write a set of instructions explaining how to catch your local bus or how to get ready for school in the morning. Look closely at the steps in the instructions on the previous page.

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The earthworm

A report starts by stating what its subject is, then it gives many interesting facts. This report is about earthworms – what they look like, how they live and the important part they play in the natural world.

Before you read

Find an earthworm or a picture of one. Look at it very closely and write down three facts about it.

Read this report

THE EARTHWORM

Earthworms are long, round animals that live in moist, rich soil.

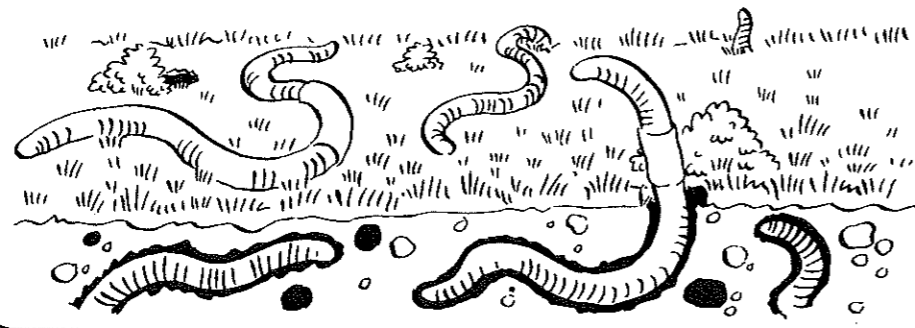
They have no spine, legs or feet. Their pinkish brown bodies are made up of rings or segments that are covered with tiny hairs called setae. These hairs help the worms to move along.

Earthworms spend most of their lives underground. They feed on soil that contains decaying animal or plant matter.

Earthworms burrow into the earth with their blunt heads, eating large amounts of soil as they go. They digest it in their bodies and leave the waste on top of the ground in little heaps, called worm casts.

Earthworms help to make the earth fertile. They enrich it with their waste, and they also loosen it as they burrow through the ground. The passages they create allow air and water to enter the soil.

Animals, birds and fish all eat worms, which form an important part of their food. So anywhere you find worms, you will also find birds, animals, plants and rich soil. Earthworms are therefore very important creatures.



Re-read the report

Answer the following questions.

1. Give three facts about the earthworm's appearance. _____

2. What do earthworms eat? _____

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3. Where do earthworms live? _____

4. What is a worm cast? _____

5. How do earthworms help to make the soil fertile? _____

6. If there were lots of earthworms in your garden, what would you know about the soil there?

7. What might happen to the soil if there were no earthworms? _____

8. Do you think that people should try to protect earthworms? _____

9. What do these words mean?

moist _____

setae _____

decaying _____

10. How could you help to make your soil a more suitable place for earthworms to live in?

More things to do

- Bring in some earthworms in a jar. Study them and write your own report.
- Draw a picture of an earthworm. Show its segments and its blunt head.

Continued from P66

Team games are more fun

An argument states a point of view. Then it gives points which argue for this view. It sums up the case at the end.

Before you read

- What games do you like to play?
- What team games do you play or watch?

Read this argument

TEAM GAMES ARE MORE FUN

Team games are much better than games you have to play by yourself. They allow more people to play, so you are able to play with your friends.

In order to win a team game, the players have to work together. This develops character and teaches people to be unselfish.

Playing in team games gives you pride in your school or club. It is a great feeling to know that you have done your best for your team – games that you play by yourself do not produce team spirit.

So, as well as helping people to learn how to be part of a team, team games are just much more fun. And if your side wins, so much the better!



Re-read the argument

Answer the following questions.

1. What is the writer's point of view about team games? _____

2. What do the players have to do if they wish to win a team game? _____

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3. The writer makes some important points to conclude the argument. What are they?

4. In what way would playing team games make you unselfish? _____

5. How do you feel if you play well for your team? _____

6. Do you think playing team games would help you to make friends? Give one or two reasons to support your argument.

7. Can you name two team games? _____

8. Can you think of two games you can play by yourself? _____

9. Explain the meaning of:
 develops character _____

 team spirit _____

More things to do

- Think about team games you like to play. Say why you enjoy them. Write an argument about why you like to play your favourite game.
- Try to explain the rules and how to play your favourite game. Do this as if the person to whom you are explaining the game knows nothing about it (he or she doesn't know any technical terms). It may be harder than you think!

Continued from p78

Our trip to Shingle Cove

A recount describes something that happened in the past, such as the events of a holiday. This recount is about what happened on a trip to a seaside town.

Before you read

- Where did you go for your last holiday?
- Think of three things that you did while you were there.

Read this recount

OUR TRIP TO SHINGLE COVE

During the summer holidays we went on a trip to Shingle Cove, a small town near the sea. Mum, Dad and I went, and my friend Jody. We stayed in a cottage for a week.

Every morning we walked to the beach for a swim. On some days the water was rough, but on other days it was calm. Jody and I used to race down the beach and jump into the sea!

Some afternoons, Dad, Jody and I played golf at a course near the end of the beach. Dad can hit the ball a really long way. Jody and I only ever managed to beat him on one hole, and it was short.

While we were away, Mum spent the afternoons reading her book. She said she enjoyed the peace!

One day Jody and I found a secret path to the beach. We had to scramble through some gorse and down a rocky track. It was a bit scary at times and we had to be careful. We got to the beach long before Mum and Dad. They went along the road and took ages.

In the evenings we sometimes had a barbecue, then afterwards we would sit on the patio and look out over the sea. If the weather wasn't warm we would play cards on the table inside. Jody and I never wanted to go to bed.

We were all very sad when we had to go home. I really liked Shingle Cove. I hope we can go back there again next year.



Re-read the recount

Answer the following questions.

1. Where did the writer go during the holidays? _____

2. What did the children do each morning? _____

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3. How did the two children get to the beach before Mum and Dad? _____

4. What did they do in the evenings after dinner? _____

5. Do you think the writer's mum liked golf? Why? Why not? _____

6. Do you think the cottage was at sea level or on a slope high above the sea? _____

7. Do you think the writer is a boy or a girl? What are your reasons for thinking that? _____

8. Are there any things that the writer did on holiday which you would enjoy doing? _____

9. What sort of holidays do you like best – camping holidays, trips overseas, beach holidays or another type? _____

10. What do you think is important on holiday if you are to have a good time? _____

More things to do

Write a recount of a holiday you have enjoyed.

Continued from P52

The elephant

A report gives us information about something. It begins by telling the reader what the report is about. It then gives facts that provide much more detail about the subject.

Before you read

- Many wild animals today are endangered. Do you know what an endangered species is?
- What might cause a species to be endangered?

Read this report

THE ELEPHANT

Elephants are the largest land animals in the world. They live in Africa and the south of Asia.

There are two kinds of elephant – African and Indian. African elephants are bigger than Indian elephants. They often weigh five or six tonnes, and can be even more! It is easy to tell the difference between the two types. African elephants have sloping foreheads and very large ears. They are also darker in colour.

Elephants eat plants, fruit and the young shoots of trees, using their amazing noses, or trunks, to put food into their mouths. They also use their trunks for drinking. Water is sucked up by the trunk and is then squirted into the mouth. Elephants drink a lot of water, often more than 100 litres in a day.

Elephants use their trunks to lift things. They are very strong and can pull and carry big loads. They often live for about 50 years, a long life for an animal.

Sad to say, these wonderful animals are under threat in the wild. They are hunted for their tusks, which are made of ivory and are therefore very valuable.

However, plastics and other materials can now often be used instead of ivory, and wild elephants are protected in many parts of the world. It is hoped that, in time, their numbers will increase.



Re-read the report

Answer the following questions.

1. Where do elephants live? _____

2. How would you tell the difference between the two types of elephant? _____

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3. What are two uses the elephant has for its trunk? _____

4. Why are elephants hunted and killed? _____

5. Elephants are sometimes tamed and used by people. What might they be used for? _____

6. What two facts give us hope that elephants will increase in number? Why is this important? _____

7. What is ivory used for? _____

8. Elephants are not the only endangered species in our world. What would you do to help endangered animals and birds if you could? _____

9. Write three facts from this report that you find the most interesting. _____

More things to do

- Find out some more facts about elephants.
- Find out about the white rhinoceros or another endangered species. Write a report about it.

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