

THE HORRIFIC TALE OF GREAT UNCLE STILTON

4

The Thirty-Nine Steps

Looking at the text

ANSWERS IN RED

LEARN: you may already know some of these techniques that writers use.

alliteration repeating the **same sounds** at the beginning of words: We found Fred's funny **photos**.

assonance repeating similar vowel sounds e.g. the **sound** resounded throughout the **house**.

rhetorical questions questions for which no answer is required: "Do you think I'm stupid?"

onomatopoeia words that sound like the thing they describe: thud, plop, crash, bang, clatter

1. What did the swirling shapes that were left on her plate remind Sarah of?

The shapes reminded Sarah of **a painting she had once seen of a storm at sea.**

ACCEPT leaf-like/abstract patterns.

2. Where had Sarah probably heard the phrase, "Know Your Enemy"?

Sarah had probably heard the phrase, "Know your enemy" **from a history lesson.**

3. Why did Sarah feel she had to check every angle?

Sarah felt she had to check every angle because **there might be something she had not considered.**

4. Why do you think the writer puts the words, 'Gallery of Paintings' in inverted commas?

The writer puts the words in inverted commas **because they are not literally a 'Gallery of Paintings'.**

ACCEPT **they were really/actually plates with baked bean sauce on them**

5. What reasons could you give for Gary rehearsing what he was going to say to Stilton?

- Gary wanted to make sure he got this right/was planning ahead/etc.
- Gary was **feeling**, scared, anxious, unsure, nervous, afraid, uncertain, insecure, unconfident etc.

6. Copy the **rhetorical question** after Gary decides not to say, "Prepare to die punk".

"In any case, no matter what the old man had done **Gary wasn't exactly going to kill him was he?**"

7. Sarah wrote a concise message. Which word do you think is the best synonym for concise?

saucy short selfish **succinct** spellbinding stupid

8. "Put the box in there and wait," Stilton said. He mumbled something about money and set off, with his stick, in the opposite direction.' **We have read this in another chapter.**

Why do you think the writer uses this exact repetition?

A To remind the reader that this has happened before.

B To suggest Stilton always does the same thing.

C To confirm Sarah's suspicions that Stilton is a creature of habit.

D To remind us that Stilton has a stick.

Circle the letter/s you think provide the best answers. A **B** **C** D

9. Gary struggles when talking to Stilton about his father. What do you think he should he have done or said?

ACCEPT answers that develop ideas thoughtfully, demonstrate an understanding of significant ideas, using inference and deduction and writing that is lively, thoughtful and adventurous and words that are used for effect (perhaps using rhetoric).

10. What is the intended effect of the change in font - “Bloody delivery boys – come round here...”?
The intended affect is **to emphasise/highlight the fact that Stilton’s voice is fading as he moves away.**
11. After the description of Gary pedalling away there is an example of **alliteration**. Copy it accurately.
“She **stood stock-still.**”

12. Find the **rhetical question** that Gary asks, shortly after he had run off. Copy it accurately.
“**Why hadn’t he had the bottle to say what he’d really wanted to say?**”

13. Sarah recalled the phrase, “Know Your Enemy” from school. What did Gary remember?

Gary remembered the phrase, “**I Will Not Rest Until The Day’s Work Is Done.**”

14. What **simile** is used to describe Sarah’s fear as Stilton ascends the steps? Copy it accurately.

The simile used to describe Sarah’s fear is, “**Her legs started to feel soft like blu-tac.**”

15. What happens to the sentences as Stilton reaches steps thirty eight and thirty nine? Why?

The sentences are written as single-sentence paragraphs. We already know how many steps there are. It reminds us that Sarah is counting them. This is done to build up the tension as we realise that Stilton is approaching the top of the spiral staircase.

16. “He was thinking clearly now.” What did Gary do that suggested this was true? Why did he do it?

- We know Gary was thinking clearly because **he used his bike to break the window then he dived in and threw the bike back outside.**
- **He did this because he anticipated needing it later.**

17. What single word tells us that Gary had begun to climb the stairs?

bounded

18. After Gary swears at Stilton there is an example of **assonance**. Copy the phrase, **not** the whole sentence.

“a sound that rang loud around the cold, white walls”

There is also an example of **onomatopoeia** on the same page. Copy the 3 onomatopoeic words

clattering	jangling	thud
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19. Gary decides to phone 999 because he considers the possible consequences of his actions. Find **one word** that is used instead of ‘future significance’ or ‘possible consequences’ **portent**

20. Why do you think Sarah laughed for the first time in ages?

Sarah laughed because Gary had thought she was a maid. ALSO ACCEPT She was also so relieved to be out of her confinement, she felt relaxed enough in Gary’s company to laugh.

21. In the sections belonging to Sarah you *might* have read that, ‘she telephoned her mother’. How is the same information expressed in the **Gary ♥ Sarah** section? **“he rang his mum”**

(N.B. There **is no point in the story where we read that Sarah ‘telephoned her mother’**)

22. Why do you think Gary’s mother says, “Ee this is a bit sudden Gary.”

Gary’s mother was under the mistaken impression that her son wanted to live with Sarah as boyfriend and girlfriend whereas he knew she had nowhere else to live.

EXTENSION WORK

WRITING: Remind yourself of **alliteration, assonance, rhetorical questions and onomatopoeia**
Make up some examples of your own.

A BASIC TASK TO ENSURE THAT PUPILS UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPTS.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING: Consider the following in pairs or groups of three.

- Is it ever ok to use ‘bad language? Was it ok for Gary to swear at Stilton? Give your reasons.
- Who was responsible for Stilton’s death? What punishments should be given?

Either discuss your ideas with the rest of your class group or write your conclusions.

A TASK TO GIVE OPPORTUNITY to develop ideas thoughtfully, describe events and convey opinions clearly; also to be responsive to others’ ideas and views, to using inference and deduction.