

THE HORRIFIC TALE OF GREAT UNCLE STILTON

4

The Octagonal Room Looking at the text

ANSWERS IN RED

LEARN THIS FIRST –

A **simile** is when you say that a person an animal a place, or anything - is *LIKE* something else. A simile nearly always uses the word ‘as’ or ‘like’. Here are some examples of similes:

"He ran **like** the wind." "He was **as** tall as a tree."

1. What words and phrases are used to describe the weather?

battled against the wind suggesting a strong wind thickening sleet bitter, December chill

2. Why, do you suppose, there were no lights on at Grubberly Hall?

Because Stilton was miserly, stingy, tight-fisted/tight and would not want to spend money unnecessarily.

3. What **simile** is used to describe how Sarah looked when Gary first saw her? Look for the word ‘like’

like a trapped animal might look at the trapper.

4. What reasons could you give for Gary finding it warmer outside?

There was probably no heating on as Stilton was too miserly and the house was very large. **ACCEPT ALSO** There was a ‘cold atmosphere’ in Stilton’s house.

5. What noise could Sarah hear as her and Stilton landed on the wet stone floor?

She heard the scrubbing-brush **scraping and skittering** along the floor.

6. Copy the sentence that describes the violence with which Stilton puts Sarah into the room.

With one final show of force Stilton flung her, headlong, into the stark, octagonal room.

7. What helped to make the Knight household a happy one?

Everyone had jobs to do and everyone expected to help each other out.
Nobody usually minded.

8. Explain the, ‘old family trick’, in your own words.

Clinton and Wayne were asking Gary a question that would make it very difficult for him to answer, if his mouth was full, without spitting some of the food out.

9. What was in the octagonal room?

an old-fashioned toilet with a broken wooden seat, a couple/two of tattered old sacks
a few sheets of yellowing newspaper

10. Explain how the smaller rat beat the larger rat.

The smaller rat 'played dead' and waited till the last minute before twisting, leaping and sinking its teeth into the other rat's neck.

ACCEPT any answer that alludes to the smaller rat getting the better of the larger one by cunning.

11. What was the awful truth that, "broke Sarah's heart"?

Stilton's last sentence, "There's not a soul who cares." broke Sarah's heart.

12. Explain, in the briefest possible way, what was bothering Gary.

He was in love.

13. What do you think Mrs Knight meant about a maid being, "the right class of girl" for Gary?

What does that tell us about how Gary's mum sees 'class'?

Gary's mum thought that her family belonged to a certain class or group of people. She thought that someone who worked as a maid would be an appropriate partner for her son because a maid was likely to be in the same/similar class as them.

Gary's mum seems to see, 'class' as something you are born in to, something that you should expect and accept. Perhaps she is proud of whatever class she sees herself in. She is aware of certain divisions in society.

14. Gary describes Stilton as "posh". What do you think this tells us about how Gary views himself and his family?

Gary seems to have similar ideas to his mother. Perhaps he sees Stilton as high status or aristocratic. He noticed that Stilton talks differently.

The word posh is sometimes used as an insulting/ derogatory/ pejorative word but it is unlikely that Gary thinks badly of Stilton (at this stage).

He realises his family have not got much money and Stilton seems to be rich.

15. What is the first indication that Mrs Knight is disturbed by what Gary is telling her?

You should quote the text for this bit.

"Mrs Knight suddenly lost her grip of the teapot and the boiling liquid splashed across her left hand. Instead of rushing to the sink and running cold water over the scald, she stood – as if she was frozen – and stared at the kitchen wall."

16. After Gary's mum has told her story there is silence. How is the silence described?

The silence is described as, "filling the little kitchen with a thousand thoughts at once."

17. Explain what, "take her post as usual" meant.

"take her post as usual" meant Sarah was expected to stand in the same position, away from the door, every time Stilton brought her some food.

18. Why did it take Gary so long to get to sleep?

Gary was feeling confused and angry. He kept thinking about what Major Stilton had done to his father and he wanted to be able to do something about it.