

Fiction

Mr Majeika/The Worst Witch

Humphrey Carpenter/Jill Murphy

Key text features

- The texts are extracts from 'modern classics' and both are from the first book in the series. These texts are based in schools and both are rich in dialogue.
- The Teaching text is an extract from the first chapter of *Mr Majeika* by Humphrey Carpenter.
- The Practice text is from *The Worst Witch* by Jill Murphy.

Reading the Teaching text: Mr Majeika

- Introduce the text by asking if any of the children are already familiar with the *Mr Majeika* books. If so, what can they tell the others about Mr Majeika? Can they predict anything about him from his name?
- Read the introduction, which sets the scene, before reading the extract to the children.

Reading the Practice text: The Worst Witch

- Introduce the text by asking if any of the children are already familiar with *The Worst Witch* books. If so, what can they tell the others?
- Once they have read the story, remind the children that they are now going to work independently to practise the strategies introduced during the teaching session.

Extending reading

Once Upon an Ordinary School Day – Colin McNaughton (9781842704691, Andersen Press 2005)

Nag Club – Anne Fine (9781406341829, Walker Books 2012)

Ottoline Goes to School – Chris Riddell (9781405050586, Macmillan Children's Books 2008)

Moving into writing

- Reread *The Worst Witch*.
- Talk with the class about how sometimes things can go wrong.
- Use drama techniques to explore things that might go wrong (e.g. trying to change the rules of a game; cheating in a test; trying to help someone who doesn't want help). You could encourage the children to have comic outcomes.
- Once they have explored ideas in drama, use talk for writing to help the children clarify an idea they want to pursue.
- Give the children time for planning before they write their story.

Listening Comprehension: Questions and Answers

Q1: How did Mr Majeika get to the school?

A1: By magic carpet.

Strategy: Consider where in the text the information might be found. Listen carefully to that part. Make a note of words used in the text.

Q2: How did Mr Majeika turn his magic carpet into a bicycle?

A2: He points a finger at it as he says "*That's my bicycle*" (paragraph 6).

Strategy: Consider where in the text the information might be found. Listen carefully to that part. Make a note of words used in the text.

Q3: "*You could have heard a pin drop*" (paragraph 9). What does this mean? Why could you have heard a pin drop?

A3: It means there was a sudden silence because Mr Potter was surprised and is trying to work out what happened, while Mr Majeika is hoping that Mr Potter will believe him.

Strategy: Listen carefully to the text. Make a note of words used in the text.

Teaching text: Mr Majeika

Cracking the questions

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
1. "Now, you're rather late, Mr Majeika. You might have telephoned me" (paragraph 1). Who do you think said those words?	Mr Potter/the headteacher.	2d 1 mark	<i>Question focus: make inferences from the text.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Consider where in the text to look for the answer. - Carefully read the paragraph and consider who said the words.
2. What is Mr Majeika's excuse for being late?	His magic carpet took a wrong turning/rain has got into his magic carpet.	2b 1 mark	<i>Question focus: find information in the text.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Consider where in the text to look for the answer. - Scan the paragraph to look for an excuse.
3. "complete slip of the tongue". What does this phrase mean in this story? Tick one. ☐ His tongue slipped inside his mouth and made an odd sound. ☐ Mr Potter hadn't heard him correctly. ☐ He had said something he didn't mean to say. ☐ His tongue got muddled when trying to say lots of similar sounds.	He had said something he didn't mean to say.	2a 1 mark	<i>Question focus: explain the meaning of words and phrases in context.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Scan the text to find the words. - Reread that part of the text while you think about the meaning of the words. - Look again at the choices in the question, then choose the one that has the closest meaning.
4. Why do you think Mr Majeika "looked bothered" (paragraph 4) when Mr Potter asked about the magic carpet?	Because he wanted to fit in. He didn't want Mr Potter to know he was a magician/had a magic carpet. He hadn't meant to say "magic carpet".	2d 1 mark	<i>Question focus: make inferences from the text.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Consider where in the text to look for the answer. - Scan that part of the text for words in the question. - Use your own understanding and empathy to think about how the character felt.

Teaching text: Mr Majeika

Cracking the questions

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
5. (a) Write a word from the text that describes how someone spoke. (b) Explain why you think the author chose that word.	(a) "[rather] faintly" (paragraph 7)/ "cheerily" (paragraph 8) (b) - The word tells the reader how to read the speech. - The word describes how someone is feeling.	2g 2 marks	Question focus: identify how meaning is enhanced through choice of words. Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Scan the text for words which describe how someone spoke. - Consider why the author gave you that information. Award 1 mark for each part of the question.
6. Tick the sentence that summarises the most important information about Mr Majeika's arrival at the school. ☐ Mr Majeika was late. ☐ Mr Majeika said he came on a bicycle. ☐ Mr Majeika came on a magic carpet. ☐ Mr Majeika made a mistake when he said "Magic Carpet".	Mr Majeika came on a magic carpet.	2c 1 mark	Question focus: summarise ideas from more than one paragraph. Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Carefully read the text while considering each of the options. - Decide which sentence you think summarises the most important and interesting information.

The Worst Witch

Jill Murphy

- 1 The smile faded from the headmistress's face and she sighed, as if with deep disappointment. Mildred felt about an inch high.
- 3 "*Really*, Mildred," Miss Cackle said in a tired voice, "I have run out of things to say to you.
- 5 "Week after week you come here, sent by every member of staff in the school, and my words just seem to go straight in one ear and out of the other. You will never get the Witches' Higher Certificate if this appalling conduct continues. You must be the worst witch in the entire school. Whenever there's any trouble you are nearly always to be found at the bottom of it, and it's just not good enough, my dear. Now, what have you to say for yourself *this time*?"
- 13 "I don't really know, Miss Cackle," Mildred said humbly. "Everything I do just seems to go wrong, that's all. I don't *mean* to do it."
- 18 "Well, that's no excuse, is it?" said Miss Cackle. "Everyone else manages to live without causing an uproar wherever they go. You must pull yourself together, Mildred. I don't want to hear *any* more bad reports about you, do you understand?"



Name:

Class:

Date:

1. Who is Miss Cackle?

2d

☐

1 mark

2. How does Miss Cackle feel about Mildred at the beginning of this extract?

2d

☐

1 mark

3. "*Mildred felt about an inch high*" (paragraph 1). An inch is about the length of your thumb. What do you think this sentence tells you about how Mildred is feeling?

2a

☐

1 mark

4. Copy the words that show Miss Cackle doesn't think Mildred listens to her.

2g

☐

1 mark

5. Write **two** ideas from the text that tell you Miss Cackle is tired of Mildred always getting into trouble.

2b

☐

1 mark

6. "*if this appalling conduct continues*" (paragraph 2). Which of these means the same as the underlined words?

not listening ☐ being an inch high ☐ very bad behaviour ☐

2a

☐

1 mark

7. Tick the sentence that summarises how Mildred feels.

She is angry that she is being blamed for something she didn't mean to do. ☐

She hates Miss Cackle and the school. ☐

She is upset that she is in trouble again. ☐

She is worried that she won't get her Witches' Higher Certificate ☐

2c

☐

1 mark

8. (a) Write a word from the text that describes how someone spoke.

(b) Explain why you think the author chose that word.

2g

☐

2 marks

9. This text is from the beginning of *The Worst Witch*. Do you think she stops getting into trouble after this? Explain your answer.

2e

☐

1 mark

Practice text: The Worst Witch

Cracking the questions

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
1. Who is Miss Cackle?	The headmistress.	2d 1 mark	<i>Question focus: make inferences from the text.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Scan the text for mention of Miss Cackle. - Carefully read the text around the words, looking for clues.
2. How does Miss Cackle feel about Mildred at the beginning of this extract?	Disappointed in her. Fed up/annoyed (" <i>smile faded</i> ") She likes her – she calls her "dear"	2d 1 mark	<i>Question focus: make inferences from the text.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Carefully read the beginning of the text, looking for clues.
3. 'Mildred felt about an inch high' (line 2). An inch is about the length of your thumb. What do you think this sentence tells you about how Mildred is feeling?	Mildred felt: unhappy/sad insignificant/small that she's about to get the blame/in trouble.	2a 1 mark	<i>Question focus: consider the meaning of words in context.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Consider where in the text to look for information. - Carefully read that part of the text, considering the answer. - Use your empathy to answer the question.
4. Copy the words that show Miss Cackle doesn't think Mildred listens to her.	"my words just seem to go in one ear and out of the other" (paragraph 1). Or "I have run out of things to say to you" (paragraph 1).	2g 1 mark	<i>Question focus: identify writer's use of words including figurative language.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Consider where in the text to look for information. - Carefully read that part of the text, considering the answer.
5. Write two ideas from the text that tell you Miss Cackle is tired of Mildred always getting into trouble.	Accept any relevant ideas. E.g.: She sighed as if with deep disappointment. Her voice was tired. Mildred is sent to her week after week by all members of staff. Mildred doesn't listen to what Miss Cackle says. Mildred's conduct is appalling. Mildred is always at the bottom of any trouble. Mildred is the worst witch.	2b 2 marks	<i>Question focus: identify key details.</i> Strategies: - Carefully read the question, marking key words. - Consider where in the text to look for information. - Carefully reread that part of the text looking for supporting evidence. Award 1 mark for each appropriate answer.

Practice text: The Worst Witch

Cracking the questions

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
6. "if this appalling conduct continues" (paragraph 2). Which of these is closest in meaning to the underlined words? Tick one. ☐ not listening ☐ being an inch high ☐ very bad behaviour	very bad behaviour	2a 1 mark	<i>Question focus: give the meaning of words in context.</i> <i>Strategies:</i> • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Consider where in the text the quotation comes from and scan the text to find it. • Consider the meaning of each of the options. • Choose the best one.
7. Tick the sentence that summarises how Mildred feels in this extract. ☐ She is angry that she is being blamed for something she didn't mean to do. ☐ She hates Miss Cackle and the school. ☐ She is upset that she is in trouble again. ☐ She is worried that she won't get her Witches' Higher Certificate.	She is upset that she is in trouble again.	2c 1 mark	<i>Question focus: summarise ideas from more than one paragraph.</i> <i>Strategies:</i> • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Carefully read the text whilst considering each of the options. • Decide which sentence you think summarises the most important and interesting information.
8. (a) Write a word from the text that describes how someone spoke. (b) Explain why you think the author chose that word.	(a) "in a tired voice" (paragraph 2) "humbly" (paragraph 3) (b) The words explain how the character is feeling so a reader knows how to read the speech aloud.	2g 2 marks	<i>Question focus: identify and explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases.</i> <i>Strategies:</i> • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the text for words that describe how someone spoke. • Consider why the author gave you that information. Award one mark for each part of the question.
9. This text is from the beginning of <i>The Worst Witch</i> . Do you think she stops getting into trouble after this? Explain your answer.	Yes She didn't like being told off and she wants to try harder. She might get better at hiding getting into trouble. No She says that everything she does keeps going wrong and that's what the book will be about.	2e 1 mark	<i>Question focus: predict what might happen from details stated or implied.</i> <i>Strategies:</i> • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Think about your wider experience of being a reader.