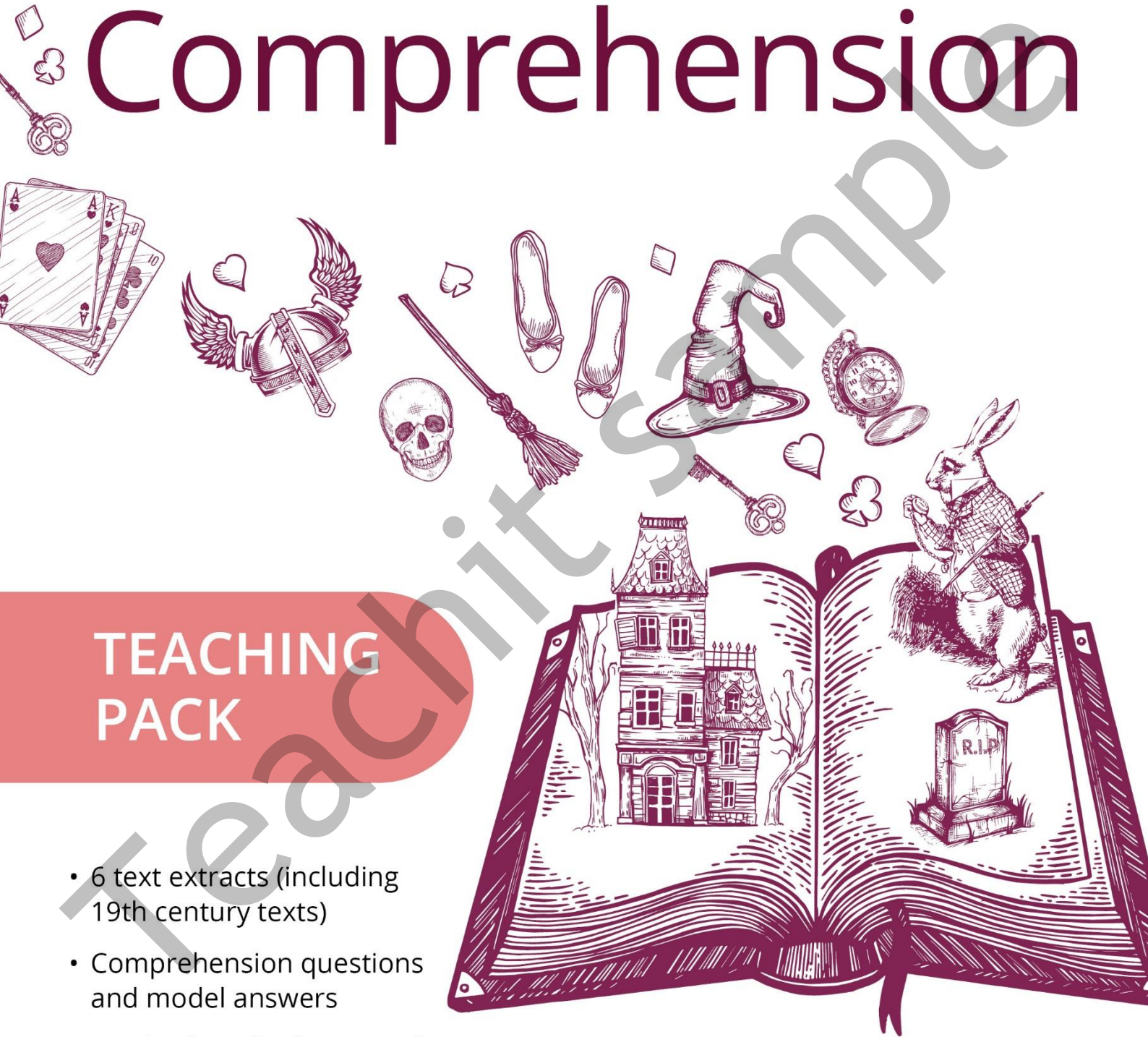


KS3

Comprehension



TEACHING PACK

- 6 text extracts (including 19th century texts)
- Comprehension questions and model answers
- Use in class, for homework or cover lessons

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Introduction

This collection of extracts, questions and answers, aims to provide reading passages and related comprehension questions for younger KS3 students. It can be used for independent work, either individually or in groups. This is not a 'teaching' pack in that teaching notes are not embedded, although it could form the core of a series of lessons and assessments.

The emphasis in this KS3 pack is on developing pupils' inferential reading skills, and making connections and comparisons within and between texts. It is adapted from Teachit Primary's *Reading (upper KS2) Comprehension* teaching pack. Texts 1-4 are the same but the questions and activities have been edited to be more appropriate for KS3 students. Texts 5 and 6, and associated questions, are new and contain a level of challenge which will help prepare students for KS4.

Our thanks go to the original writer of this pack, Gabrielle Chant and to Julie Hopkins for her thoughtful revisions.

KS3 National Curriculum relevance: Reading

'Pupils should be taught to:

understand increasingly challenging texts through:

- learning new vocabulary, relating it explicitly to known vocabulary and understanding it with the help of context and dictionaries
- making inferences and referring to evidence in the text
- knowing the purpose, audience for and context of the writing and drawing on this knowledge to support comprehension
- checking their understanding to make sure that what they have read makes sense.

read critically through:

- knowing how language, including figurative language, vocabulary choice, grammar, text structure and organisational features, presents meaning
- studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these
- making critical comparisons across texts.'

List of text extracts used within the pack

Extract 1 - *Five Children and It* by E. Nesbitt

Extract 2 - *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by Frank L. Baum

Extract 3 - *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Extract 4 - *Odin's Reward* by Mary H. Foster and Mabel H. Cummings

Extract 5 - *The Canterville Ghost* by Oscar Wilde

Extract 6 - *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

Extract 6

Great Expectations

Great Expectations - extract

Our narrator is an orphan boy named Pip. One cold, dark evening he is alone among the gravestones of the village churchyard. He is feeling miserable and starts to cry – suddenly a frightening figure appears. (It is later revealed that this man is an escaped prisoner.)

“Hold your noise!” cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. “Keep still, you little devil, or I’ll cut your throat!”

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

“O! Don’t cut my throat, sir,” I pleaded in terror. “Pray don’t do it, sir.”

“Tell us your name!” said the man. “Quick!”

“Pip, sir.”

“Once more,” said the man, staring at me. “Give it mouth!”

“Pip. Pip, sir.”

“Show us where you live,” said the man. “Pint out the place!”

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment,

turned me upside down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself – for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet – when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

“You young dog,” said the man, licking his lips, “what fat cheeks you ha’ got.”

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized for my years, and not strong.

“Darn me if I couldn’t eat em,” said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, “and if I han’t half a mind to’t!”

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn’t, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

“Now lookee here!” said the man. “Where’s your mother?”

“There, sir!” said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

“There, sir!” I timidly explained. “Also Georgiana. That’s my mother.”

“Oh!” said he, coming back. “And is that your father alonger your mother?”

“Yes, sir,” said I; “him too; late of this parish.”



“Ha!” he muttered then, considering. “Who d’ye live with – supposin’ you’re kindly let to live, which I han’t made up my mind about?”

“My sister, sir – Mrs. Joe Gargery – wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir.”

“Blacksmith, eh?” said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg and me several times, he came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

“Now lookee here,” he said, “the question being whether you’re to be let to live. You know what a file is?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And you know what wittles is?”

“Yes, sir.”

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

“You get me a file.” He tilted me again. “And you get me wittles.” He tilted me again. “You bring ‘em both to me.” He tilted me again. “Or I’ll have your heart and liver out.” He tilted me again.

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, “If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn’t be sick, and perhaps I could attend more.”

He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll, so that the church jumped over its own weather-cock. Then, he held me by the arms, in an upright position on the top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms:

“You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted and ate. Now, I ain’t alone, as you may think I am. There’s a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a-keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it wery hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?”

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery, early in the morning.

“Say Lord strike you dead if you don’t!” said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

“Now,” he pursued, “you remember what you’ve undertook, and you remember that young man, and you get home!”

“Goo—good night, sir,” I faltered.

“Much of that!” said he, glancing about him over the cold wet flat. “I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!”

At the same time, he hugged his shuddering

body in both his arms — clasping himself, as if to hold himself together — and limped towards the low church wall. As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in.

Teachit sample

Comprehension questions

Name: Date:

1. How can we tell that the man is extremely hungry?

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2. What shows us that he is very cold?

.....
.....

3. What is the misunderstanding that causes the man to start to run away when Pip points and says his mother is 'there'?

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.....
.....

4. "Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg." Why? What is the connection he is making between the two?

.....
.....
.....

5. The man asks Pip if he knows what 'wittles' is. Can you find a phrase later in the extract which reveals the meaning?

.....

6. Put these threats against Pip in the order they are made.

- To eat his cheeks
- To cut his throat
- To tear out his heart and liver

7. The man tells Pip, “in comparison with which young man I am a Angel.” How is he using this comparison to frighten Pip into keeping the secret and bringing what he has asked for?

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8. What do you think is the reason the man says “I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!”?

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9. a. Which words are connected to Pip and which to the ‘fearful man’?

Pleaded, powerfully, timidly, trembling, strong, threatening, helplessly

- b. What impression of each character does this language create?

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10. Re-read the descriptions of Pip’s first sight (paragraph 2) and last sight (final paragraph) of the man. Select three details that might help to create a more sympathetic picture of this terrifying character.

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Extension task

The graveyard setting is eerie/terrifying and provides the perfect setting for encountering an escaped prisoner. In no more than 500 words, either:

- a. Create your own eerie setting for a suitably terrifying encounter or ...
- b. Do the opposite and create a comforting/inviting setting.

For both a. and b., make sure you use the weather and scenery to good effect.

Comprehension answers

1. How can we tell that the man is extremely hungry?

He ate 'ravenously'.

2. What shows us that he is very cold?

'shivered', 'teeth chattered'

3. What is the misunderstanding that causes the man to start to run away when Pip points and says his mother is 'there'?

He thinks someone else is nearby, but Pip is pointing at her tombstone.

4. "Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.' Why? What is the connection he is making between the two?

He has a 'great iron' on his leg'. A blacksmith has tools/skills and can work with metal ... He can see that there might be a way to remove the manacle.

5. The man asks Pip if he knows what 'wittles' is. Can you find a phrase later in the extract which reveals the meaning?

'I would get him what broken bits of food I could.'

6. Put these threats against Pip in the order they are made.

- To eat his cheeks B
- To cut his throat A
- To tear out his heart and liver C

7. The man tells Pip, "in comparison with which young man I am a Angel." How is he using this comparison to frighten Pip into keeping the secret and bringing what he has asked for?

He is increasing the sense of threat and making Pip even more afraid of the consequences of betrayal. If the 'fearful man' is an angel, then how much more terrifying must the 'other young man' be?

8. What do you think is the reason the man says "I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!"?

Answers may vary, but could refer to the 'cold wet flat' or it won't be a 'good night'. Might refer back to the initial description 'soaked in water' and 'smothered in mud'. Reject evidence that only refers to cold (e.g. 'hugged his shuddering body').

9. a. Which words are connected to Pip and which to the 'fearful man'?

Pip: pleaded, timidly, trembling, helplessly
Fearful man: powerfully, strong, threatening

- b. What impression of each character does this language create?

Pip: Weak, young, afraid, intimidated

Fearful man: dangerous, overpowering, aggressive

10. Re-read the descriptions of Pip's first sight (paragraph 2) and last sight (final paragraph) of the man. Select three details that might help to create a more sympathetic picture of this terrifying character.

Answers will vary, but might include:

- with 'broken shoes ... lamed by stones, and cut by flints, who limped' / '... limped towards the low church wall'
- and 'no hat' but only an 'old rag tied round his head'
- 'soaked in water', and 'smothered in mud', and 'stung by nettles', and 'torn by briars'
- 'shivered', and 'teeth chattered' '... hugged his shuddering body in both his arms'
- 'eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up to ... pull him in'.

Extension task - students should be rewarded for the strength of their descriptive writing and for effective use of descriptive techniques.