

## Reading activities

Choose one of these reading activities to go alongside your reading book each day.

### Task 1 - Umbrella

It was a cloudy night; the darkness covered the city like a thick blanket. The wind blew gusts of air smelling of car fumes through the streets; it sneaked under the cracks of doors and whispered down sooty chimneys.

Mr Bell hurried down a dark street, holding onto his bowler hat so that the harsh breeze couldn't steal it. The wind blew harder, almost blowing the short, stout man off-course. Eyes narrowed, Mr Bell tried again to walk into the path of the determined gale. A hazy drizzle of misty rain drifted down in sheets, making him shiver and cough. Cursing the cold, he drew his coat tighter around his large figure. As he made to clamp his hat to his head again, he spotted something black and flapping on the pavement. An umbrella!

His heart leapt; the umbrella would be perfect! Feeling pleased with himself, Mr Bell ran towards it and snatched it up. The handle was smooth and glossy, and the waterproof dome was black and very large.

As Mr Bell raised it above his head, something remarkable happened. He began to feel lighter as he ran over the cobbled street, holding tight. Lighter and lighter. With a gasp, he realised that his leather shoes were no longer making contact with the pavement. He was flying! The wind lifted him up like hundreds of hands, all pushing upwards.

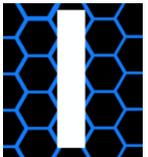
With a delighted and shocked shout, Mr Bell gazed down at the sprawling city below him. The street lamps looked like beautiful, luminous flowers reaching up to him. Cars reminded him of jewel-coloured beetles crawling through the concrete maze.

The wind led him towards the park; it was the only splash of green in a grey ocean of buildings and roads. Clutching the umbrella tightly, he drifted towards two bronze statues of lions guarding the park entrance. Mr Bell outstretched his free hand and reached towards one. As he passed, he patted it on its cold head. The lion roared deeply and shook its impressive mane, whilst watching the small man float past. Wide-eyed, Mr Bell swung himself away. The umbrella swayed dangerously and as he grasped the handle harder, he waited dizzily for the world to stop spinning.

Still the wind carried him on. He glanced back at the now still statues. The trees swayed in time with the umbrella as he drifted higher again. A white barn owl flew past Mr Bell like a winged ghost.

As he rose, he scanned the sprawling city for his house. There. He gently coaxed the umbrella down towards his street. The wind rushed down and with a bump, Mr Bell landed outside his house. He looked around to check that nobody had noticed him disembarking, before making his way up the garden path. The promise of light and warmth beckoned him inside. As he stood on the front porch, he folded the umbrella up and smiled as he thought about what an exciting bedtime story his daughters would have that night.

**Text Title: The Dream Asylum.**

Find and underline the words.	Bronze (5)	Silver (7)	Gold (10)
	Sooty, narrowed, swayed, drifted	Clamp, cobbled, sprawling, Clutching	Luminous, disembarking
 <b>VOCABULARY</b>	<p>Which group of words shows us how Mr Bell felt when he saw the umbrella?</p> <p>What does the statement 'wide-eyed' suggest about how Mr Bell is feeling at that point?</p>		
 <b>INFER</b>	<p>'Determined gale'</p> <p>What does this suggest about the wind?</p>		
 <b>PREDICT</b>	<p>Can you think of another literary character who may have been the previous owner of the umbrella?</p> <p>What might the character do next with the umbrella? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.</p>		
 <b>EXPLAIN</b>	<p><i>'It was a cloudy night; the darkness covered the city like a thick blanket. The wind blew gusts of air smelling of car fumes through the streets; it sneaked under the cracks of doors and whispered down sooty chimneys.'</i></p> <p>Which two examples of figurative language are used in this paragraph?</p>		
 <b>RETRIEVE</b>	<p>What does Mr Bell pat on the head?</p> <p>What streaks past his head?</p>		
 <b>SUMMARISE</b>	<p>Draw and label a map show Mr Bell's journey.</p>		

## Task 2

### Spirit By Sally Christie

'I saw a real live fairy,' he said, 'and I took it home in a bag.'

Well, what would *you* think if someone said that? If it was someone you knew – a friend – you might say they were joking. But nobody knew Matt Barker. No one could guess why he'd said what he'd said. Was he attention-seeking? Was he a show-off? He didn't look the type.

They wanted to laugh, but that was against the rules. You had to respect what anyone said. And yet they felt *he* was laughing at *them*. Was he trying to make them look stupid? Taking advantage?

The one thing they knew for certain was he wasn't telling the truth.

And that was the problem. In the Truth Game, you had to. If you chose to open your mouth (and you might well not, but if you did) the rule was that any words that came out of it had to be true. If people broke that, then they'd better not play. As Mr McGann was fond of saying, he could equally well have called it the Trust Game – because truth and trust are so closely connected.

When Mikey Maloney had told them last term he'd done seventy-nine keepy-uppies, round the back of his house, they'd all had to trust that he really had (he had) because no one – not even Dip Jay or Joe Black – had been there. And when Angela Poole had chosen to say that she'd watched her grandpa actually die, she was trusting them to be understanding and ask only sensitive questions. They did, but even so Ange started crying and Mr McGann stopped the game.

He had a right to do that. He could do that now. But he didn't want the new boy to think that that was all there was to it. He could feel the anger around him, and several people had put up their hands.

Joe Black, a nice enough lad, thought Mr McGann, but sparky: what would he ask? Something challenging. Something to show he was nobody's fool. *This fairy, where did you find it, then? How did you catch it?*

### Retrieval questions

1. Who was Matt Barker?
2. What had Mikey Maloney told them last term?
3. Who asked the first question?

### Inference questions

1. Who do you think Mr McGann is? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
2. Why do you think Mr McGann said that truth and trust were closely connected?
3. How do you know the 'Truth Game' had been played before?
4. Are Mikey Maloney and Joe Black friends? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
5. How old do you think Mikey Maloney is? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

### Choice questions

1. Mr McGann describes Joe Black as 'sparky' what do you think this means?
2. Why is the word 'he' and 'them' in an italic font?

### Challenge question

What do you think will happen next in the story?

### **Task 3**

#### **In a nutshell...**

Write a ten-word summary of the pages (or book!) you have just read.



### **Task 4**

#### **Dear diary...**

In first person as the main character from the book you are currently reading, write a diary entry about the main event.



### **Task 5**

#### **Word Detective...**

Find 10 words that you are unsure of the meaning and, using the sentence, find the definition.



**Task 6**

**Incredible Illustration...**

Choose the favourite page you've read today and create an illustration for it.



**Task 7**

**20 Questions...**

Write down 10 questions you'd want to ask the characters from the book.



**Task 8**

**I say...**

Draw a speech bubble - what was a character thinking during the events of the page?

