

Reading Journal

DEEP WATER

I think the main event(s) in the story will be...

Extract 1

Deep Water by Ann Turnbull

Chapter 1

1 The bus was late. Jon hoped it had broken down. Or caught fire. Or been hijacked. Anything – so long as he didn't have to go to school this Friday.

Today, if he went in, he'd be given his report to take home.

5 And then the trouble would start: Mum cross-examining him, nagging, bullying. He'd never hear the end of it.

'Hey, Jon!' Ryan Jackson crossed the road, grinning. 'You off to that posh school?'

Jon hated being seen in his school uniform. The black
10 blazer with its blue and gold badge marked him out as different: the only one on the Eldon Wood estate who didn't go to the local school.

'Bus is late,' he growled.

'Skive off, then,' suggested Ryan. 'Say it never came.'

15 Jon considered the possibility. A day's reprieve. No, three, with the weekend. He'd thought of skipping school before. It wasn't just the lessons. It was the other boys – the gangs and the bullying; being always on the outside of things.

Reading Journal

Refer to extract 1 opposite.

What I know	Line number	The quotation which tells me this

Extract 2

Deep Water by Ann Turnbull

'I'll come with you,' said Ryan. 'I hate Fridays. We get old Freezerbags for maths. We could go over the canal. You know Gaz? Fell in last week. Nearly drowned...'

Jon laughed. Across the road he saw fields, woods, the glint of water.

If only he dared... But Mum would find out. And her anger would be terrifying.

'You could forge a note,' Ryan said. 'They never look at those notes.'

Jon thought they would at the Thomas Crawford School. It was the sort of school where they kept a check on you. But the bus wasn't coming. If it doesn't come, he thought, it'll be all right. I can go with Ryan. It won't be my fault.

'This uniform,' he said. 'I'd have to change...'

'Let's go to your house, then.' Ryan walked to the kerb and stood there, grinning. 'You coming? Or are you scared?'

Jon didn't want to look soft. Ryan was his only friend.

'I'm coming,' he said.

They darted across the road and on to the footpath that led to the estate. Jon heard a familiar sound and looked back.

The school bus.

If he ran, now, he could be across the road and back at the stop in time. He thought of the boys who made every morning a misery on that bus: Simon Ray and Stefan Coltswood.

He followed Ryan.

Reading Journal

Extract 3

The school corridor seemed much longer than usual now that it was deserted. Mark shuddered. He hated being in the school when everyone else had left. Still, he had to get his science book. Mr Cross wouldn't be prepared to listen to yet another excuse if his homework was late.

Mark turned left along the corridor that led to his form room. Trying to ignore his heart, which seemed to be pounding in his ears, he passed the rows of lockers.

'What?' he gasped as he heard a locker door bang shut. He spun round to see other lockers flying opening and crashing shut, as if a frenzied student was desperately searching for something. But there was no one there. Mark was alone in the corridor. He shut his eyes.

As suddenly as it had begun the noise stopped and all was still. Frozen to the spot, Mark opened his eyes and tried to calm his breathing. This is what fear does to you, he thought. How stupid – to imagine frightening things like that just because he wasn't used to being alone in the school.

The thought of old Crotchety Cross and the non-existent homework helped him to pull himself together and make his feet move towards the classroom.

As soon as he walked in, he realised he wasn't alone. A figure was sitting at his form teacher's desk, but it wasn't Mr Lakes. He seemed to be wearing a black cape.

'Oh, sorry. I just need to get my science book,' Mark started to say, when the man got to his feet and turned towards him.

The cape was one of those gowns that he had seen the teachers wear at Prize Giving. But before he had time to think how strange this was, Mark saw his face.

His skin was chalky white, as if he had hardly ever been outside. Dark circles seemed to replace his eyes, yet he appeared to be smiling.

Mark uttered a strangled cry and backed away as the terrifying figure reached out towards him. He realised in horror that he was trying to speak.

'I've been waiting for you,' he said.

Reading Journal

Extract 4

The Eighteenth Emergency by Betsy Byars

The pigeons flew out of the alley in one long swoop and settled on the awning of the grocery store. A dog ran out of the alley with a torn Cracker Jack box in his mouth. Then came the boy.

The boy was running hard and fast. He stopped at the sidewalk, looked both ways, saw that the street was deserted and kept going. The dog caught the boy's fear, and he started running with him.

The two of them ran together for a block. The dog's legs were so short he appeared to be on wheels. His Cracker Jack box was hitting the sidewalk. He kept glancing at the boy because he didn't know why they were running. The boy knew. He did not even notice the dog beside him or the trail of spilled Cracker Jacks behind.

Suddenly the boy slowed down, went up some steps and entered an apartment building. The dog stopped. He sensed that the danger had passed, but he stood for a moment at the bottom of the steps. Then he went back to eat the Cracker Jacks scattered on the sidewalk and to snarl at the pigeons who had flown down to get some.

Inside the building the boy was still running.

Reading Journal

The question	The evidence
Is the story set in America?	
My answer	
Does the story take place in a city?	
My answer	

Reading Journal

Extract 4

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Reading Journal

Evidence that the boy is afraid

1	
2	
3	
4	

Extract 5

Prowlpuss by Gina Wilson

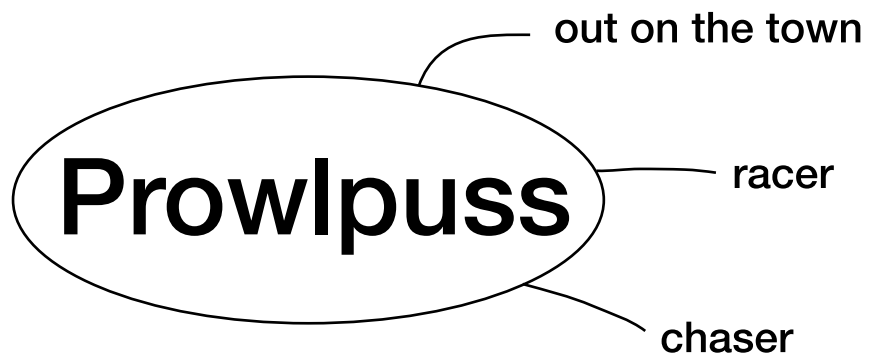
Prowlpuss
is cunning
and wily
and sly,

A kingsize cat
with one ear
and one eye...

...He's not a lap cat
a cuddle-up-
for-a-chat cat,
No, he's not!
He's not a sit-in-
the-window-
and-stare cat.
He's an I-WAS-
THERE! cat.

Watch out!
Prowlpuss about!

He's not a stay-at-home cat,
No, he's not!
He's not a sit-on-the-mat-
and-lick-yourself-down cat.
He's an out-on-the-town cat,
A racer, a chaser,
A 'You're a disgrace'-er!
A 'Don't show your face'-er!
He's not a throat-soft-as-silk cat,
A saucer-of-milk cat. No, he's not!
He's a fat cat, a rat cat,
A 'What on earth was that?' cat.



Thoughts and interpretations

1.

2.

Read extract 5 again. Use it to help you to write a character portrait of Prowlpuss.

Reading Journal

Extract 6

Deep Water by Ann Turnbull

He sneaked into the empty house the back way, just in case any neighbours were watching. Not that the neighbours were likely to say anything to his mum; she didn't spend much time with them. He put his school clothes away and got dressed in jeans and sweatshirt. Catching sight of himself in the mirror he felt scared. Suppose Mum found out? What could he say? That he'd thought he must have missed the bus? Yes, that would do.

Ryan was waiting outside.

They crossed the estate and went out through an underpass that led to the canal towpath. No one was around. It was early: still only ten past eight.

'Your mum'd have a fit if she could see you,' said Ryan.

Jon knew it was true. Not only because he was playing truant but because he was with Ryan. He tried to look unconcerned.

'What about yours?' he asked.

'She doesn't care.'

On the canal two swans were swimming around a half-sunken supermarket trolley. They hissed and lifted their wings as the boys came near.

But Ryan wasn't interested in swans. There was a pipe across the canal and he showed Jon how he could balance along it, arms spread, wobbling.

'This is where Gaz fell in,' he said.

Jon took a turn. It was difficult. He had to climb over a fan of spikes to get on to the pipe and, once there, up and balancing on the curve, the sight of the water below made him unsteady. Ryan began drumming on the pipe, sending vibrations down its length.

'Don't!' Jon reached the spikes on the far side and clambered to safety. 'Race you to the bridge!'

Reading Journal

Extract 7

Deep Water by Ann Turnbull

They left the canal and walked across fields to the Summerlees estate. There was a wooded area on the far side where a rope swing hung over a ravine. They took turns to swing out over the drop, twisting and laughing. Then they found a den that someone had made nearby and took it over. It was good having the place to themselves.

At eleven o'clock Jon said, 'I'm starving.'

They went to the fish and chip shop on the estate, bought chips and coke and walked back eating...

...A field path took them into woodland with drifts of bluebells. It was two miles to the river. They met a woman walking a dog, but no one else. Ryan chatted: about his dogs, his mum's boyfriend who'd let him have a go on his motorbike, his mates at school – Gaz, Jamie, Sandeep, Baggsey. Jon remembered the names from junior school, but he'd lost touch with most of them; only Ryan had stayed friends.

They came out on the river bank.

The river was high, lapping at the footpath which ran alongside back garden gates and fences.

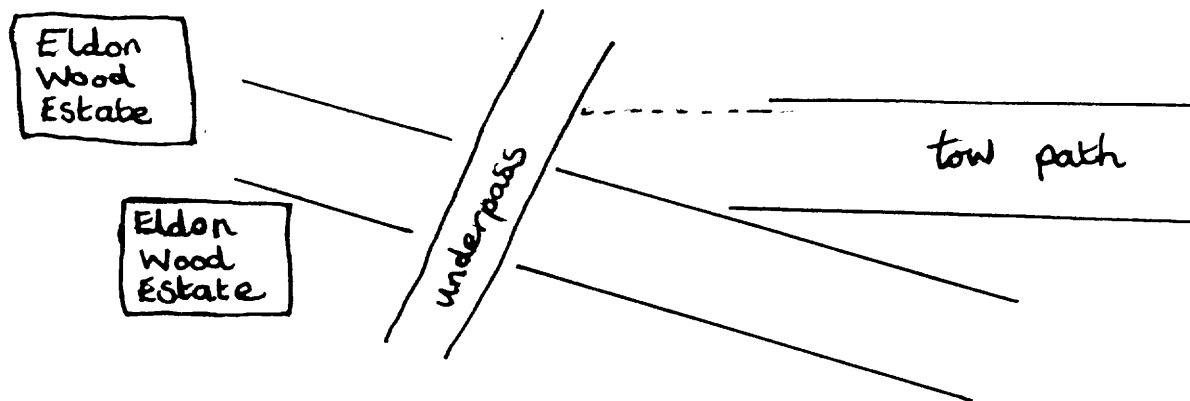
'It's under water further up,' said Ryan.

He led the way.

Jon threw a stick into the water and watched the current snatch it. If you fell in, he thought, you'd be done for.

Reading Journal

Read the text carefully again. Complete the sketch map to show the boys' journey from home to the river.



Reading Journal

Extract 8

Deep Water by Ann Turnbull

Jon watched the broad brown sweep of the river ahead, the drowned trees and broken branches caught in the flood.

The current pulled at the boat. It was getting stronger. The banks slid by faster and faster and the water was choppy. Jon noticed small eddies and whirlpools. He felt a flicker of anxiety.

'Try and land,' he said. 'Over there. See that tree lying in the water? We might be able to climb along the trunk to the shore.'

Ryan attempted to turn the boat, but the current pulled him off-course and he missed the place Jon had seen. A small whirlpool caught them, turning them slowly, helplessly. For a moment they found themselves facing upstream and drifting backwards. Jon began to feel afraid; they had no control. They were like that twig he'd dropped into the water.

'We must stop,' he said. 'We must.'

They were closer to the shore now, but the banks had become wooded cliffs rising straight up out of the water, with rocks around their base. Jon noticed white water ahead. Cross-currents tugged at the boat, half-turning it, then letting it go.

'It's getting rough,' Ryan said.

Jon noticed the fear in his friend's voice and that scared him; Ryan was never afraid.

Just ahead of them now he saw the undulating brown surface of the river broken by white foam. Suddenly he understood: rocks! He saw the black deadly tip of one breaking the surface.

'Ryan!' he yelled. 'Rocks! Rocks up ahead! Turn away, quick!'

Extract 9

Boo! by Kevin Crossley-Holland

She didn't like it at all when her father had to go down to London and, for the first time, she had to sleep alone in the old house.

She went up to her bedroom early. She turned the key and locked the door. She latched the windows and drew the curtains. She peered inside her wardrobe, and pulled open the bottom drawer of her chest-of-drawers; she got down on her knees and looked under the bed.

She undressed; she put on her nightdress.

She pulled back the heavy linen cover and climbed into bed. Not to read but to try and sleep – she wanted to sleep as soon as she could. She reached out and turned off the lamp.

Reading Journal

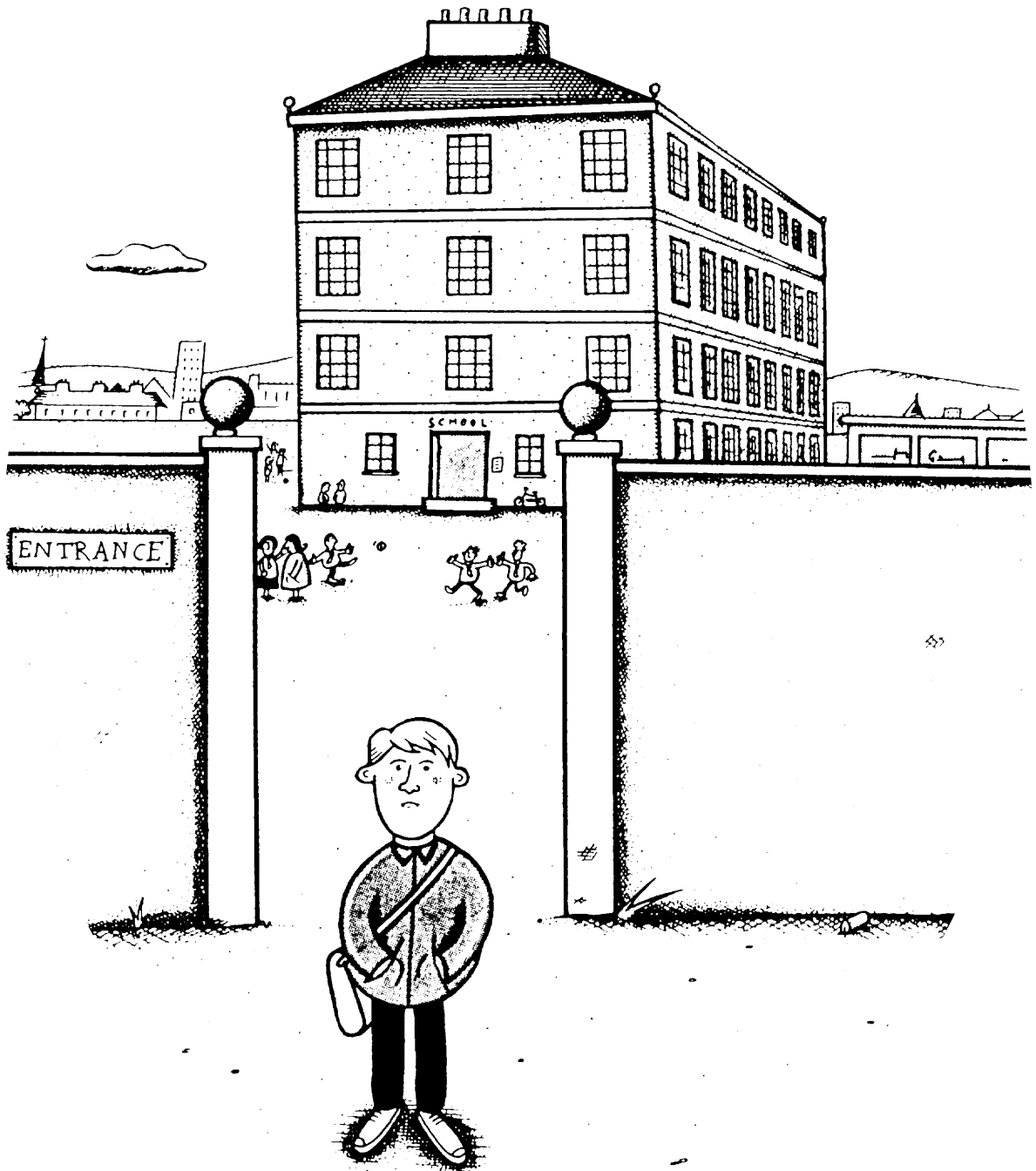
Predict how your character would be most likely to react in the following situation.

She/he discovers the virtually unstoppable enemy's secret hideaway where an innocent person is being held hostage. There is obvious danger and the hero/heroine is outnumbered because of the villain's guards.

Would your character:

- (a) – realise the danger and the amount of protection surrounding the hideaway and run away?
- (b) – keep at a safe distance and call the police?
- (c) – try and gain entry without being spotted, but if discovered fight the enemy in order to rescue the hostage and save the world?
- (d) – join forces with the villain in order to conquer the world?

Make your choice and explain why your character would act in this way.



Extract 10

Virtual Friend by Mary Hoffman

Chapter 1

Ben Silver was bored. He was bored because he had nothing to do. And he had nothing to do because he had no one to do anything with. He had no friends. Not because there was anything wrong with Ben. It just wasn't fair.

The only reason he had no friends was that his father had moved with him to a new town when he got a new job. And a new town meant a new school. And it wasn't even a new term. School had been back for three weeks and Ben had missed the scrimmage of the first few days. That's when everyone finds classrooms, loos, their own special bit of the playground and their own special group of people like them.

So Ben was lonely at school. And at weekends he was lonely at home too. He was an only child.

'Just as well,' Dad often said, sighing, his eyes filling with tears. Ben's Dad was quite soppy. But he had a reason to be. Ben's Mum had died two years ago and he and Dad had both been a bit likely to burst into tears for a long time. But Ben was getting over it better than Dad.

Reading Journal

Extract 11

The Runner by Keith Gray

It wasn't running away. Not proper running away. Not really.

The monster Intercity hauled itself into the station. Jason was already at the edge of the platform with his bag in his hand. The other waiting passengers crowded round him as the train slowed. He kept his head low, scared someone might recognise him, and gripped the handles of his bag tighter. It felt so very heavy, it seemed to be dragging him down. Could he really carry it all the way to Liverpool? After as many as eight or nine carriages the train finally managed to bring itself to a halt. It still had another two or three to go but left them hanging out of the station, like a tall man in a small bed. The straggly crowd was an excuse not to queue and Jason was the last to climb aboard, even though he'd been one of the first waiting.

He followed the crowd on to the train and grabbed the first empty seat he came to. Then almost immediately wished he hadn't. Sitting across the aisle from him was an elderly woman with a bag of Mint Imperials and a wrinkly smile. She offered him first the smile, then a sweet. He shook his head quickly and hurried through to the next carriage along, lugging his bag behind him. The woman looked just like his Auntie Jen, who Michael had always called the nosiest woman in the world. But this carriage was better, just some business men who were far too interested in their morning papers to wonder what an eleven-year-old boy was doing travelling so far by himself.

He sat by the window and let his bag block the seat next to him. He checked his watch. Nine twenty-seven; the train left at half past. He was surprised by just how hard and fast his heart was beating and zipped his jacket right up under his chin to try to help keep the noise in, then folded his arms over his chest too.

He began humming a tune to himself nervously. At first he thought he was making it up. He hated himself when he realised it was one of the songs that his father always played and forced it quickly out of his head. He thought of something by Oasis instead, because they were Michael's favourite band, and waited for the train to get going.

Reading Journal

Q.1: Some questions you might like to ask Jason.

Why are you running away?

Why are you going to Liverpool – do you know anyone there?

Who is Michael?

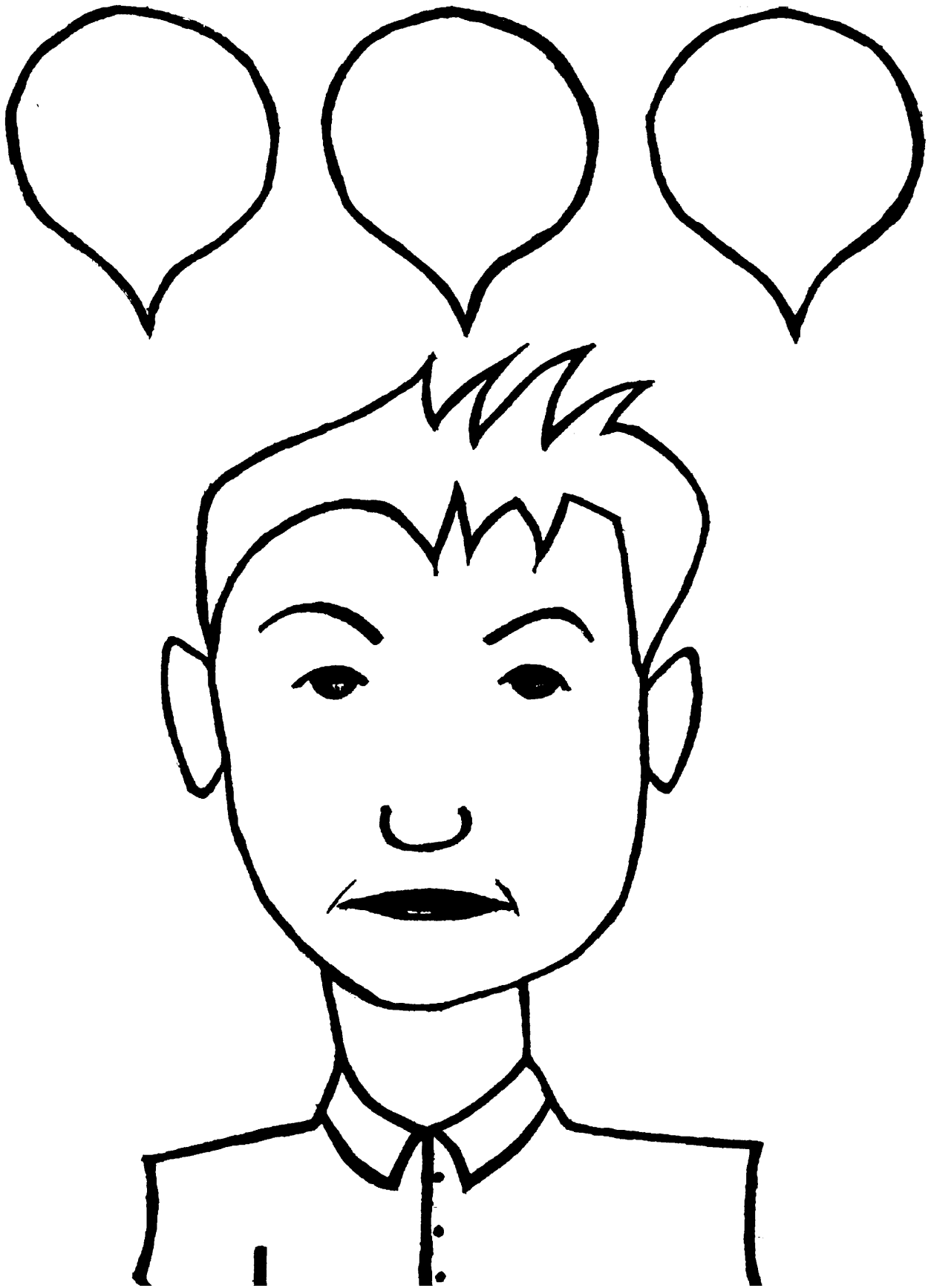
Why didn't you take the sweet from the old lady?

Why are you cross with yourself for humming the tune your Dad likes?

Think of a question of your own.

Q.2: On the next page, fill in the speech bubbles from Jason, which might help explain further his motivation for running away.

Q.3: Look again at extract 11 opposite and use this space to change the first two sentences of the fourth paragraph from third person to first person narrative.



Reading Journal

Q.1: How do you think Jason's Dad or brother might feel about him running away?

Answer these questions.

Q.1: Why is she alone in the house?

Q.2: How do we know that she is scared?

The choices writers make

How has the author of this short story managed to create a scary atmosphere? Present your answer in bullet points.

Kevin Crossley-Holland has made this ghost story effective by...

