

Improving Your Reading with Arlo the Author: The Grey House



It was an intensely hot July day; not a cloud appeared in the high blue vault of the sky. The trees, flowers and grass were all motionless for not even the gentlest breeze lingered in the air. The world had lapsed into a drowsy, warm slumber; even the birds had ceased singing and nestled their way onto the most shaded branches of the great forest trees. There they sat and talked to one another about the glorious weather – they liked the heat although it made them too lazy to sing.



From the tops of the trees, had anyone been energetic enough to climb up there, wisps of white smoke could be seen dancing in the air, proceeding from the kitchen chimneys of a square-built grey house. The house was almost completely covered with vines. Pigeons were cooing from the rafters and several dogs were lying flat out in the shade cast by structure but, as far as human life was concerned, the whole place looked absolutely deserted.

1. **Find** and **copy three** phrases from the first paragraph which support the idea that the world is asleep.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. *not a cloud appeared in the high blue vault of the sky*
What does this phrase suggest about the sky?

3. **Find** and **copy** an example of personification from the text and explain how it contributes to meaning.

4. Look at the second paragraph of the extract.
List **two** impressions that you are given about the house.

1. _____

2. _____



Answers

1. Find and copy three phrases from the first paragraph which support the idea that the world is asleep.

Accept any three of the following reasonable points: were all motionless, not even the gentlest breeze lingered, the world had lapsed into a drowsy, warm slumber; birds had ceased singing.

2. *not a cloud appeared in the high blue vault of the sky*

What does this phrase suggest about the sky?

Pupils' own responses, such as: It suggests that the sky is bright blue and seems to be incredibly high.

3. Find and copy an example of personification from the text and explain how it contributes to meaning.

Pupils' own responses, such as: An example of personification is when the text says 'the world had lapsed into a drowsy, warm slumber'. This gives the reader the impression that everything in the world had stopped moving and builds a still, calm atmosphere.

4. Look at the second paragraph of the extract.

List **two** impressions that you are given about the house.

Accept any two reasonable points, such as: It was hidden amongst the trees; It seemed derelict/abandoned; It was covered with foliage; Someone inhabits it; Pets live at the house; It appeared deserted.