



Friday 9th July 2021

WALT: Retrieve examples of figurative language

Lesson 13



What does it mean to retrieve?

WALT: Retrieve figurative language so we can develop a deeper understanding of the text and consider the impact on the reader.

## Being a reader

When I am learning to read, I am decoding words in the text.

**p-l-ay-ing**



Reading broadens my knowledge and widens my vocabulary, allowing me to link this to my previous and new learning.

When I am learning to read, I practise reading with fluency, intonation and at an appropriate pace.

I am learning to read because it allows me to make more sense of the world around me.

When I read, I am learning to take meaning from different texts.



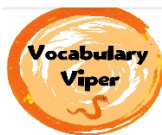
I am learning to read because it gives me the power to develop myself as an individual and as a part of society.



When I am reading, I am igniting my imagination.



When I am reading, I use a range of skills to understand the text



### Prior learning:

Previously, we have used key words in a question to retrieve information from a text.

Today, we will retrieve examples of **figurative language** which have been used in this chapter. We will then think about the impact these vocabulary choices have on us as the reader and why the author might have chosen to use them. You may also decide to use some of these examples to improve your own work when you are being a writer.

Figurative language – words or phrases used to help convey a meaning (**personification, simile, metaphor**)

Can you remember what these terms mean and how they are used?

## Reading - Chapter 11

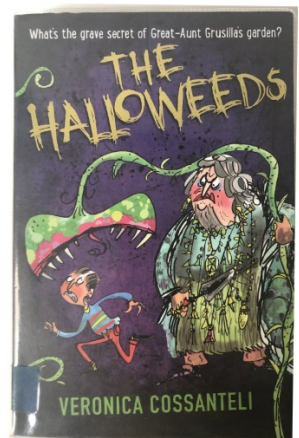
As we read, we will confirm the meaning of our new vocabulary through context.

**flourishes** - to grow well

**brandishing** - to wave something in anger or excitement

**ancestors** - a person someone has descended from (not immediate family)

As you read the text, look out for examples of figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification)







## CHAPTER ELEVEN

'Tssss!'

Fingers clawed at my neck, pulling me backwards. The plants had me by the feet, pulling me forwards. I felt like a Christmas cracker. Any minute now, there'd be a loud bang and I'd come apart...

'Ssstop it!'

The plants were backing off; my feet were free. Pokiss hauled me up by my collar.

'Ssstupid!'

She was shaking me, but I didn't care. It was just nice not to be dissolving into a puddle of slime. She marched me out of the Cabbages' reach, kicking at my ankles if I stopped or stumbled. When she let go, I

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V - What does the verb 'briskly' suggest? Can you think of a synonym?

crumpled up. My legs felt like Bone Jelly. A shape darkened the doorway.

'No damage, I hope?' Aunt Grusilla shook the raindrops off her umbrella, showering Lambkin who was at her heels, already looking like a drowned rat.

Pokiss sniffed. 'Rough boy. Nassy.' 'I am disappointed in you, Dandelion,' declared Aunt Grusilla. 'I can't have you hurting my Halloweeds. Did your parents not teach you to respect Nature?'

'There's nothing *natural* about those things.' I shuddered. 'They nearly ate the cat, then they tried to eat me.'

'All living organisms must feed,' said Aunt Grusilla. 'The Halloweeds have been nurtured from cuttings. They are very precious and must be kept alive - at any cost.'

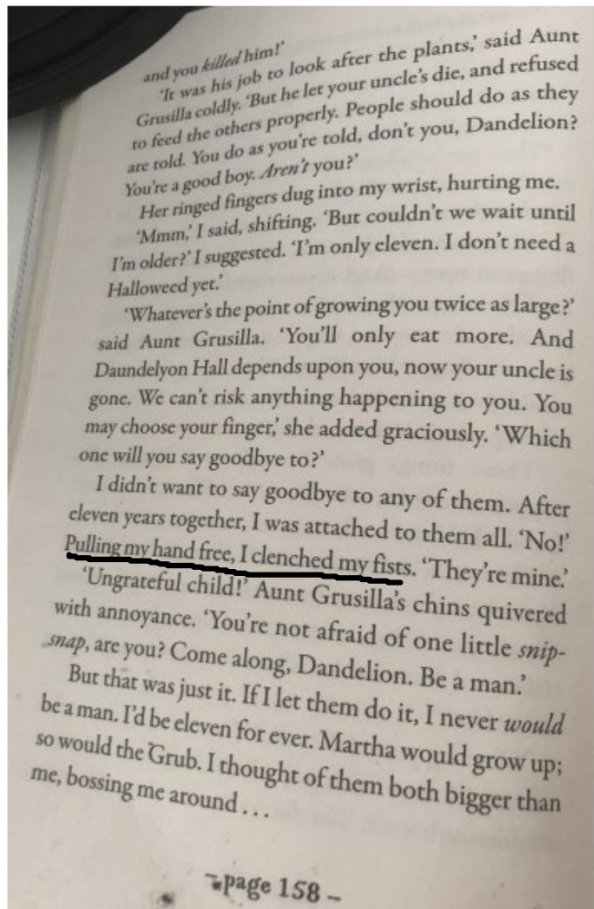
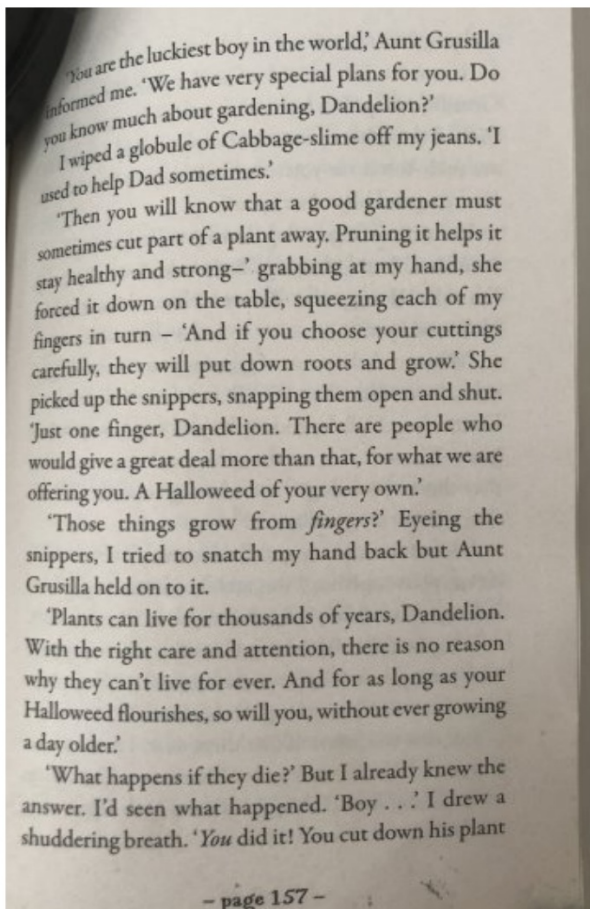
'One of them's dead,' I said. 'You chopped it down.'

Aunt Grusilla shut her umbrella with a snap. 'Dead wood,' she said briskly. 'I put it out of its misery. It will soon be replaced.' She looked at Boy's row of geranium cuttings, and the pair of garden snippers lying beside them. 'Can't we do it now, Pokiss?'

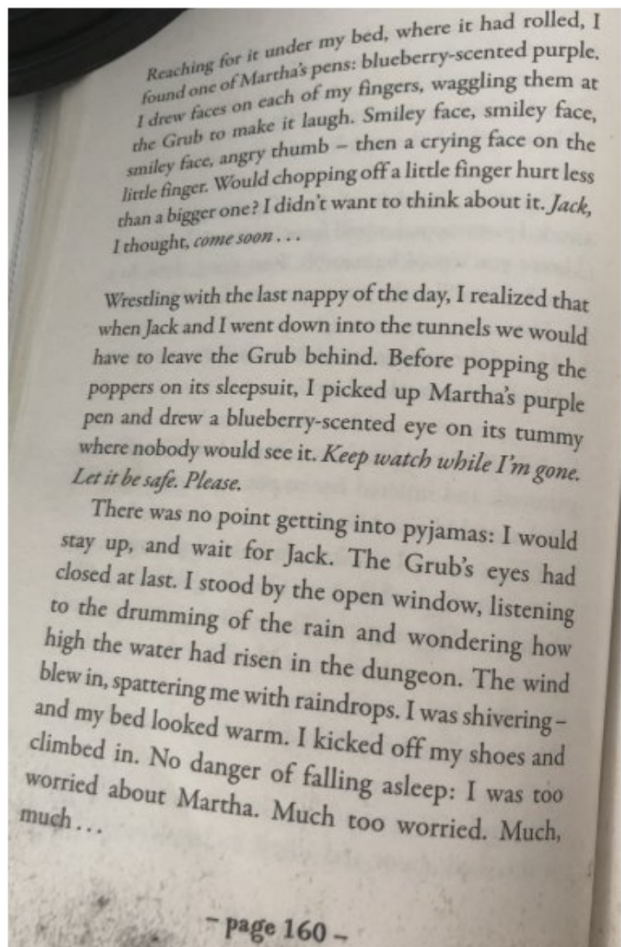
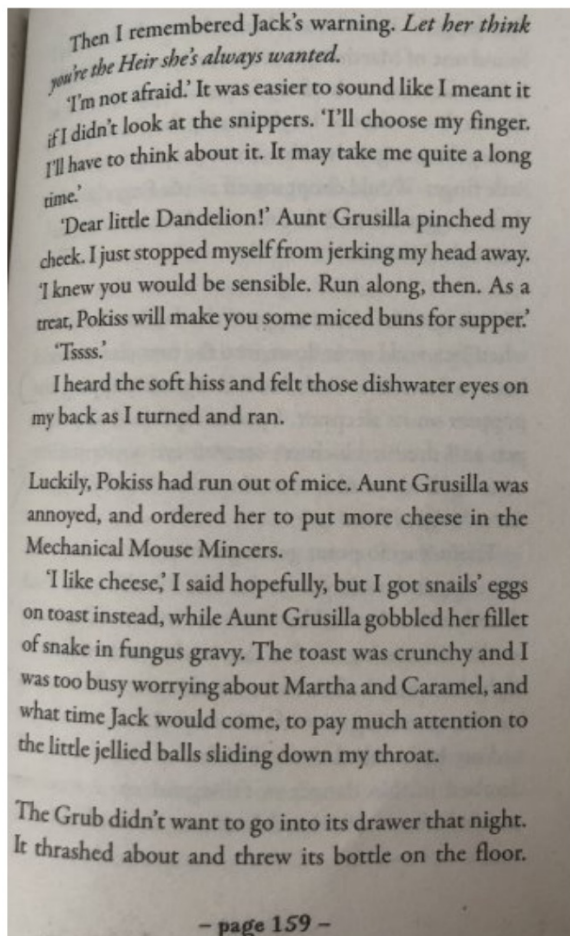
Pokiss's dishwater eyes flickered. 'Too soon. Tomorrow. All Hallows' Eve.'

My brain was still un-fuzzing itself from shock. 'Do what?'

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I - Why did the character clench their fists?



R - What did Aunt Grusilla gobble?



The next thing I knew, someone was shaking my shoulder. 'Sleepyhead! Wake up!'

'Jack?' Heavy with sleep, my eyes didn't want to open. 'Is it after midnight?'

'It's almost dawn, you dozy boy.' The voice was not Jack's. 'It's Halloween. Your special day!'

I was wide awake now. Aunt Grusilla was bending over me, still in her nightgown (size Walrus, Extra Large) and white nightcap. Without her mouse eyebrows, spider-leg lashes and beetle-juice blush, her face was pale and bald. I struggled up on my pillows. *Martha!* How long had I been asleep for? *Where was Jack? Why hadn't she come?*

'Hurry up, Dandelion.' Aunt Grusilla peeled the covers off me. She didn't seem to notice that I'd gone to bed in my jeans. 'Pokiss is waiting. It is Time.'

'Time for what?' I knew the answer. The back of my neck tingled and I felt something like the flapping of bat wings in my stomach.

'Put your shoes on,' ordered Aunt Grusilla. 'We're going out to the Glass House. Pokiss is sharpening the snippers.'

'Can't we do it later?' I pleaded. 'It's not properly Halloween yet. Not until tonight.'

'Nonsense,' said Aunt Grusilla. 'Dawn is the perfect time for a new beginning, the start of a new life: a new

Halloweed.'

As she dragged me out into the corridor I looked back at the Grub, asleep on its stomach with Martha's iguanodon pressed against its cheek. I hoped the Eye would keep it safe.

Aunt Grusilla towed me down the stairs. The front doors stood open; outside the darkness was fading into the milky light of dawn. There was something strange about the silence. I realized what it was: the rain had stopped.

*You could just run away. Aunt Grusilla wouldn't catch you. Hide in the Deepness. Find Jack.*

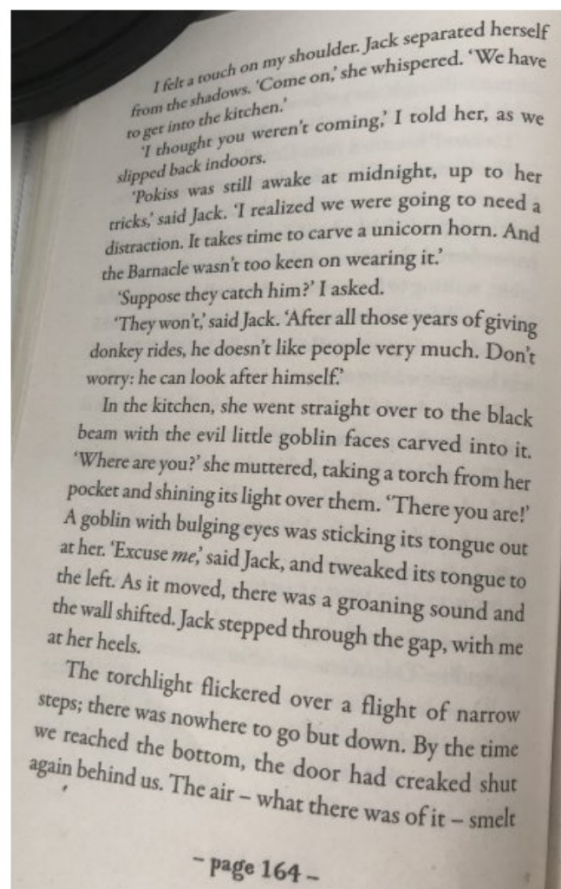
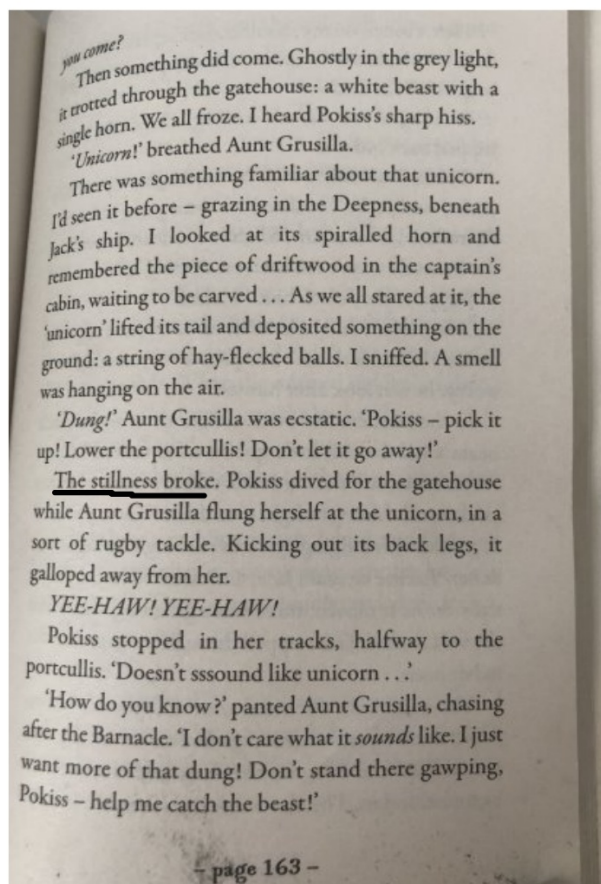
But how could I run away from Martha and the Grub?

And Jack didn't care. She wanted me to lose a finger, so she didn't have to spend the rest of forever being alone...

It was too late anyway: Pokiss was standing in the doorway, blocking my escape. In one hand she held a little flowerpot, full to the brim with earth. From her other hand dangled something sharp and silvery: the newly-sharpened snippers. My stomach-bats flapped harder.

Between them, Aunt Grusilla and Pokiss bundled me downstairs. The front doors stood open; I shivered, not just because of the cold. *Oh Jack, why didn't*





V/I - What does this choice of language suggest?

...damp and a bit ratty, and the walls felt slimy against my fingers. I tried not to brush against them but it was difficult; if I shrank away from one, I bumped into the other. My feet were wet. The torchlight glinted off water; quite a lot of water. There was a sudden skitter and a squeak; something ran past me, going the other way.

'Mind your head,' warned Jack. 'The ceiling gets lower. And stay close.'

Soon we were crawling, my wet jeans clammy against my legs. Jack carried the torch between her teeth, like a pirate's dagger; I didn't like the wavering shadows it made. When she stopped suddenly, I didn't notice in time and went into the back of her.

'Mmmph. Sorry.'

'Ssssh!' She had taken the torch out of her mouth. 'Listen!'

I could hear scabbling sounds. I don't mind rats, but I prefer it when they're not running over my hands in dark tunnels. Then – very loudly and definitely – somebody sneezed.

'Caramel!'

'Dan? Is that you?'

It didn't take us long to reach her – or rather, to reach the mound of rubble that blocked the tunnel in between us.

'Roof's caved in,' said Jack, moving the torch beam over it. 'We're going to have to shift it.'  
The tunnel had widened just enough for me to crawl up beside Jack. 'Caramel? We were coming to rescue you! How did you get out?'

'The water came in over our ledge,' Caramel's voice was muffled. 'We had to swim. Martha got tired of the frog stroke and was hanging on to the wall when she found a gap leading into this tunnel, then we got stuck.' As she stopped for another explosive sneeze, we could hear the rubble rattling. 'I've moved a lot of it,' she added hopefully. 'If you work on it from that side, we'll soon be through.'

'But,' I said, 'where's Martha?'

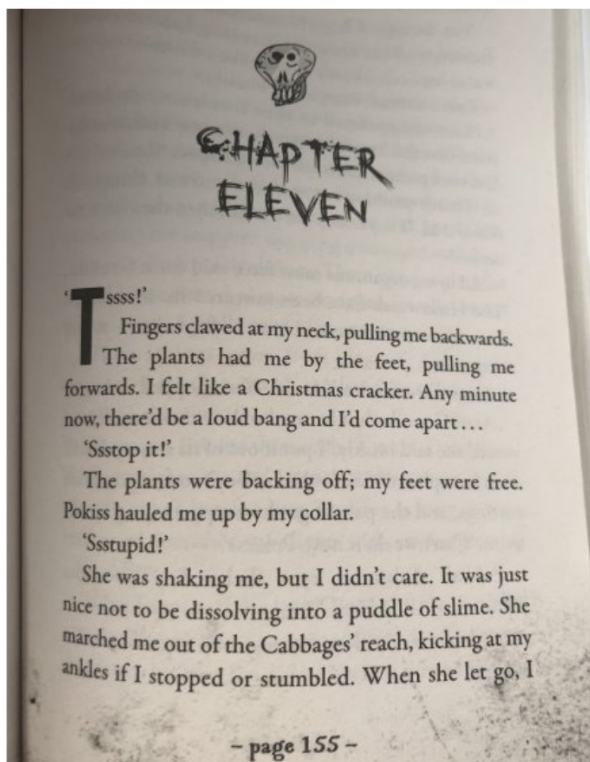
'She went to look for another way out,' Caramel sounded anxious. 'The tunnel branches off down another passage behind us. She said she wouldn't be long, but ... Dan, she's been gone for ages.'

I thought of Martha lost, somewhere in the maze of dark tunnels. I thought of rushing water and broken ankles and collapsing ceilings and red-eyed rats the size of cats. 'Why did you let her go on her own?'

I heard Caramel's sigh. 'You'll understand,' she said sadly, 'when you see where she went.'

Lying propped on our elbows, Jack and I pulled at chunks of brick, piece by piece, until our fingers bled.

## Modelled task



Look at page 155:

Find examples of figurative language the author has used to create an image in the readers mind.

How does the author give the impression that the Halloweeds are dangerous and scary?



WALT: Retrieve examples of figurative language

Main task:

**Read the rest of the chapter.**

Look at page 171. Find and copy descriptive phrases and figurative language which the author uses to create an image of:

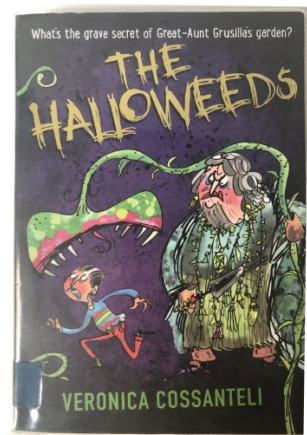
The room Dan is in

The plant he can see

The finger

*Support: Find and copy adjectives used to describe the plant.*

*Challenge: Describe the effect these language choices have on the reader. Why has the author chosen to use each example?*



It was taking too long. I tried not to think about the mass of earth above me and the stream of cold water trickling past me. *Aphid. Bean weevil. Carrot fly.* Insects always calmed me down. *Dagger moth. Eye gnat. Furniture beetle...*

I let out a squawk as something scuttled up my back and over my shoulder. Jack shone the torch at its departing bottom and long bald tail as it vanished into the rubble. A moment later Caramel let out an answering squawk the other side.

'If Mr Rat can get through,' said Jack, 'then so can we.'

She was right. It wasn't long after that before Caramel's white face appeared, smeary with rubble dust, her wet hair plastered to her head. As soon as the gap was big enough, I wriggled through to her side. Jack passed me the torch and I moved the beam over the tunnel walls.

'Where did Martha go?'

'There!' Caramel pointed to where a low brick arch, like a downturned mouth, marked the entrance to another passage.

I forgave her, straight away, for letting Martha go on her own. Martha would have wiggled through easily; I'd fit, just; Caramel wouldn't stand a chance.

'That's what comes of eating too much chocolate.'

she said sadly. 'You don't fit through holes when you need to. If I ever get out of here, I'll just eat lettuce.'

There wasn't room to hug her, so I gave her a pat. 'Don't,' I told her. 'Anyway, I don't think any grown-up could fit through there, not even Jack.' I took a deep breath. 'Somebody has to go after Martha - it's going to have to be me.'

I sort of hoped that somebody would come up with a better plan. Nobody did.

'If you're sure,' said Jack, not giving me time to say that I wasn't. 'We can't have Caramel sneezing like a herd of elephants all over the place - she'll bring the rest of the roof down. I'll take her as far as the temple in the maze, then I'll come back for you. Don't forget to mark your way.' Digging in her pocket, she passed me a handful of her gold coins.

'Oh!' said Caramel. 'Chocolate?'

'Spanish doubloons,' said Jack. 'Sorry.'

'Where does it go?' I asked doubtfully, looking at the tunnel.

'I don't know,' admitted Jack. 'Maybe towards the Glass House...'

'No!' I was already shivering; now my blood ran even colder. 'Not there! Jack, *that's where the fingers are!* They plant them and they grow into these huge, horrible Halloweeds. They feed off bodies, dead or

... alive – they tried to eat me, but Pokiss rescued me. As long as your Halloweed's alive, so are you.'

Jack was gripping my arm; I saw the four fingers of her other hand curling into her palm. 'How many of these Halloweeds did you see? Could you tell them apart? Could you tell which was mine?'

'I was quite busy trying not to get eaten,' I said apologetically. 'There were three, I think. Two massive great things and a smaller one.' I frowned. *Aunt Grusilla. Pokiss. Lambkin. So where was Jack's?*

'What I can't help wondering,' said Jack slowly, 'is why they *kept* me alive. It was an experiment, to start with, but that was over long ago. They didn't need me any more – and it's not as if my mother ever cared. So why didn't they end it?'

'Aunt Grusilla ended it for Boy,' I told her. 'She chopped down his Halloweed and he just shrivelled away. Uncle Dandelion's plant choked on a pudding. But yours has to be alive, or you wouldn't be here.'

Caramel had been looking more and more bewildered. Now she gave another of her erupting-volcano sneezes.

'Time to get her out of here,' said Jack, as fragments of ceiling rained down on us. 'The Halloweeds can wait.'

As Jack urged her away, Caramel pressed something

... into my hand. I felt it crinkle: one of her little paper birds.

'A crane,' Caramel told me. 'For long life – and good luck.'

As I squirmed through the gap beneath the archway, the darkness pressed in around me. Jack had offered me the torch but I'd told her to keep it as I could use the light on my watch. Its glow was green and spooky; I wished I had taken the torch. The squirming was skinning my elbows; soon they were raw and aching.

The passage sloped downhill, Water was coming from somewhere, overtaking me in what started as a trickle then turned into more of a stream. I swallowed a mouthful of it by mistake; it didn't taste too good, so I wriggled with my chin up after that.

When the tunnel forked, I hesitated. Right – or left? 'Martha? Maaaaartha ...' I was deafened by my own voice bouncing off the tunnel walls.

*Da... a... a... an... be... e... e... elp...*

I froze. It was so faint, I wasn't even sure if I'd really heard it. Which fork had it come through? Right? Wrong. Left. *I'm coming, Martha.* I remembered how Caramel's sneezes had rattled the brickwork and didn't dare risk another shout. Dropping one of Jack's coins to mark the turning, hoping the water wouldn't carry it



away, I set off again, faster now.

I only noticed the metal grating when it scraped the top of my head. One end of it was hanging loose from the tunnel roof. Up above me, I thought I heard something rustle.

'Martha?'

I squeezed my head and shoulders through the gap into a small, box-like chamber, with stone slabs for walls and a floor of earth. There was no door or windows but a trickle of greenish light dribbled in where the slabs did not quite meet. Here and there the floor was littered with pale, knobbled shapes.

Close to my nose a little snail, striped like a peppermint, was climbing up the side of a flowerpot. It never reached the top – there was a sudden movement, a shiver of leaves and a crunch. The plant in the pot was no higher than a pencil: a single stem with a pair of leaves each side. A young cutting, putting down roots . . . and I knew what had been cut.

I'd seen dead fingers before, dry and dusty, on the Egyptian mummies in the British Museum. This one had been fed and watered; it was greener and less shrivelled. You could still see the knuckle and the nail, poking out of the crumbly brown soil.

An image flashed in my brain: Pokiss's hands, with the extra half a finger missing. She'd planted herself

a spare Halloweed. If anything went wrong with her other one – weevils or puddings or Aunt Grusilla losing her temper – this baby was Pokiss's Emergency Backup . . .

Leaves rustled behind me.

'Martha?' Where was she? I tried turning round, but I was wedged too tightly. Something sticky landed on the end of my nose. I wiped it off with the back of my hand. Green. Slimy. Digestive juices . . . My heart gave a sickening kick.

I pulled myself up and on to my knees; the ceiling wasn't high enough to stand. Shuffling awkwardly round, I found myself face to face with another Halloweed – and this one was no baby. Thick-stemmed, with leaves yellow from lack of light, its lower half was coiled like a cobra. Its upper half had Martha wrapped in a deadly hug. Above the rubbery leaf clamped over her nose and mouth, I could see her eyes, round and terrified. I could smell the plant's salami breath as its fleshy lips puckered, ready to start sucking . . .

Desperately, I looked around me for something, anything, to attack it with. Metal glinted on the ground at my feet. I had snatched it up and was slicing the air with it before I realized what it was. A sword. It was the double of the one Robo-Ancestor had been

brandishing in my bedroom: the *Dent de Lyon*. This had to be the *other* Tooth of the Lion: the one Sir Lyon de Beaune had taken to his grave.

I knew, now, where I was – and what the pale, knobbly objects scattered around me were. They were all that was left of my ancestors – the bones of Sir Lyon and Lady Clotilda de Beaune . . .

The sword was heavy in my hand. *Go on. Use it. What are you waiting for? Chop that thing up – snicker smack – before it can suck all the juices out of Martha.*

But how could I? That Halloweed belonged to somebody. Its sap was somebody's lifeblood. And I thought I knew whose. Jack.

I had two choices: I could let the plant kill Martha – or I could kill Jack.

Learning re-cap:

Why do authors choose to use figurative language?

