

Reading Comprehension Task:

Aelfun's Mystery

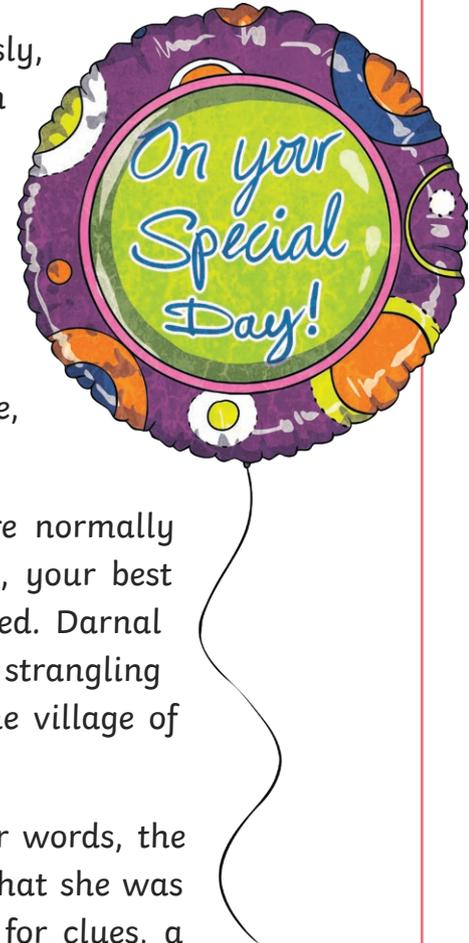
You have 30 minutes to read the following passage and answer **all** of the questions below. Match your response to the marks available. You may continue your answers on the additional pages provided, if required.

“So, where exactly are we going again?” asked Aelfun suspiciously, hesitant to be coaxed out of the vehicle by her unusually skittish father with such mystery lingering in the air.

“To the... allotment, my dear,” came the reply – the tone equally as unconvincing as Darnal’s accompanying facial expression. Avoiding all eye contact, Darnal shuffled from one foot to another, looking at the watch that he had forgotten to wear as he awaited Aelfun’s exit. She slowed her movements on purpose, enjoying the angst.

“See, the thing is, Da... When you go to the allotment, you’re normally wearing your gardening clothes,” continued Aelfun. “And, well, your best shirt isn’t normally what you do the gardening in,” she smirked. Darnal unconsciously clutched at the collar of his shirt, loosening its strangling grasp from his neck. Had it suddenly become very warm in the village of Hedgley Willows or was he the only one who thought so?

Aelfun enjoyed this game. The further she pushed him with her words, the more Darnal started to squirm. He was hiding something – of that she was certain – but what was it? As Aelfun’s eyes scoured the area for clues, a colourful balloon discreetly drifting towards the clouds gave her the solid lead she’d hoped for.



1. Discuss two ways in which the author makes it clear that Darnal feels uneasy.

2 marks

2. **...hesitant to be coaxed out of the vehicle by her unusually skittish father...**

Rewrite this phrase replacing the words 'hesitant', 'coaxed', 'vehicle' and 'skittish' with appropriate synonyms.

2 marks

3. What impression does the author give of the character Aelfun? Discuss at least two aspects of her character, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

3 marks

4. Predict what you think the circumstances surrounding this extract are, providing an explanation which uses evidence from the text. You may wish to write about what could be happening and where Aelfun and Darnal are going.

3 marks

Reading Comprehension Task:

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To achieve the full number of marks for each question, pupils' responses should be to the same quality as the examples below. This is not a comprehensive list of answers and should only be used as a guide regarding answer depth and detail.

1. Discuss two ways in which the author makes it clear that Darnal feels uneasy.

The author makes it clear that Darnal feels uneasy because they write that he was 'avoiding all eye contact' which is something that people do when they are uncomfortable. Another way that the author makes this clear is by writing 'looking at the watch that he had forgotten to wear'. This shows that Darnal has something on his mind that is distracting him enough to make silly mistakes.

2. **...hesitant to be coaxed out of the vehicle by her unusually skittish father...**

Rewrite this phrase replacing the words 'hesitant', 'coaxed', 'vehicle' and 'skittish' with appropriate synonyms.

...reluctant to be persuaded out of the car by her unusually nervous father...

3. What impression does the author give of the character Aelfun? Discuss at least two aspects of her character, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

The author gives the impression that Aelfun is mischievous because they write that she 'enjoyed this game' when she was making her father squirm. This shows that she has a cheeky sense of humour. We are also given the impression that Aelfun is smart because she is immediately suspicious of the story Darnal gives and starts to hunt for clues to disprove him.

4. Predict what you think the circumstances surrounding this extract are, providing an explanation which uses evidence from the text. You may wish to write about what could be happening and where Aelfun and Darnal are going.

I think that Darnal is trying to take Aelfun to a surprise party. I think this because Darnal is wearing his best shirt and a colourful balloon is floating off into the sky as they arrive at the destination. These are both things that would be seen at parties. Clearly, Aelfun doesn't know about it but seems to have some sort of idea that a surprise is afoot.