

Thursday 11th February – Reading Comprehension.

Extract taken from chapter 9 of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J K Rowling

In this extract, the children are trying to find their way back to Gryffindor Tower when they come face to face with something terrifying.

They weren't in a room, as he had supposed. They were in a corridor. The forbidden corridor on the third floor. And now they knew why it was forbidden.

They were looking straight into the eyes of a monstrous dog, a dog which filled the whole space between ceiling and floor. It had three heads. Three pairs of rolling, mad eyes; three noses, twitching and quivering in their direction; three drooling mouths, saliva hanging in slippery ropes from yellowish fangs.

It was standing quite still, all six eyes staring at them, and Harry knew that the only reason they weren't already dead was that their sudden appearance had taken it by surprise, but it was quickly getting over that, there was no mistaking what those thunderous growls meant.



Harry groped for the doorknob — between Filch and death, he'd take Filch.

They fell backwards — Harry slammed the door shut, and they ran, they almost flew, back down the corridor. Filch must have hurried off to look for them somewhere else because they didn't see him anywhere, but they hardly cared --- all they wanted to do was put as much space as possible between them and that monster. They didn't stop running until they reached the portrait of the Fat Lady on the seventh floor. 'Where on earth have you all been?' she asked, looking at their dressing-gowns hanging off their shoulders and their flushed, sweaty faces.

'Never mind that — pig snout, pig snout,' panted Harry, and the portrait swung forward. They scrambled into the common room and collapsed, trembling, into armchairs.

It was a while before any of them said anything. Neville, indeed, looked as if he'd never speak again.

'What do they think they're doing, keeping a thing like that locked up in a school?' said Ron finally. 'If any dog needs exercise, that one does.'

Hermione had got both her breath and her bad temper back again.

'You don't use your eyes, any of you, do you?' she snapped. 'Didn't you see what it was standing on?'

‘The floor?’ Harry suggested. ‘I wasn't looking at its feet; I was too busy with its heads.’

‘No, not the floor. It was standing on a trapdoor. It's obviously guarding something.’

She stood up, glaring at them.

‘I hope you're pleased with yourselves. We could all have been killed — or worse, expelled. Now, if you don't mind, I'm going to bed.’

Ron stared after her, his mouth open.

‘No, we don't mind,’ he said. ‘You'd think we dragged her along, wouldn't you?’

But Hermione had given Harry something else to think about as he climbed back into bed. The dog was guarding...What had Hagrid said? Gringotts was the safest place in the world for something you wanted to hide – except perhaps Hogwarts.

It looked as though Harry had found out where the grubby little package from vault seven hundred and thirteen was.

Questions

1. Why was the third floor corridor forbidden to all students?
2. Write down as much detail as you can from the text that tells you what the monstrous dog was like.
3. How do you know that Neville had been terrified by the encounter with the dog?
4. How did Hermione know that the dog was guarding something?
5. What made Harry think that it was guarding whatever was in the ‘grubby little package’ that Hagrid had collected from Gringotts?

