

Improving Your Reading Skills with...

Arlo the Author



What Does Arlo the Author Do?

Arlo the Author helps with content domain **2g**:

Identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases.

This means that he is there to help you to spot examples of **ambitious vocabulary** and **figurative language** within the text.

When you find them, Arlo helps you to think about **why** the author made those vocabulary choices and how they give a **certain meaning** to the text.

For example, an author could say that the water in a lake was still and reflective. However, for effect, they could describe the water as 'like a sheet of glass'.

When Have We Seen Arlo the Author?

The kind of questions that Arlo the Author helps with are not very common in SATs papers but they do require a lot of thought. Here are some recent examples:

33 Look at the paragraph beginning: *I had the same feeling of mystery and danger around us.*

Find and copy four different words from the rest of the paragraph that suggest danger.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

2 marks

29 ...like a toy sitting on a glass table.

What does this description suggest about the boat?

1 mark

5 ...they crossed the glassy surface of the lake.

Give **two** impressions this gives you of the water.

1. _____
2. _____

2 marks

Click on the image of each question to find out more.

What Might **Arlo the Author** Ask?

Arlo the Author might ask questions like these:

What does this word tell us about the character/setting/atmosphere?

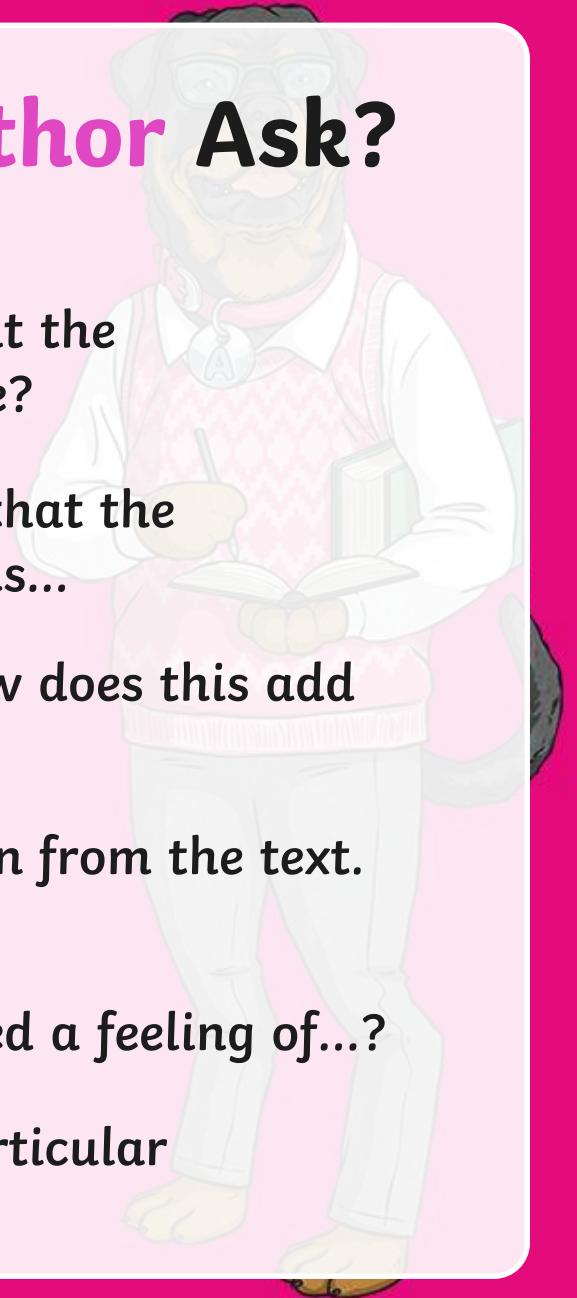
Look at that phrase which implies that the character/setting/atmosphere is...

Look for a simile/metaphor in the text. How does this add meaning?

Find and copy an example of personification from the text.
Why is it used?

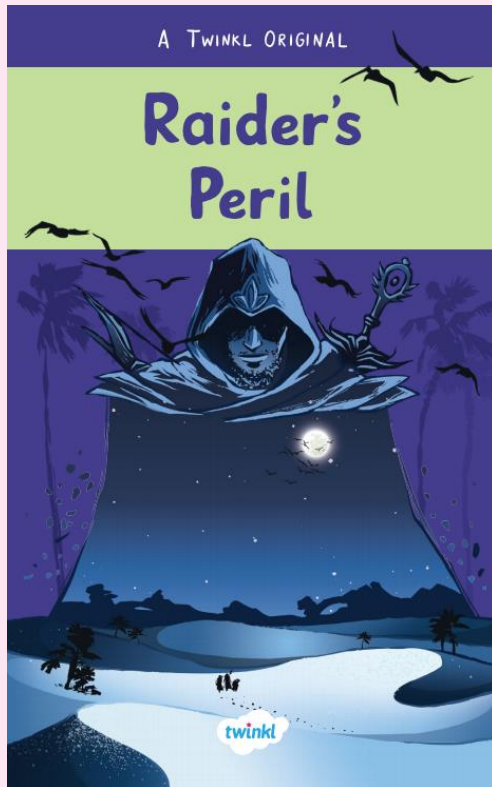
How has the author's choice of words created a feeling of...?

Why did the author choose this particular verb/adjective/adverb?



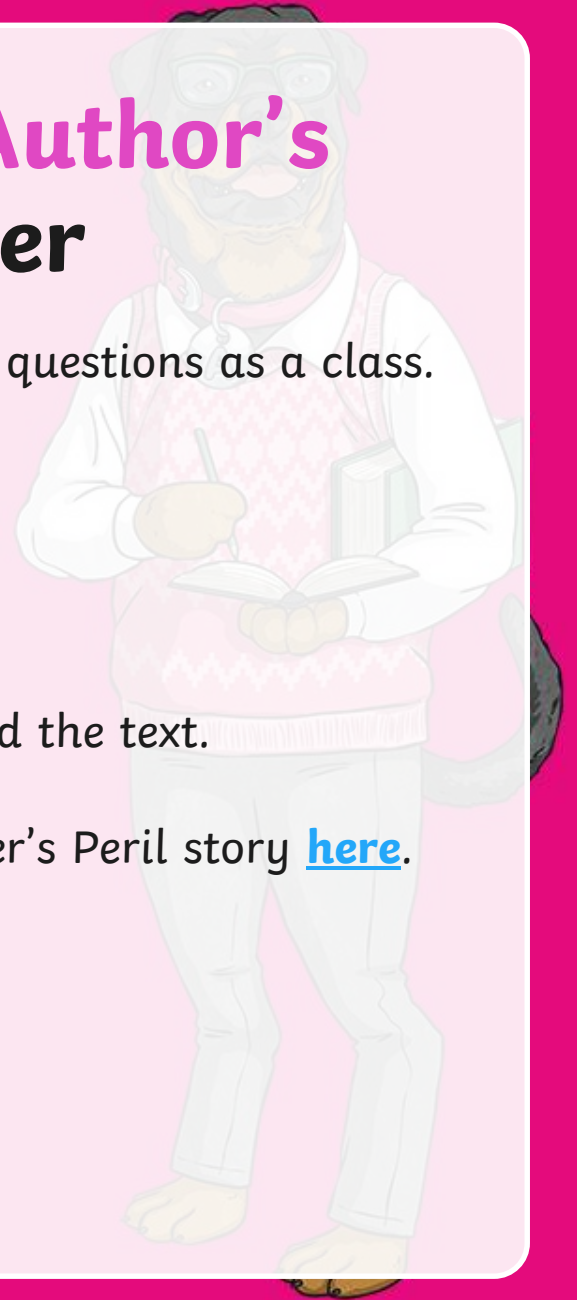
Let's Explore **Arlo the Author's** Questions Together

Read the extract from Raider's Peril and answer the questions as a class.



Click on the image to read the text.

Read the rest of the Raider's Peril story [here](#).



Let's Explore **Arlo the Author's** Questions Together

Read the extract from Raider's Peril and answer the questions as a class.

She pounded the pestle into the bowl beneath

Why do you think the author chose to use the verb pounded?

Look at the paragraph beginning, *Catanna had found the topaz gems...*

Find and copy two words or phrases from this paragraph which suggest that the basement was an unpleasant place.

List two impressions you are given about fire opals within this extract.

It glinted dully.

What impression does this description give you about the quartz spear?

What effect does the last sentence of this extract have on the reader's understanding of the upcoming plot?



Chapter 1

Double Life

The quartz spear was nothing special. Plenty like it at the bazaar, for the right price. The spear's cloudy, white point lay on the workstation, next to the pestle and mortar. It glinted dully.

The workstation wasn't special either – a wooden worktop and a shelf of instruments that had never been used: hammers, pliers, chisels. On the right-hand side was a lever with a gleaming handle. Workstations just like this one were used throughout the White Desert and the Silken City to craft new weapons and armour.

Catanna Brittlestar stood before it. She pounded the

pestle into the bowl beneath, until the substance within was ground to a fine powder. This substance was special: topaz.

Catanna had found the topaz gems in a chest on her last raid. In the gloom of a stronghold basement, she had scooped them into her sack without looking and had run before the enemy guild could capture her. It was only when she had reached the safety of the Brittlestar stronghold that she had taken the time to examine the unusual blue gems.

Topaz was rare. Not as rare as diamond, sunstone or fire opal, but rare enough to make powerful weapons. Rare enough to make Catanna and her Brittlestar guild almost unstoppable.

Almost.

Fire opal weapons would make her truly unstoppable. A guild leader who could equip her followers with fire opal weapons would be revered across the White Desert.

What she wouldn't give to be that leader.

Summing Up **Arlo the Author**

Prove your understanding of what Arlo the Author does by answering the following questions:

What does Arlo the Author help you to do?

What sort of question might Arlo the Author ask?

How can you make sure you get full marks on Arlo the Author questions?

