

In this unit, you'll read a number of poems set in strange places, practise using words carefully and write poems of your own.

The Bogeyman

In the desolate depths of a perilous place
the bogeyman lurks, with a snarl on his face.
Never dare, never dare to approach his dark lair
for he's waiting...just waiting...to get you.

He skulks in the shadows, relentless and wild
in his search for a tender, delectable child.
With his steely sharp claws and his slavering jaws
oh he's waiting...just waiting...to get you.

Many have entered his dreary domain
but not even one has been heard from again.
They no doubt made a feast for the butchering beast
and he's waiting...just waiting...to get you.

In that sulphurous, sunless and sinister place
he'll crumple your bones in his bogey embrace.
Never never go near if you hold your life dear,
for oh!...What he'll do...when he gets you!

Jack Prelutsky



The Magician's Attic



The woodwork's musty as the russet smell of
old burnt toast and almonds.

The feather-hands
Of the falcon-clock have stopped.

There are no sounds,
Except the old creaking rocking-throne that
stands

In a corner (still rocking, for kings and queens
have ghosts called Histories).

Ends

Of cowboys' cattle-brands
Hang on a wall.

The table's one leg bends
Like a toad-stool stalk.
The magician never mends
His old things. He never sends
Them to auction-sales, bazaars or jumble-
sales. Indeed, he intends
To keep his attic cluttered with peaceful
rubbish
quieter than islands.

The air is still with the dust of grated
diamonds.

The feather-hands
Of the falcon-clock have stopped.

He finds
Old things are good for games of memories,
and sometimes he stands
For hours staring at wands –
For this is where he keeps them, old,
splintered, broken, worn-out wizard wands.

Harold Massingham




1 Group discussion


Read the poems and discuss these questions:


- What are they about?
- How do they make you feel?
- How are they written? (In verses? Do they rhyme? Do they have rhythm?)
- Which words help you to imagine the setting of each poem?
- Does anything puzzle you, or are there words you don't understand?


Choose one set of questions. Blue is easiest and green is the most tricky.

2 Responding to the poems

Answer questions from the ,  or  section.

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- 1 What smells are in the attic?
 - 2 What sounds can be heard?
 - 3 Write down four things you would find in the attic.
 - 4 What is the bogeyman waiting for?

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- 1 What does the magician do in the attic?
 - 2 Why doesn't he clear up the mess?
 - 3 Which word tells you that the bogeyman's home is a long way from anywhere else?
 - 4 Find two words which tell us that the bogeyman is not a friendly character.

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- 1 *The air is still with the dust of grated diamonds.* What image does that line paint in your mind about the attic?
 - 2 Why do you think the wands are worn-out?
 - 3 Find two words in the poem which are used for the bogeyman's home.
 - 4 Does the bogeyman's home smell? How do you know?

This is for all groups

3 Group work

As a group, you are going to perform one of the verses from *The Bogeyman*.

Think about:

- the rhythm.
- the punctuation.
- how to say the different words to make the meaning clear.
- changing the speed, if needed.
- changing the volume, if needed.

Write your ideas down and practise the verse aloud.

CS Scanned with CamScanner Use these notes when you perform.

This is for all groups

4 Writing descriptive language

1 Draw a quick sketch of a strange place. It could be:

- an underworld kingdom
- a mad inventor's workshop
- a witch's kitchen
- a dragon's cave
- a fairytale castle
- a house made of sweets.

Or it could be another strange place from your own imagination.

2 Label your sketch with well-chosen words and phrases (like the ones you have read in the poems).

3 Use your picture to write a few lines from a poem. You could:

- copy the structure of *The Bogeyman* and write a poem with rhythm and rhyme.
- copy the style of *The Magician's Attic* and write a poem with no rhythm or rhyme.

4 Share your lines with a friend. Give each other advice about how to make them better.

Remember!

- Use interesting adjectives for description.
- Similes will help the reader to picture the scene.
- Alliteration will add to the rhythm of the poem.
- Choose descriptions that appeal to the senses – what we see, hear and smell.