

Thursday 30th April 2020

What to do today:

1. Read the first part of the poem 'Skimbleshanks'
 - How easy is it to read?
 - Underline any tricky vocabulary.
 - Can you practise reading so that you can find the rhythm of the poem?
2. Listen to two performances of the poem.
 - Play the first part of each of these performances. Follow the words as you do.
 - What are some of the differences between the two performances?
 - Which do you prefer? Why?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLEEEHj6e_Y

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKY5ag8qhlQ>

3. Practise parentheses
 - Use the Revision Card to remind yourself about commas, brackets and dashes for parentheses.
 - Complete Skimbleshanks Sentences 1, 2 and 3. They get harder, so challenge yourself to keep going!

1. Skimbleshanks – Part 1

There's a whisper down the line at 11.39
When the Night Mail's ready to depart,
Saying "Skimble where is Skimble has he gone to hunt the thimble?
We must find him or the train can't start."
All the guards and all the porters and the stationmaster's daughters
They are searching high and low,
Saying "Skimble where is Skimble for unless he's very nimble
Then the Night Mail just can't go." At 11.42 then the signal's nearly due
And the passengers are frantic to a man -
Then Skimble will appear and he'll saunter to the rear:
He's been busy in the luggage van!
He gives one flash of his glass-green eyes
And the signal goes "All Clear!"
And we're off at last for the northern part
Of the Northern Hemisphere!
You may say that by and large it is Skimble who's in charge
Of the Sleeping Car Express.
From the driver and the guards to the bagmen playing cards
He will supervise them all, more or less.
Down the corridor he paces and examines all the faces
Of the travellers in the First and the Third;
He establishes control by a regular patrol



And he'd know at once if anything occurred.
 He will watch you without winking and he sees what you are thinking
 And it's certain that he doesn't approve
 Of hilarity and riot, so the folk are very quiet
 When Skimble is about and on the move.
 You can play no pranks with Skimbleshanks!
 He's a Cat that cannot be ignored;
 nothing goes wrong on the Northern Mail
 When Skimbleshanks is aboard.

By TS Eliot


2. Revision Cards

Parenthesis

- Parenthesis is **extra information** added into a complete sentence.
- The original sentence makes sense without it.
- The extra information can be separated using **commas, brackets or dashes**.

Skimbleshanks is indispensable to the railway. (complete sentence)

Skimbleshanks, an ever reliable character, is indispensable to the railway. (extra added information)




Commas

Commas are used often – they do not draw much attention to the extra information and hardly break up the sentence at all.

Everyone looked for Skimbleshanks around the station. (complete sentence)

Everyone looked for Skimbleshanks, the cat of the railway train, around the station. (extra added information)




Brackets

Brackets are used to draw more attention to the additional information. The reader knows that they are being told something extra.

The eyes of Skimbleshanks are always watching. (complete sentence)

The eyes of Skimbleshanks (whose attention is complete) are always watching. (extra added information)

The writer might want to draw attention to important or funny extra information.
Skimbleshanks (who likes a drop of whisky in his tea) never stops watching.




Dashes

Dashes are commonly used in informal writing. They break up the sentence more than commas or brackets, and therefore draw attention to the extra information.

We started to behave when we saw old Skimbleshanks coming towards us! (complete sentence)

We started to behave when we saw old Skimbleshanks – that terror of the train – coming towards us! (extra added information)



3. Skimbleshanks Sentences 1

- Add information to these sentences, using parenthesis.
- Put the extra information in the place marked with an arrow.
- Choose punctuation to make your addition clear.
- There are suggestions (underneath) of phrases to add.
- Be careful, because these suggestions are in the wrong order.

1. The train ↑ was ready at 11.39.
2. Nobody knew where Skimbleshanks ↑ had gone.
3. Everybody ↑ searched hard for him.
4. The passengers ↑ grew frantic.
5. Skimble appeared and walked ↑ to the back of the train.

Suggested Phrases

- sauntering calmly
- who were waiting inside the train
- the cat of the railway train
- which was full of passengers
- even the stationmaster's daughters

3. Skimblehanks Sentences 2

- Add information to these sentences using parenthesis.
- You will have to decide where to put the extra information.
- Choose punctuation to make your addition clear.
- There are suggestions (underneath) of phrases to add. They are in the right order.

1. Skimblehanks gave a flash of his eyes to set the train going.
2. The driver watched for the signal then started the journey
3. The train was travelling to the north through the night
4. Everybody respects Skimblehanks.
5. Skimblehanks patrols the corridors

Suggested Phrases

glass-green and bright
in order to be safe
to Scotland
drivers, guards and bagmen
establishing control as he goes

3. Skimblehanks Sentences 3

- Add information to these sentences, using parenthesis.
- You will have to decide what extra information to add and where, in the sentence, to add it.
- Choose punctuation to make your addition clear.

1. Skimblehanks can see what you are thinking.
2. Everybody stays very quiet.
3. Pranks are not allowed.
4. Ignoring Skimblehanks is not possible.
5. Nothing goes wrong on the Northern Mail.

Make up some sentences (including parenthesis) of your own about Skimblehanks.

Email me for any support or feedback! ☺

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