



# *THE DEMON HEADMASTER*

## *Chapter five*

Assembly - keep out

When you have read the first section of this chapter (pages 39 to 42) answer these questions in sentences:

1. What were Ian, Mandy and Ingrid doing in the first paragraph? What do you notice about their behaviour compared with the behaviour of the rest of the pupils in the school?
2. For what reason is Harvey convinced that the pupils in the Hall are not watching a film? (page 40)
3. What was the prefects' usual reaction when they were asked something unexpected? (Page 40)
4. Quote the words on page 41 in which the Headmaster is compared to a bird. In your opinion, why does Gillian Cross choose *this* particular bird at *this* particular moment?
5. "He did not look back. If he had, he would have seen Jeff slide out from behind a tall bookcase beyond the Hall doors and stare after him with a gloating smile on his face."
  - a) What was Jeff doing behind a tall bookcase?
  - b) What two words tell you that Jeff was pleased at what he saw and knew that he could bet Harvey into trouble?

In this section Gillian Cross tries to give the reader some idea of the possibilities for minor disobedience that were open to the pupils like Lloyd and Harvey. Make a list of the ways in which Harvey was "naughty" both in thought and action and then add a few of your own. Try to be *really* creative.

**PF5/1**



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## *Chapter five*

### Assembly - keep out

When you have read the first section of this chapter (pages 39 to 42) answer these questions in sentences:

1. What were Ian, Mandy and Ingrid doing in the first paragraph? How does this confirm that they were different from the rest of the pupils in the school?
2. For what reason is Harvey convinced that the pupils in the Hall are not watching a film?
3. What was the prefects' usual reaction when they were asked something unexpected?
4. Quote the words on page 41 in which the Headmaster is compared to a bird. In your opinion why does Gillian Cross choose *this* particular bird at *this* particular moment?
5. What evidence is there on page 42 that the prefects regularly snooped on the pupils at the school?

In this section Gillian Cross tries to give the reader some idea of the possibilities for minor disobedience that were open to the pupils like Lloyd and Harvey. Make a list of the ways in which Harvey was "naughty" both in thought and action and then add a few of your own. Try to be *really* creative.

**PH5/1**



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When you have read pages 42 to 47 you will see that the relationships between the three children are now rather more complicated. As he was before, Lloyd is unpleasant to Dinah. This is largely because he sees her as a threat to his and Harvey's relatively peaceful life which he has worked so hard to achieve and maintain. Furthermore Harvey is polite and helpful to Dinah. (His words "So you can't have seen a film. You're lying." are simply the honest truth as seen by an eight-year old boy.) However Dinah becomes a threat to them.

Firstly she is much more aggressive towards Harvey. She tries to insult and to intimidate him and she succeeds. This is her way of attempting to find out the truth. Secondly she is flatly denying something even though they both know it happened (because Harvey saw it). Thirdly she has clearly changed in some way that they do not understand.

Get into groups of three or four - no more, no less.

At an ordinary high school a sum of money has been stolen from a bag left in a corridor.

- One of you is a teacher investigating the theft.
- The second is a pupil called Chris who has been falsely accused of the theft.
- The third is another pupil called Sam who took the money, as Chris knows.

The teacher is under pressure from the Headteacher (the fourth member of your group, if there is one) to find the culprit so the questioning of the two suspects (either together or singly or both, as you wish) is intense. Chris's difficulty is that Sam is a close relative - a cousin perhaps - so there is reluctance on Chris's part both for the truth to get out and for the original accusation to stick.

A few points for you to consider before you start:

1. Why had Sam taken the money?
  - to pay off some bullies?
  - to buy an important birthday present?
  - to buy a vital piece of equipment or kit for an important event?
2. What were Sam's feelings when Chris was being wrongfully accused?
  - guilt?
  - bewilderment?
3. Why exactly was Chris reluctant for the blame to fall where it belonged?
  - good nature?
  - fear?
4. Why was the Headteacher pressuring the teacher?
  - a forthcoming school inspection?
  - a lot of thefts lately?

**PHF5/2**



# THE DEMON HEADMASTER

## Chapter six

### Snow

1. Describe snow to a 12-year-old from Brazil who has never seen it.
2. Make up a list of ten things that snow is good for. Here are two to start with:
  1. Putting into your brother's wellies before he puts them on.
  2. Cooling down your tea.
3. The word *snow* is a good one to use to make up some really corny jokes. It looks and sounds a bit like words beginning with *no-* and with *so-*.



For example:

Why is it difficult to play cricket in the Arctic Circle? *You keep bowling snowballs.*

What month is it all year round in the Arctic? *Snowvember.*

4. Try to make up a few of your own. Start by answering these questions by using one of the hints in italics below.
  - a. Where does an Eskimo read about the next jumble sale?
  - b. Who are the most popular female singing group in the Arctic Circle?
  - c. Who saved all the Arctic animals?
  - d. What are an Eskimo's favourite sweets?
  - *Use a version of the word "notice" in the reply.*
  - *Ask your teacher or your parents about the Nolan Sisters.*
  - *He did it with an ark.*
  - *Use a version of "opal fruits" in your answer.*



5. In your exercise book draw *in pencil* an outline of a snowflake. It should take up about half a page and can be as complicated or as simple as you wish, but remember that it must have six points and have a regular pattern. Then in your book write down a few sentences - thirty words should be enough - about why you like snow. When you're happy with them write them *in pencil* around the outside edge of your drawing. If there aren't enough words make up some more and if there are too many rub some out. Now go over the words in ink and rub out the pencil lines. You should be left with your very own shape poem. Try another, but this time write about why your granny does not like snow.

**PHF6**