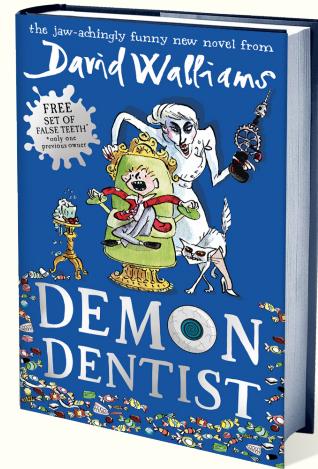


David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY ONE

I am an active reader. I can make predictions by reading pictures and text

The opening of *Demon Dentist*:

The reader is introduced to a menacing first picture:



- a) Why do you think all the doors and shutters are closed?

Answer: _____

- b) What effect does the shadow have on you?

Answer: _____

This warning follows:

**BEWARE.
THIS IS A
HORROR STORY.**

Now read the Prologue

Darkness had come to the town. Strange things were happening in the dead of night. Children would put a tooth under their pillow at bedtime, excitedly waiting for the tooth fairy to leave a coin. In the morning they would wake up to find something unspeakable under there. A dead slug. A live spider. Hundreds and hundreds of earwigs creeping and crawling beneath their pillow. Or worse. Much worse... Someone or something had come into their bedrooms in the hours of darkness, snatched the tooth and left a blood-curdling calling card behind.

Evil was at work.

But who or what was behind it?

How could they sneak into children's bedrooms without being seen?

And what could they possibly want with all those teeth...?

We read in the Prologue:

'**Strange things** are happening'

'They ... find **something unspeakable**'

'**Someone or something** had come into their bedrooms'

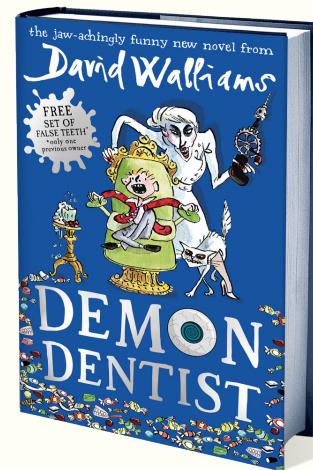
Why do **these particular phrases** add more mystery to what is happening in the town?

Task: Think about this early build up to the story you are about to read. Then write six sentences predicting what you think may happen in this story.

Top Tip! You may want to ask the class why the film title 'The Thing' seems more scary than 'The Fly' (mystery, suspense, fear of the unknown etc)

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY TWO

I can respond imaginatively to what I have read and write imaginatively, focusing on creative uses of language and on how to interest the reader



The madcap chase

While reading the delicious madcap pursuit of Alfie on pages 180-187, your teacher might download and play the 'Yakety Sax' music associated with such chases to add to the sense of movement and the increasing size of the crowd.

Questions:

In the line of chasers, who do you think is:

- 1) the most bizarre? _____
- 2) the most unexpected? _____
- 3) the most threatening? _____
- 4) the most agile? _____
- 5) the least agile? _____

Other Chases

In the book *The Great Gracie Chase: Stop that Dog*, painters, neighbours and garbage men chase Gracie and ultimately the whole town joins in.

In the book *Burger Boy*, Benny is chased across the countryside by a mob of hungry dogs, boys and angry cows. The painters, the neighbours, and the garbage man all run after her.

In the film 'A Town called Panic' there is a madcap chase that sees Cowboys, Indians and horses

chasing thieves into forests, under the earth and across the arctic wastes.

Task: Beginning at the first stage of a chase that tells your reader who or what is being chased and why, describe a really madcap chase in no more than 300 words. Think carefully about who joins in. The following words used by David Walliams in *Demon Dentist* could be useful:

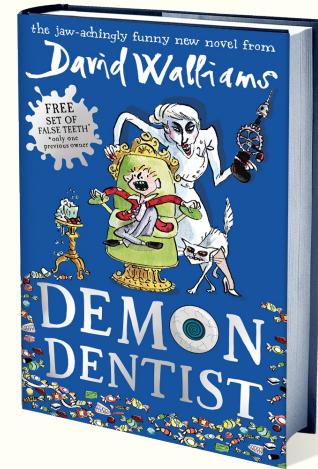
trampled commotion brandishing
stampede pursued

Use a Thesaurus to find even more useful words.

My Madcap Chase

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY THREE

I can identify and comment on the organisation of texts, including multimodality

David Walliams' book, *Demon Dentist*, is presented as a **multimodal text** because it combines images, words and sounds. We therefore have to give a proper focus to all of the elements on each page.

The author has chosen this style of layout to make his story more dynamic. For example, he aims to capture lots of visual support for his story and lots of emphasis, shouting, strong feelings and loud noises. To achieve this, one of the things he does is use a **wide range of font sizes** to add weight to certain words.

For example:

AAAAAAA
AAAAAAA
RRRRRRRRRG
GGGGGGGGHH
HHHHHHH!

This strong mass of letters **expresses terrible fear**

STOP HIM, OFFICER

The large capital letters make this spoken command very **strong and urgent**.

DING!

With the emphasis on the first and last letter, this **mimics a specific noise** – a bell.

"IMPRO!"

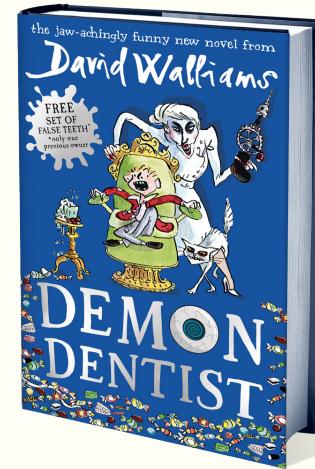
This robust shout **intensifies the instruction** given by Mr Snood for his class to follow a drama technique.

Task: Collect and write out more varied examples of David Walliams' use of large, bold font and write alongside each one what he achieves just as you see in the examples.

Example of varying font size in <i>Demon Dentist</i>	What does the author achieve?

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY FOUR: MAKING COMPARISONS

I am an active and critical reader

Read the author's description of two key settings in *Demon Dentist*:
The Dental Surgery and The Witch's Cave.

A: The Dental Surgery

Alfie's eyes darted **around the room**. The surgery was quite bare. A dental certificate took pride of place **on the wall**, but the paper and the writing looked like they could be hundreds of years old. **Pristine medicine cabinets lined the surgery**, most holding tubes of Miss Root's highly toxic toothpaste. **In the corner of the room** was a long shiny grey metal cylinder, no doubt containing nitrous oxide or 'laughing gas', often used by dentists on their patients to take away the pain. Curiously, **on the dial** was what looked like a speedometer. It read:

SLOW
MEDIUM
FAST
VERY FAST
REALLY TOO FAST
OH MY WORD MAKE THIS THING STOP NOW

The **surgery windows** were all painted black, so no one could see in or out. "I'll take good care of you..." incanted the dentist. Miss Root pulled a lever somewhere behind the headrest of the reclining chair. **In an instant, metal cuffs emerged, holding Alfie's hands and feet in place.**

B: The Witch's Cave

Dominating the cave was an **impossibly long table**, but there were no chairs **around it**. It was white, and looked more like an altar you would see in a church.

A plate and a number of goblets **adorned the table**. All of them white. There was a huge white

chandelier **hanging down from the ceiling**. It held hundreds upon hundreds of candles. **On the walls** there were mosaics, in the shapes of what looked like prehistoric letters, or some kind of code. Alfie had seen something similar in pictures of the pyramid tombs of ancient Egypt, called hieroglyphics. **On one side of the cave** sat a huge imposing throne. This again was white.

The throne looked big enough for a giant. It was so tall it reached the ceiling of the cavern.

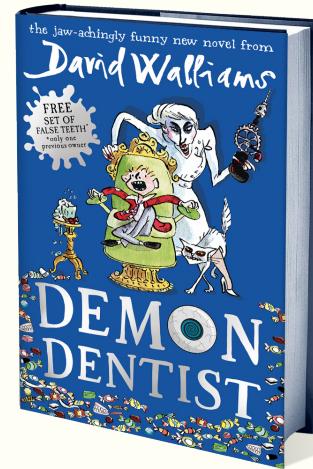
Was this some kind of temple?

Or a tomb?

To write a good description of a place you want to imagine moving your reader's eyes from one thing to another thing or from one section of the place to another section. This makes your writing more interesting. David Walliams does this in both descriptions of the Surgery and the Cave.

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY FOUR: MAKING COMPARISONS

continued

Task: Work on one text at a time and complete the lines of movement below by adding each object that the author draws the readers' attention to.

Text A: The whole room > the wall > the cabinets

Text B: The long table > the chairs > the plate and goblets

Question: See how many contrasts and how many similarities you can find between Text A and Text B.

Similarities	Contrasts
Both rooms had wall hangings - mosaics and the dental certificate	The dental chair is reclining so it lies low, whereas the ultra-tall throne reaches the ceiling.

1. Both passages end with a shock for Alfie

'In an instant, metal cuffs emerged, holding Alfie's hands and feet in place'

&

'Was this some kind of temple? Or a tomb?'

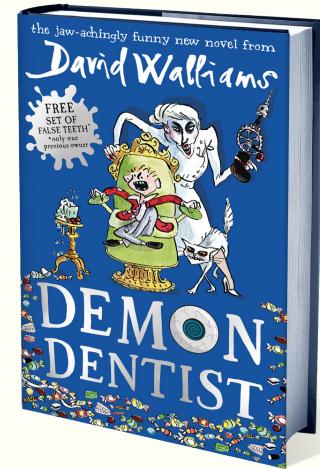
The first is a physical shock and the second is a shocking idea he has that he had strayed into a hidden burial chamber housing the remains of the dead.

2. Which do you think is the worst and most scary shock? Give a reason for your choice.

Which of these two very good descriptions do you like the best? Make a list of all the things that appeal to you in your chosen description with examples, whether it is certain words, images you like, how the writer appeals to your senses, the build up of tension or anything else you can think of.

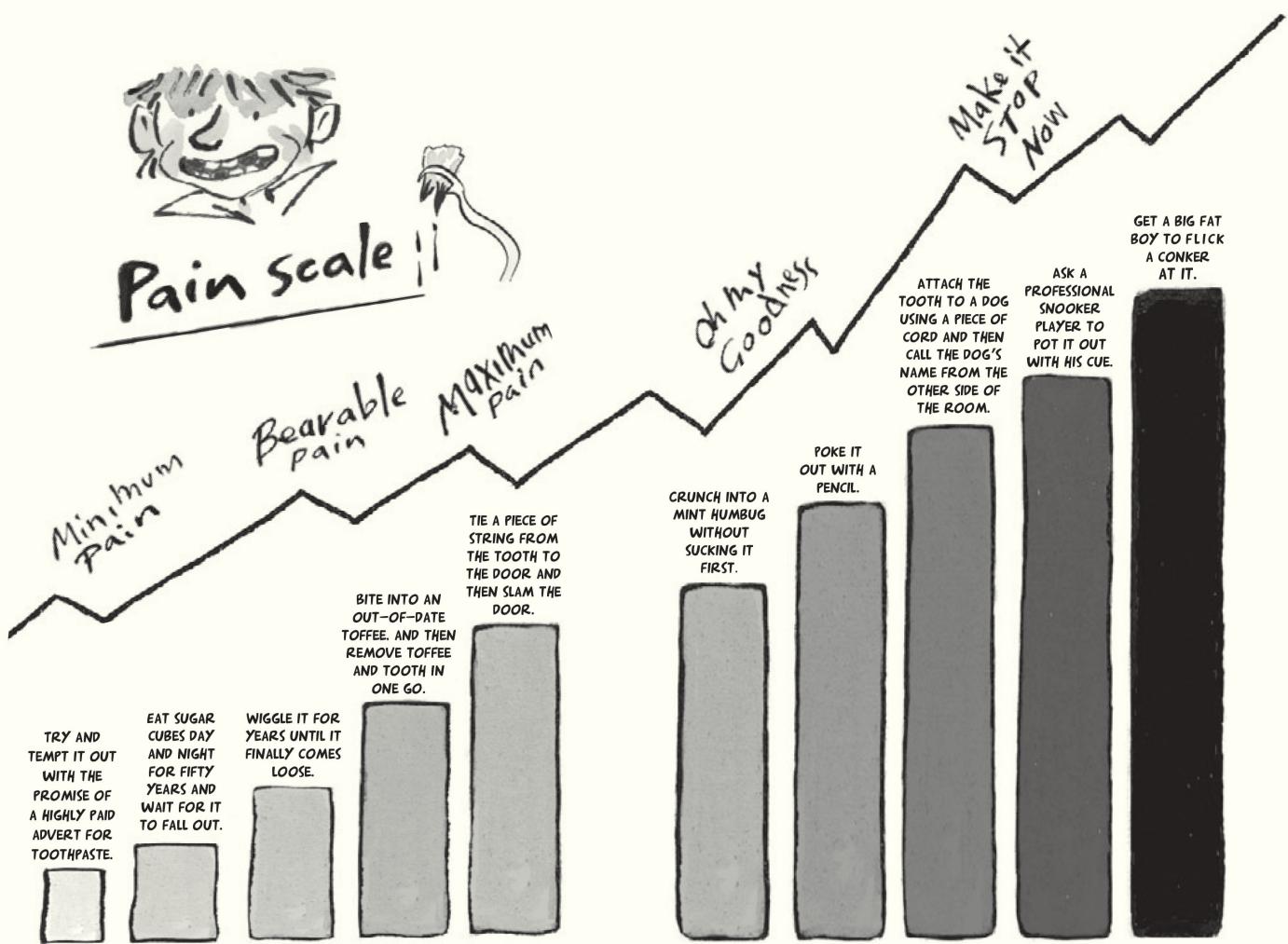
David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY FIVE

David Walliams offers a sliding scale of pain for removing a tooth.



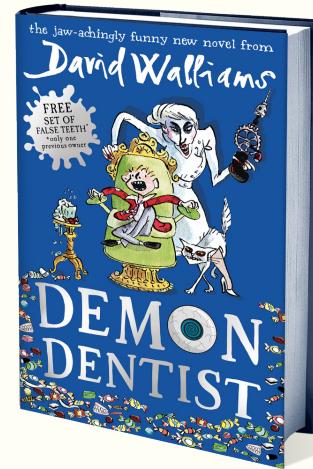
Task: Can you add in your own ideas to David Walliams' sliding scale of pain? Can you make your ideas funny like the author does? Think of more and more bizarre and interesting injuries!

Top tip! Think about paper cuts, a bitten lip, grazes, bruises, all the way up to a broken leg(!) and then try to make the circumstances funny.

For example: I fell over my cat onto a folded newspaper and got a really bad paper cut on my nose!

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY SIX

I am an active and critical reader.



Villain's profile

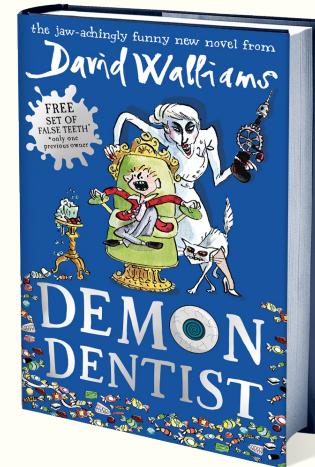
Task 1: Complete the character profile for Miss Root. Try to use a quotation from the story to support each of your points.

Physical characteristics	This suggests
'The dentist spoke in a singsong manner, as if she were recounting a nursery rhyme.'	She hides her real voice with a false one that she thinks will appeal to children
Personality	This suggests
'Miss Root picked out a particularly evil-looking instrument. It was more like a spear than a dentist's implement.'	She seems to enjoy inflicting pain. She is hard and cruel. She is merciless.

Task 2: Now create a bullet point list showing three sentences that David Walliams uses to show that Miss Root is indeed a villain.

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY SEVEN

I am an active and critical reader.

The story opens with this warning:

**BEWARE.
THIS IS A
HORROR STORY.**

We therefore expect some of the below.

Task 1: Having read the book, tick any of the ingredients below that you think are in *Demon Dentist*

- a vivid setting that helps increase the tension
- convincing villain(s)
- good storyline
- torture
- plenty of screaming
- suspense to keep the reader on edge
- a good twist at the end
- believable characters
- fast-paced, action-packed story
- not too much description
- suspenseful plot

More horror ingredients

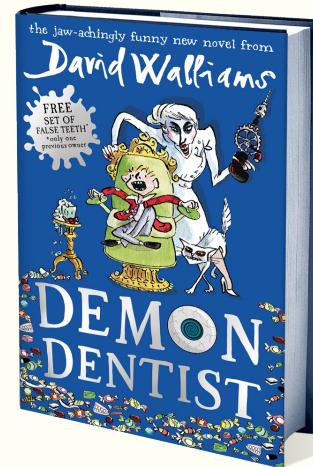
Task 2: In five sentences please tell David Walliams what you thought of his story.

Task 3: Now write three questions that you would like to email to the author.

(Example: Why did you choose to make the villain female?)

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY EIGHT

Read this extract from *Demon Dentist*:

'From their little bungalow Dad would take his son on all sorts of thrilling adventures. They would ride on magic carpets, dive under the oceans, even drive stakes through the hearts of vampires'

It was a multicoloured world of make-believe, a million miles away from their black-and-white existence.[...]

Together they:

- Went out fishing for the day in Scotland and caught the Loch Ness Monster.
- Climbed the Himalayan Mountains and came face-to-face with the Abominable Snowman.
- Slew a huge fire-breathing dragon.
- Hid aboard a pirate ship and were forced to walk the plank as stowaways, only to be saved by beautiful mermaids
- Rubbed a magic lamp and met a genie who gave them three wishes each, although dad gave all his wishes to his son.
- Rode on the back of Pegasus, the winged horse from Greek mythology.
- Climbed up a stalk to Giant Land and met an extremely hungry Cyclops whose perfect idea of a between-meals snack was a scrawny little twelve-year-old boy, so Dad had to save him.

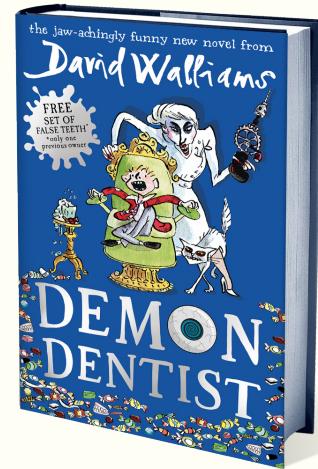
- Became the first ever father and son team to successfully land on the moon in a home-made rocket.
- Were chased across the misty moors at night by a ferocious werewolf.

This was the world of the imagination. Anything was possible in Dad's and Alfie's adventures. Nothing could stop them. Nothing.'

Task: Using books and/or the internet, can you research the Abominable Snowman, dragons, Pegasus, mermaids, genies and Cyclops? What can you find out about them?

David Walliams

DEMON DENTIST



ACTIVITY NINE

Faced with a dreaded dental appointment Alfie says:

"Don't worry, I can easily get the bus there myself from school tomorrow afternoon."

The town's bus service had a long-standing reputation for being unreliable. Of course, Alfie had no intention of going anywhere near the dentist, and with the bus service being what it was, he would have a long list of possible excuses as to why he didn't make his appointment.'

The fattest man in the world stepped on to the bus and it toppled over on to its side.

I got on the wrong bus, one which was actually being used by a motorcycle display team to jump over.

The driver went the wrong way and the bus got stuck under a low bridge.

A group of scientists then had to miniaturise it so it could get on its way, and of course this took time, as they had to invent the miniaturisation machine first.

The bus was delayed for hours as it stopped at the zoo and a waddle of penguins tried to get on, but none of them had the right change and the driver became quite irate.

Task: Can you compete with Alfie and his ingenious and fantastical excuses?

Either create excuses for not tidying your bedroom or for not taking the dog for a walk or for missing an appointment. Write a title to show which one you have chosen

Title: _____
