

By Roald DAHL

1. Read the beginning of this short story by Roald Dahl, down to "from neglect" (l.47). Read the whole passage even if there are words or sentences you do not understand. Then answer the following questions.

A. What do we learn at the beginning of the story ?

It is about:

1. a young man who is looking for a pub in London.
2. a young man who is looking for a place to stay in Bath.
3. a young man who is cold and tired because of a long train journey.

Billy has come there:

1. to make new friends.
2. to take on a new job.
3. to find lodgings.

The houses along the street:

1. are in good condition.
2. are no longer lived in.
3. are in need of repair.

The weather was most likely:

- | | | | |
|----------|--------|---------|----------|
| 1. rainy | 2. hot | 3. cold | 4. foggy |
|----------|--------|---------|----------|

B. List all the information you are given about Billy:

- Name: _____
- Age: _____
- Job: _____
- Place of work: before: _____ now: _____
- Any further information ? _____

C. Match the following expressions and what they refer to:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| a. The Bell and Dragon (l.12) | (A) the principal office of a business. |
| b. The Head Office (l.20) | (B) the director of a subdivision of the same business. |
| c. The Branch Manager (l.23-24) | (C) a pub. |

D. Can you infer the meaning and word-class (e.g. adjective, verb, preposition ...?) of the following words and expressions ? What elements in the context helped you find out ?

WORDS/EXPRESSIONS	WORD-CLASS	MEANING
settled (l.25)		
briskly (l.29)		
big shots (l.33)		
swanky (l.42)		

2. Now continue reading in the same way, down to "He turned to go" (l.89). Then answer the following questions.

A. Find the main information you learn in this passage.

The bed and breakfast place:

1. looks lovely and comfortable.
2. has too much furniture and too many animals.
3. does not appeal to Billy.

Billy decides:

1. that a pub is better than a B&B (= Bed & Breakfast)
2. that this B&B is better.
3. that he must see The Bell and Dragon before deciding.

Billy reaches for the bell of the B&B

because:

1. he suddenly understands he will be better there.
2. he likes the letters of the words B&B.
3. he feels obliged to go there without knowing why.

B. Billy mentally compares what he knows of B&Bs and pubs. Underline:

- three of the advantages of pubs for him;
- three of the advantages of B&Bs for him.

Now look again at the paragraph in which you find this comparison and try to infer the overall meaning of the following words. What elements helped you decide ?

- congenial (l.76): _____
- darts (l.77): _____
- cabbage (l.84): _____
- kippers(l.85): _____