

The Secret Garden

Frances Hodgson Burnett

A Before Reading

- 1 The story is about a British girl, Mary, who moves from India to Yorkshire, England, in the early 1900s. What differences do you think she found between her life in India and England? Write a list of possible differences.

Differences
<i>the weather</i>

- 7 Mary goes to live with her uncle at Misselthwaite Manor, a 600-year old house with a secret garden where no-one has been for 10 years.
- a Why do you think the garden is secret? What happened there 10 years ago? What is inside the garden now?
- b Write a list of 8 words or expressions you think you will find in a story called *The Secret Garden*. As you read, look out for your words.

Example: *wall*

B While Reading

- 3 You will find lots of words about nature in the story. As you read, add words and expressions to the chart below.

Animals and birds	Trees, plants and flowers	Weather	Countryside and landscape
<i>robin</i>			

- 4 When Mary first meets Colin in the middle of the night, they have a long conversation about their lives.

"Colin wanted to know how long she had been at Misselthwaite. He asked where her room was and what she did during the day. He made her tell him all about India and her journey back to England. And Mary found out lots of things about Colin, too." (page 40)

Write this conversation between Colin and Mary.

Colin: So, how long have you been here at Misselthwaite?

Mary:...

- 5 Mary and Colin change from cross, unhappy children to healthy, happy ones. As you read, keep a record of the ways that they change.

Mary



She starts to learn to dress herself and play by herself for the first time (p13-14).

Colin



He stops crying and is in a good mood, he wants to see Mary (p44-45).

C After Reading

- 6 *"Then they sat down under the tree, and the children told him [Mr Craven] their story. They told him how Mary and Colin had met in the middle of the night. They told him about the spring coming and about their great secret."* (p69)

Imagine you are Mary and write the story that you told Mr Craven.

It all started when I heard crying in the middle of the night...

... and now it doesn't have to be a secret any more!

7



The picture shows an important moment in the story when Mary first goes through the door into the secret garden.

- a** How is Mary feeling at this moment? What is she thinking? What can she see? What does she do next?
- b** Imagine you are designing your own secret garden. Which flowers and trees would you plant where? Would you add a fountain, a waterfall, a pool or a space for barbecues? Would it be tidy or wild? Plan your garden in the box below and then write a short letter to a friend describing your garden design.

Garden plan:

Letter:

door

Dear ...

- 8** The Secret Garden is a story about angry, unhealthy children who find new happiness through nature.
- a** Look at the list below and choose the 5 things which you think are most important for happiness in life:
- Living close to nature
 - Having enough money
 - Good health
 - A close family
 - Good friends
 - Having interesting things to do in your free time
 - Love
 - Helping other people
 - A comfortable home
 - Enjoying your studies or job
- b** Would you add anything else to the list?