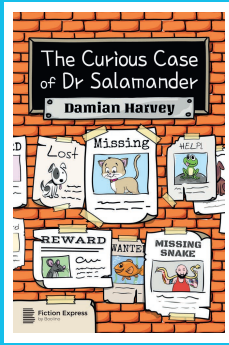


Chapter 2 · Missing Pets



Jazz and Mortimer know Dr Salamander is up to something, they just don't know what! When pets start going missing, including their own pet mouse Twitch, the twins are determined to solve the mystery.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF DR SALAMANDER

Damian Harvey

CONTENT



READ!

- **Reading comprehension questions:** 10 multiple choice questions to test text retrieval and reading comprehension. These questions may also be completed online at www.fictionexpress.co.uk
- **Guided reading:** teacher's notes and a written response worksheet comprising 6 questions which allow for deeper response to the story, looking at personal response, inference and prediction



WRITE!

- **"Inspire!" words** to encourage children to include them in their own writing
- **"Spotlight!" word list** of the words highlighted and defined online
- **Writing worksheet:** write your own story about a haunted house using one of the dramatic techniques in the chapter
- **Grammar worksheet:** plural possessive apostrophes



TALK!

- **Voting options:** discussion points for each voting option
- **Discussion activity:** perform a scene from the chapter as part of oral storytelling



EXPLORE!

- **Art activity:** draw a picture of yourself as a pet detective



Name: _____

1

What does Mrs Heckle take out of her basket?

- A. A strange key
- B. A black cat
- C. A crystal ball

2

How does Mrs Heckle find out she's being watched?

- A. Jazz sneezed very loudly
- B. Dad shouts "hello" and waves
- C. Mortimer bangs his head on the window

3

Which rooms next door does Dad say are locked?

- A. The two rooms next to the garage
- B. The loft and the cellar
- C. The two rooms without windows

4

What is Dr Salamander doing when they first see him?

- A. Walking out the front door
- B. Poking around in the bushes
- C. Climbing out the bathroom window

5

What is Dr Salamander wearing?

- A. A green boiler suit, a backpack and a red balaclava
- B. A lab coat, sunglasses and a scarf around his mouth
- C. Orange dungarees, wellington boots and a straw hat



Name: _____

6

What is Dr Salamander carrying?

- A. A fishing net
- B. A rubber ring
- C. A cat basket

7

What surprise does Jazz have when she goes to feed her mouse?

- A. Mrs Heckle is staring at Twitch through the window
- B. Dr Salamander is removing Twitch from his cage
- C. Twitch has vanished from the cage

8

What job does Mrs Hall want Jazz and Mortimer to help with?

- A. She needs someone to do her shopping
- B. She wants someone to babysit her daughter
- C. She wants the twins to help find her cat

9

What do the children see around town?

- A. Lots of posters about missing pets
- B. Lots of people wearing white lab coats
- C. Cats running around everywhere

10

Why does Jazz think that Twitch has been stolen?

- A. There are muddy footprints on the carpet
- B. The door to his cage has been broken
- C. Someone has climbed into the garden



1

Ask: What are the main events of this chapter? (Jazz and Mortimer seeing the key, Dr Salamander coming out into the garden, Jazz seeing Mrs Heckle staring at Twitch, pets going missing and finally Twitch going missing.)

Ask: What does the key look like? (a gnarly old branch) What do you think the key will open?

Ask: Why are the words 'just', 'that' and 'did' in italics? (for emphasis)

2

Ask: What do you think has happened to the pets? Agree that it looks rather like Dr Salamander has taken them.

Ask: What clues make you think this? (Mrs Heckle looking at Twitch through the window, Dr Salamander's fishing net, the disappearance of the pets shortly after his arrival, the crushed plants by the wall.)

Ask: How might the key be important? Speculate on whether it will open a door locking in the pets.

3

Ask: What does Dr Salamander look like? Agree that we don't know because he hides his face.

Ask: Why might this be? Speculate on different ideas - perhaps he is an alien or a famous footballer, or he is really Mrs Heckle. Encourage the children to come up with their own ideas.

Ask: What is he wearing? (a lab coat, a colourful scarf, dark sunglasses) Ensure the children know what a lab coat looks like.

Ask: What is he holding? (a fishing net)

4

Ask: What are the twins like? Ask the children to locate the spoken phrases that create the different characters. For example: Jazz is sure of her ideas (*What matters is the key*), determined (*We're going to find out*). Mortimer is less sure, less suspicious (*We don't know yet*) and tends to follow Jazz's lead.

Ask: Why does Dad tell the twins that there is a locked crypt in the house next door? (He is teasing them because they are being dramatic.)

5

Ask: How much time passes in this chapter? (A couple of weeks.) Ask the children to search for fronted adverbials that introduce a paragraph by introducing a new time, for example: *One morning*, *That night*, *The very next morning*, and so on. Find the paragraph that begins, *For the next couple of weeks...* Locate the alliteration of *watched and waited*. Point out how the list emphasises that nothing happened for a very long time.

6

Ask: What is going to happen next? Discuss ideas.

Ask: Do you think the pets will be found? Ask the children to find the names and descriptions of the pets that are missing, for example: Jazz's mouse Twitch, a black and white cat called Trixie, other cats, dogs, rabbits and a pet snake called Ozzy. Ask: What would you like to happen? Do you think that the twins will meet Dr Salamander?



Name: _____

1

What does the key that Mrs Heckle has look like?

2

What do you think has happened to the pets?

3

What does Dr Salamander look like?



Name: _____

4 _____

What is Jazz like? What is Mortimer like?

5 _____

Can you find and copy one fronted adverbial from this chapter?

6 _____

Can you write down the names of three pets that have gone missing?



Here is some of the challenging or potentially unfamiliar vocabulary used in chapter 2 of *The Curious Case of Dr Salamander*.

You may wish to explore this vocabulary, to improve children's understanding of the chapter, and inspire and enhance the quality of their own writing. You might like to display the words in the classroom, and encourage children to use new vocabulary as part of the Write! worksheet tasks.

disappointed

gnarly

insisted

nosy

peered

pulling
your leg

sprung

watch and
wait



Find these words in chapter 2. Use the definition to check that you understand the meaning of the sentences you find them in.

accident – an event that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, that often causes damage or harm to someone or something

alerted – warned of a danger or problem

assured – said in a way to make someone feel better

balance – when weight is evenly spread, helping you stay upright and steady

cellar – a room of a house, below ground level, often used to keep belongings in

certainly – used to highlight the speaker's belief that what they have said is true

claim – collect something that is owed, such as money or a reward

coffin – a long narrow box, often made of wood, in which a dead body is buried

convinced – sure

crooked – bent

crypt – an underground room, often beneath a church, used to bury bodies

disappeared – could no longer be seen or had gone missing

disappointed – a feeling of unhappiness about something that has happened

doctor – someone who treats people who are unwell

examined – looked at closely

exercise ball – a plastic ball in which you can put a pet, such as a mouse, and they can run about

expected – thought was likely to happen

frowned – made a scrunched up facial expression that showed unhappiness

gasp – struggled to take a breath

glaring – looking at them angrily

gnarly – another word for 'twisted' and 'knobbly', especially with age

grumbled – moaned about something

horrible – another word for 'nasty' or 'mean'

hot on her heels – following right behind her

huffed – blew out air loudly to show displeasure

impatiently – to feel annoyed and irritated about waiting for something

insisted – demanded, persisted or said confidently



interested – curious

keeping an eye on – watching

lab coat – a long white coat worn in a laboratory

loft – a room of a house, in the roof space, often used to keep belongings in

mystery – something that is difficult to understand or explain

normally – in a usual manner

nosy – showing too much interest in other people, a bit of a busybody

notices – posters in shop windows and on lamp posts that people can see easily

pacing – walking very quickly

peer – look closely at something

pet detective agency – a firm that investigates mysteries involving people's pets

presence – being in a certain place

pulling your leg – a phrase that means 'playing a joke'

raised – lifted

rattled – shook and made a noise

recently – not long ago

reminded – made someone think of something they know or they've seen before

reward – something, often money, given to say 'thank you' for helping someone

rustling – making a soft crackling sound, often by movement in dry leaves

scientist – someone who is an expert in natural or physical sciences, such as chemistry, biology and physics

search – another word for 'look for'

slamming – closing something with a loud bang

snapped – said in a cross way

solving – finding an answer to something, such as a mystery

sprang – moved or jumped suddenly forwards towards something

spying – looking closely at something or someone, collecting information and deciding how to act

squashed – crushed or squeezed

stolen – taken without permission from the owner and not returned

struggled – found it difficult

watch and wait – look out for something to happen

worried – troubled about something



Name: _____

An author uses dramatic techniques in his or her writing to build tension and suspense. Some of the dramatic techniques in this chapter are short sentences for impact, ellipses, powerful verbs and unusual character descriptions. Write a short mystery story about a haunted house. Choose a dramatic technique that is used in this chapter to build suspense and tension in your own writing.

A large rectangular area enclosed by a dashed blue border, containing ten horizontal solid black lines for writing.



Plural possessive apostrophes

Name: _____

- An apostrophe can be used to show that something belongs to someone or is connected to something, for example: *The cat's whiskers are long.*
- To make a regular plural noun (ending in -s) possessive, just add an apostrophe. So if there is more than one cat, this would be: *The cats' whiskers are long.*
- To make an irregular plural noun that does not end in 's' possessive, add an apostrophe and s, for example *The men's clothes were wet.*

Write the **plural** possessive form of the underlined words on the lines by adding an apostrophe before or after the final -s. (Remember – each underlined word is a plural.)

1. The squashed <u>flowers</u> petals are red.	_____
2. The <u>childrens</u> posters were on the lamp posts.	_____
3. The <u>neighbours</u> gardens were empty.	_____
4. The <u>twins</u> schoolbags were in the kitchen.	_____
5. The <u>parents</u> books are boring.	_____
6. The <u>clocks</u> hands are ticking.	_____
7. The <u>womens</u> race was about to begin.	_____
8. The pet <u>detectives</u> agency was called Big Bad Woof.	_____

On a separate piece of paper, make a list of your ten favourite possessions. Can you write three sentences about these belongings using plural possessive apostrophes?



What do Jazz and Mortimer have to do?

A **Knock on Dr Salamander's front door and demand to know where Twitch is hidden**

Why might Jazz and Mortimer suspect that their new, and rather odd, neighbour has taken Twitch? Have there been any clues to suggest he is stealing pets so far in the story? What do you think will happen in chapter 3 if this is the winning option?

B **Sneak into Dr Salamander's house through an open window**

Do you think sneaking into the house is a sensible thing to do? What dangers might the twins face once they climb in through the window? Is this action the right thing or the wrong thing to do? Predict what will happen in chapter 3 if this is the winning option.

C **Call the police and explain the strange goings-on next door**

What do you think the police officers will make of Jazz and Mortimer's story about Dr Salamander? Does it seem like a reasonable explanation? What else could have happened to the missing pets? What do you think will happen in chapter 3 if this is the winning option?

→ Which option do you think would be the most exciting one for the next chapter of *The Curious Case of Dr Salamander*?

Discussion Activity

Oral storytelling is an important tool for writers – it helps an author form ideas, check that what they have written makes sense and helps get the characters' dialogue right. In pairs or a small group, learn a section of the chapter and perform it to the rest of the class. Think about the characters and their voices. Do you think they might have an accent? Maybe one talks with a deep voice and the other has a squeaky high-pitched voice! As a class, discuss how each pair or group interpreted the story differently. That's the beauty of reading and writing – we each experience it differently as our imaginations are different!



Name: _____

Draw a picture of yourself as a famous pet detective. Think about any unusual clothes you might wear or belongings you might carry. For example, you might wear a hat and sunglasses and carry a briefcase. Write three spoken phrases you would say if you ever became the famous pet detective you have drawn below.

ANSWERS

READ! Comprehension

1. What does Mrs Heckle take out of her basket?
A. A strange key
2. How does Mrs Heckle find out she's being watched?
C. Mortimer bangs his head on the window
3. Which rooms next door does Dad say are locked?
B. The loft and the cellar
4. What is Dr Salamander doing when they first see him?
B. Poking around in the bushes
5. What is Dr Salamander wearing?
B. A lab coat, sunglasses and a scarf around his mouth
6. What is Dr Salamander carrying?
A. A fishing net
7. What surprise does Jazz have when she goes to feed her mouse?
A. Mrs Heckle is staring at Twitch through the window
8. What job does Mrs Hall want Jazz and Mortimer to help with?
C. She wants the twins to help find her cat
9. What do the children see around town?
A. Lots of posters about missing pets
10. Why does Jazz think that Twitch has been stolen?
C. Someone has climbed into the garden

WRITE! Worksheet: Plural possessive apostrophes

1. The squashed flowers petals are red. flowers'
2. The childrens posters were on the lamp posts. children's
3. The neighbours gardens were empty. neighbours'
4. The twins schoolbags were in the kitchen. twins'
5. The parents books are boring. parents'
6. The clocks hands are ticking. clocks'
7. The womens race was about to start. women's
8. The pet detectives agency was called Big Bad Woof. detectives'