



Chapter 1 · The Ice Giant

Everyone remembers the day the ice giant appeared. When Zara and her family visit the strange iceberg, the view bewitches her, as does the weird and wonderful garden blossoming at the top...

THE ICE GARDEN

David Macphail

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
- **Writing worksheet:** write a new story opening using the same characters but in a different setting
- **Grammar worksheet:** verbs and subjects



TALK!

- **Voting options:** discussion points for each voting option
- **Discussion activity:** give well-structured descriptions of the new setting (link to writing)



EXPLORE!

- **Activity:** book cover design



Name: _____

1

Why is everyone surprised to see an iceberg sitting on the sand?

- A. All the world's icebergs have melted
- B. No one saw the iceberg arrive
- C. The country is not cold enough for icebergs

2

Who are the first people to climb on the iceberg?

- A. Scientists
- B. The police
- C. Local children

3

What did the scientists think the green on the iceberg was?

- A. A garden
- B. Seaweed
- C. Paint

4

Why does the narrator tell us that it is 11 degrees when she arrives?

- A. To tell the reader that it is a chilly day
- B. To show the reader that she is a scientist
- C. To tell the reader that it is too warm for ice

5

What type of animal is Marcia's cuddly toy?

- A. A dog
- B. A penguin
- C. A rabbit



Name: _____

6

What plant can they smell at the top of the iceberg?

- A. Roses
- B. Ice flowers
- C. Wild garlic

7

What do the flowers do when Marcia touches them?

- A. They open out
- B. They fade away
- C. They bend down

8

What are most people on top of the iceberg doing?

- A. Picking flowers
- B. Having a picnic
- C. Looking at their phones

9

What does Zara see from the top of the iceberg?

- A. Another iceberg
- B. Pollution from a factory
- C. Thousands of people

10

How does Zara first know that Marcia has left her?

- A. She realises that she's not holding Marcia's hand anymore
- B. She notices that she's alone on top of the iceberg
- C. She sees the crushed flowers where Marcia was sitting



- 1** Read the opening sentence. Ask: What does this tell us about the ice giant? (For example: it is strange, everyone saw it, it was one of the most important things to happen in the area.) Ask: How does this make the reader feel? (For example, ready to be impressed.) Read the opening up to *...their vans and left*. Clarify the meaning of 'estuary'. Point out that *shipping vessels*, *cruise ships* and a *lighthouse* tell the reader that it is a busy port.
- 2** Ask: How does the author make the arrival of the iceberg dramatic? (For example, the contrast between the iceberg and the industrial setting, people's reactions, the helicopter and navy escort, the scientists.) Read up to *...climb to the top*. Discuss the impact of short sentences such as, *The ice was alive*. and *But it didn't*. Ask: What makes the iceberg seem magic? (It is in a strange location, plants are growing on the iceberg, it is alive and it doesn't melt.)
- 3** Ask: How long do you think the events so far have taken? (days, or perhaps even weeks) Read up to *...a walk in the hills*. Point out that time slows down as the story starts properly. Ask: Who are the main characters and what are they like? (Dad, who is in a rush, Marcia, a small girl amazed by all she sees, and Zara, the narrator who watches everything.) Read the paragraph beginning *Marcia dallied...* Discuss the things that amaze Marcia. Ask: How does Dad react? (He rushes her.)
- 4** Read up to *We'd both seen it*. Share children's experiences of smelling wild garlic, which can be found in woodlands across Europe. Ask the children to find details of the other plants on the iceberg and discuss whether the children have seen any of these growing. Ask: How is the reader made to feel about the iceberg? (Filled with wonder, to feel that the garden is magical.) Ask: What is strange about the roots? (Plants can't grow in ice.)
- 5** Ask: What happens when Marcia touches the flowers? (They bend towards her and open up.) Speculate together on why this happens. (Because she's young, because she is magical, because she'll appreciate it.) Read to the end of the chapter. Ask: What are all the other people on the iceberg doing? (Using their phones and thinking about themselves.) Ask: Why does the ancient man look at Zara? (They are both aware of how everyone else is behaving.)
- 6** Ask: What does Zara see from the top of the iceberg? (Beautiful light and mountains, but also pollution.) Ask: What do you think the theme of this story might be? (How wonderful our planet is and how we should look after it.) Ask: How is this used in the story? (Suggest that perhaps the iceberg is our planet, perhaps the author wants us to think about pollution versus the wonder of nature.)



Name: _____

1

Describe the setting of the story.

2

What are the first three things that happen to the iceberg once it stops moving?

3

What does Marcia do as she walks towards the iceberg?



Name: _____

4 _____

List three plants that grow on the iceberg.

5 _____

Why do you think the flowers open up for Marcia?

6 _____

Why do you think Zara notices the pollution from the factories?



Here is some of the challenging or potentially unfamiliar vocabulary used in chapter 1 of *The Ice Garden*.

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.

ancient

dallied

grinding
halt

peered

pungent

separated

terse

yanked



Name: _____

A good story opening has setting, action and dialogue. Reread the opening chapter of *The Ice Garden* and identify these three things. Now rewrite the opening three paragraphs of the story, keeping the characters and their dialogue but placing them in a different setting. Perhaps on a tropical island or in a bustling city!

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



Name: _____

Look at these sentences and underline the correct verb form. Don't forget this rule:
If the subject is singular, use 'was'. If the subject is plural, use 'were'.

1. But here it was / were, towering as high as a hill. On our river.
2. There was / were many other people up on the summit with us
3. Was / Were it just me who noticed it?
4. I looked frantically, this way and that, but couldn't see her anywhere.
She was / were gone.
5. Pine seedlings was / were sprouting, and crocuses and snowdrops.
6. The greenery was / were at its thickest leading into a narrow cleft in the ice.

Underline the subject of each sentence below. Is it singular or plural?
Write an 'S' or a 'P' in the box.

1. Even Marcia could manage it without help.
2. They came in droves to stand and stare.
3. The scientists thought it was seaweed at first.
4. We tramped across the sand.
5. Dad dragged her along.



What should Zara do next?

A

Ask the ancient man

Do you think this is the right thing to do? Does the ancient man seem trustworthy? Why do you think he might know where Marcia went? Look back through the chapter for clues. (He is observant.) What do you think will happen in chapter 2 if this is the winning option?

B

Go back down the steps

Do you think Zara will leave her sister on top of the ice and go back down the iceberg? Reread the chapter for character clues. Does she seem like someone who would be afraid or is she someone who would do anything for her sister?

C

Seek her through the archway

Why might Marcia have gone through the archway? Look back through the chapter for clues. Do you think the place on the other side of archway is dangerous? Why or why not? Predict what will happen in chapter 2 if this is the winning option.

→ Which option do you think would be the most exciting one for the next chapter of *The Ice Garden*?

Discussion Activity

In pairs or a small group, read your new story openings to each other. Discuss the different settings you have created. What was the hardest thing about writing your new openings? What elements were easier to write and why? Are these the parts of your writing that you think work the best? Do your friends agree? What similarities and differences are there between your story openings? How do you think the change of setting has altered the narrative of the story?



Name: _____

Now that you have read the chapter, have a go at designing your own cover for the book, or for the new story opening that you wrote about in your WRITE! worksheet. Remember to think about the story setting, the main characters we've met so far and the atmosphere of the opening paragraphs.



READ! Comprehension

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Why is everyone surprised to see an iceberg sitting on the sand?
C. The country is not cold enough for icebergs | 6. What plant can they smell at the top of the iceberg?
C. Wild garlic |
| 2. Who are the first people to climb on the iceberg?
A. Scientists | 7. What do the flowers do when Marcia touches them?
A. They open out |
| 3. What did the scientists think the green on the iceberg was?
B. Seaweed | 8. What are most people on top of the iceberg doing?
C. Looking at their phones |
| 4. Why does the narrator tell us that it is 11 degrees when she arrives?
C. To tell the reader that it is too warm for ice | 9. What does Zara see from the top of the iceberg?
B. Pollution from a factory |
| 5. What type of animal is Marcia's cuddly toy?
B. A penguin | 10. How does Zara first know that Marcia has left her?
A. She realises that she's not holding Marcia's hand anymore |

READ! Guided reading response answers

1. For example: An estuary with a port that is busy with container vessels and cruise ships. There are factories and a lighthouse on the land.
2. People look at it, scientists study it, it is on the television.
3. She stops to study what happens to her footprints, she looks at the patterns on the sand.
4. Wild garlic, pine saplings, crocuses, snowdrops, grass, ivy.
5. Perhaps because they know she'll like it, perhaps because she has the most wonder for nature, perhaps because she is so young.
6. Perhaps because she has been looking at so many beautiful sights, such as the iceberg and the light.

WRITE! Worksheet: Verbs and subjects

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. But here it was towering as high as a hill. On our river. | 1. Even <u>Marcia</u> could manage it without help. |
| 2. There were many other people up on the summit with us | 2. <u>They</u> came in droves to stand and stare. |
| 3. Was it just me who noticed it? | 3. The <u>scientists</u> thought it was seaweed at first. |
| 4. I looked frantically, this way and that, but couldn't see her anywhere. She was gone. | 4. <u>We</u> tramped across the sand. |
| 5. Pine seedlings were sprouting, and crocuses and snowdrops. | 5. <u>Dad</u> dragged her along. |
| 6. The greenery was at its thickest leading into a narrow cleft. | |

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