

READING ACTIVITY

1/4

THE SECRET OF THE STONES

Read the excerpt and do the activities below.

Mr Carter and Mrs Black

The cottage is big. There are four bedrooms and two bathrooms upstairs. Downstairs there is a big kitchen, a living room and a study. Uncle Stephen wants to use the study. He must finish some work during the holiday.

Uncle Stephen is a historian. 'What does Uncle Stephen do exactly?' Laura asks. Her mother replies, 'He studies history.'

Max is confused. 'But I study history too...at school...but it's not my job!'

'Yes, but Uncle Stephen writes books about history. He thinks about history. He tries to understand the things that no one understands.'

'For example?' asks Laura. 'Well,' Mum replies, 'for example, the mystery of Stonehenge.'

'So, what about Stonehenge? What is its mystery?'

'No one really knows. Ask Uncle Stephen. Tomorrow we can go to see it.'

Suddenly there is a knock at the door. Mum opens it and an old man comes in. He has white hair and an angry face. 'My name's Carter,' he says in an angry voice. 'I look after this cottage. Is everything OK? There is wood for the fire in the garden. There are sheets and pillows upstairs. If you have a problem, tell me. Have you got any problems?'

Now Mum remembers. Yes, Mr Carter is the caretaker. He looks after the cottage when no one is staying in it.

'Thank you Mr Carter. It's very kind of you, but we have no problems.'

Mr Carter wants a problem to solve so he is not very happy. He goes to the door. Then he stops suddenly, turns around and looks at them. 'Mrs Black is coming,' he says. 'Mrs Black is coming soon. Be careful!' he opens the door and goes out. 'What?' asks Mum.

'Who is Mrs Black?' asks Max.

'And why "be careful"? Is she dangerous?' asks Aunty Barbara.

'Probably a witch from Stonehenge,' says Laura. Everyone laughs.

'Don't talk about things you don't understand!' says Uncle Stephen.

There is another knock at the door. They all stop. There is silence in the room.

Max opens the door. No one speaks.

'Hello everyone,' says a happy voice. A woman comes into the cottage. She is quite old, fat but she is pretty. She has blue eyes, silver earrings and a big pink face.

'Hello! My name's Mrs Black.'

Mrs Black is a housekeeper: she helps with the cooking and the cleaning.

When a family comes for a holiday in the cottage, she helps them. She lives in a different cottage in the village with her son.



(From Chapter 3)



READING ACTIVITY

2/4

ACTIVITIES

1 Choose the correct answer—a, b or c.

1. The cottage has

- a. three bedrooms.
- b. four bathrooms.
- c. is big.

2. Uncle Stephen

- a. teaches history.
- b. writes books about history.
- c. sells history books.

3. Mr Carter has white hair

- a. but he is not old.
- b. and he is happy and friendly.
- c. and he is the caretaker.

4. Mrs Black is

- a. the housekeeper.
- b. a friend of Aunty Barbara.
- c. a witch.

5. Mrs Black lives in the village

- a. with her cat.
- b. with her son.
- c. with her husband.



READING ACTIVITY

3/4



2 Are the following sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false ones.

1. The living room and the study are upstairs. T F
2. Uncle Stephen must do some work during the holiday. T F
3. No one really knows the mystery of Stonehenge. T F
4. Mr Carter does not want to solve problems. T F
5. Mrs Black helps with the cleaning and the cooking. T F

