

LISTENING ACTIVITY

1/3



FLUSH

1  Listen to the audio and complete the text. Choose the word/s from the basket below.

- fixed • gentle • characteristics • forehead • historians • aristocratic • nonsense • curled • existed • chased

Many years ago, before humans 1 _____, the world was full of trees and plants. And where there are plants, often there is grass; and where there is grass, there are rabbits; and where there are rabbits, there are dogs to chase the rabbits. At some point in history, we know that the dogs that 2 _____ the rabbits became known as 'spaniels', but the reasons for this are not so certain. Let us start then with the land of Spain. Some 3 _____ say that as the rabbits dashed here and there across the fields people used to shout 'Span!Span!', because span is the old Spanish word for rabbit. So the land became known as Espana, or 'rabbit land'. And the dogs, with their long fur and their long ears, were known as spaniels. Others say that this is 4 _____ Espana, they say, comes from a northern word meaning 'border'. It has nothing to do with romantic ideas about rabbits or dogs. However, let's not become 5 _____ on a name. Most people agree that the spaniel is called a spaniel because it is from Spain. A fact of much greater importance is that a spaniel was not just any dog. The spaniel was a distinguished dog. It had its place by the king's side. And when a dog is distinguished there are rules. His eyes should not be too light in colour. His ears must be long and straight and not 6 _____. He should be intelligent and 7 _____. He should have a wide 8 _____ to show the size of his incredible brain. For a spaniel, these qualities mean everything. Our story begins with the family of the Mitfords. Doctor Mitford came from a long line of the 9 _____ family of the Mitfords of Bertram Castle in the far North of England. His wife, meanwhile, was the daughter of the Duke of Bedford. However, if Doctor Mitford had been judged in the same way as a spaniel, he would not have had many good 10 _____. His eyes were light, his ears were curled, his forehead was shallow. In terms of his character, he drank and ate too much, and he lost most of his money on gambling. In short, he was selfish and dishonest. Despite this, he did have one good quality. He loved dogs.

(from Chapter One – Three Mile Cross)



LISTENING ACTIVITY

2/3



2 Circle the correct word to complete the sentence.

1. 'Span' was the old Spanish word for *rabbit/dog*.
2. A dog called a spaniel comes from *Northern England /Spain*.
3. A spaniel's wide forehead shows *the size of his brain/his good sense of smell*.
4. A spaniel's eyes should *not be too light in colour/be light in colour*.
5. A spaniel's ears must be *long and curled/straight and not curled*.
6. Doctor Mitford came from *an aristocratic Spanish family/a family of Bertram Castle*.
7. Doctor Mitford lost most of his money on *bad business dealings/gambling*.
8. Doctor Mitford *disliked dogs/loved dogs*.

