

The Playground Fell Silent

The headmaster, Mr Hawtrey, hated children. Actually, he hated everybody, probably even himself. He wore an immaculate three-piece grey suit, with a charcoal-coloured tie and dark-framed glasses. His hair was meticulously combed and parted, and he had a thin, black moustache. It was as if he actively wanted to look sinister. And he had a face that someone who has spent their whole life grimacing ends up with. A permanently grimacing one.

“He might not be in his office,” ventured Darvesh hopefully.

“Maybe,” said Dennis, gulping.

At that moment the headmaster’s face peered out of the window. “SCHOOL!”

104 he bellowed. The playground fell silent.



Quick Questions

1. Find and copy one adjective in the text that describes the headmaster’s appearance.

2. What does the word ‘hopefully’ tell us about how the character feels in the following sentence?
“He might not be in his office,” ventured Darvesh hopefully.

3. What colour were Mr Hawtrey’s trousers?

4. Number the events 1-4 to show the order that they happen in the text.

Mr Hawtrey looked out through the window.

Darvesh spoke to Dennis.

Silence fell over the playground

Dennis gulped.

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Answers

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sinister

2. What does the word ‘hopefully’ tell us about how the character feels in the following sentence?
“He might not be in his office,” ventured Darvesh hopefully.

Pupils’ own responses, such as: The word ‘hopefully’ suggests Darvesh wants to make Dennis feel better by being optimistic that the headmaster is away.

3. What colour were Mr Hawtrey’s trousers?

grey

4. Number the events 1-4 to show the order that they happen in the text.

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| 3 Mr Hawtrey looked out through the window. | 1 Darvesh spoke to Dennis. |
| 4 Silence fell over the playground | 2 Dennis gulped. |