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Synopsis

The Witching Hour

Sophie, an orphan, is unable to sleep. It is the “witching hour,” a spooky moment in the middle of the night when everyone is asleep and all the dark things come out from hiding. Sophie sees something tall, black, and very odd outside her window.

Who?

The figure is a giant! He blows something into the room across the street where the Goochey children are sleeping. The Giant sees her!

The Snatch

The Giant reaches into the window and grabs Sophie! He races across the field at an amazing speed. Sophie is convinced that he is going to eat her.

The Cave

The Giant, cradling Sophie in blankets, races across the land until they finally duck into a secret cave in the ground. The walls of the cave are filled with rows of glass jars.

The BFG

The Giant reassures Sophie that he does not eat people, unlike the rest of the giants in this odd land. The Giant explains that all humans have different flavors, depending on their homeland. He also explains that he is the Big Friendly Giant, BFG for short.

The Giants

The BFG explains that he snatched Sophie because she saw him. If others found out about him, he would be put in a zoo and exhibited. Therefore, Sophie will have to stay with the BFG for the rest of her life. The BFG gives Sophie a peek at the other giants and explains that they are fierce people-eaters who ravage the world nightly.

The Marvelous Ears

When Sophie tells the BFG about her wretched childhood as a mistreated orphan, the BFG cries with pity. The BFG explains that he is a dream-blowing giant; indeed, he was blowing a lovely dream into the children’s bedroom when Sophie saw him. The BFG catches dreams and saves them in the glass jars that line the cave’s walls. The BFG has huge ears, which enable him to hear all sounds, even the music of the stars.

Snozzcumbers

The BFG eats snozzcumbers, huge vile-tasting vegetables. He also explains that giants aren’t born—they simply appear—and they are immortal.

The Bloodbottler

The Bloodbottler, a huge and fierce giant, busts into the BFG’s cave looking for the human being he suspects the BFG has hidden. Sophie hides in the half-eaten snozzcumber. The Bloodbottler takes a bite and spits it across the room, sending Sophie flying to safety. After the Bloodbottler leaves, the BFG gently cleans Sophie off.



Froboscottle and Whizzpoppers

The BFG drinks froboscottle, a delicious carbonated drink that causes extreme gas, which he calls “whizzpoppers.”

Journey to Dream Country

The BFG hides Sophie in his pocket when he goes to Dream Country to gather dreams. On the way, the bigger giants harass the BFG by playing a cruel game of toss with him. When Sophie protests the giants’ cruelty, the BFG points out that even giants do not kill giants. In fact, humans are the only animals that kill their own kind.

Dream-Catching

The BFG catches a lovely dream and a vile nightmare.

A Trogglehumper for the Fleshlumpeater

The BFG shoots the nightmare into the Fleshlumpeater's ear. The mean giant dreams that Jack the Giant Killer is after him. All giants are terrified of Jack! The giants get into a melee, pounding each other. The BFG and Sophie are delighted at the use to which the BFG has put the nightmare.

Dreams

The BFG labels the new dream, as he has labeled all the other dreams in his collection. Sophie reads many of the labels. The BFG taught himself to read from a book he "borrowed" from a little boy.

The Great Plan

To stop the giants from eating British children, Sophie has the BFG mix a dream about the giants and their child-eating habits. The BFG will give the dream to the Queen of England. When the Queen awakens, Sophie will be there to help convince the Queen that the dream is true.

Mixing the Dream

The BFG mixes the dream. Lovely scraps of dream float through the cave.

Journey to London

Sophie hides in the BFG's ear as they travel to England. They arrive in the Queen's back yard.

The Palace

The BFG finds the Queen's window, puts the dream in her ear, and leaves Sophie behind. The BFG gives Sophie a gentle kiss.

The Queen

When the Queen tells her maid about the dreadful dream, the maid drops the Queen's breakfast tray in shock because what the Queen dreamed has already come true! The previous night, 18 British school girls and 14 boys vanished from their beds in school. The Queen sees Sophie, who explains how the Queen came to have the terrifying dream. The BFG appears at the Queen's window and the Queen invites the BFG and Sophie to breakfast.

The Royal Breakfast

The Queen's butler, Mr. Tibbs, arranges a table and feast for the BFG. The BFG is delighted with the food, all but the coffee. He far prefers frobscottle. The Queen calls world leaders to verify that the giants are on a rampage. The Queen summons the Army and Air Force.

The Plan

They plan to use helicopters to capture the giants as they sleep. The giants will be trussed underneath like torpedoes.

Capture!

The BFG leads the helicopters off the map to giant country. The soldiers capture all the giants but the Fleshlumpeater, who grabs a soldier. Sophie stabs the Fleshlumpeater in his ankle with a brooch the Queen had given her. The BFG tricks the Fleshlumpeater into thinking he has been bitten by a snake and he is safely trussed up. The BFG loads his jars of dreams and the nine giants are carried off.

Feeding Time

The giants are imprisoned in a huge hole; since giants never eat giants, the BFG unties them. He has brought plenty of snozzcumbers to feed them and snozzcumber plants to grow more of the vile food.

The Author

The BFG and Sophie are celebrated around the world. Sophie helps the BFG improve his reading and writing skills. He writes the story of his life: this book!

Author Sketch

Best known as a children's writer, Roald (pronounced "Rooaal") Dahl (1916-1990) was also noted for his short stories for adults and his autobiographies. Dahl's children's books are marked by sharp turns into fantasy and their harsh treatment of adults who make trouble for children. His adult fiction is also marked by sharp, unexpected plot turns.



Dahl was born in 1916 in Cardiff, Wales, to Norwegian parents. He was named after the famous Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. An active, mischievous child, he was often in trouble. Though Dahl's father died when Roald was only four, his mother was able to afford a fine English education for her children. At school, Roald encountered many tyrannical and cruel adults. Speaking of his days in English schools, Dahl later said: "Those were days of horrors, of fierce discipline, of not talking in the dormitories, no running in the corridors, no untidiness of any sort, no this or that or the other, just rules, rules and still more rules that had to be obeyed. And the fear of the dreaded cane hung over us

like the fear of death all the time.”

Dahl was a mediocre student and showed little sign of his future skill as a writer. His teacher in 1931, for example, declared him “a persistent muddler. Vocabulary negligible, sentences malconstructed. He reminds me of a camel.” After school, Dahl took a job with the Shell Oil Company, and was later sent to Tanganyika (now Tanzania), where he enjoyed “the roasting heat and the crocodiles and the snakes and the log safaris up-country, selling Shell oil to the men who ran the diamond mines and the sisal plantations. ... Above all, I learned how to look after myself in a way that no young person can ever do by staying in civilization.”

In 1939, Dahl’s adventures took a dangerous turn when he joined the Royal Air Force in Nairobi, Kenya, as a fighter pilot. While he was strafing a truck convoy in North Africa, his plane was hit and crashed. Dahl crawled from the wreckage as the gas tanks exploded. It took six months for Dahl to recover from his skull fracture and broken nose. Dahl returned to his squadron and later shot down four enemy planes, but frequent blackouts as a result of his earlier injuries eventually rendered him unable to fly.

Dahl was transferred to Washington, D.C., to serve as an assistant air attaché. One day C.S. Forester interviewed Dahl over lunch for an article he was writing, but didn’t take notes. The notes Dahl had taken turned out to be a story, which Forester sent to the magazine under Dahl’s name. The magazine paid Dahl \$1,000 for the story. His writing career was launched. “Becoming a writer was pure fluke,” he later said.

Dahl published many stories during the next decades, but by 1960 turned mainly to children’s fiction. His career boomed. Both *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator* sold over one million hardcover copies in America alone. Looking back on his years as a writer in *Boy*, Dahl contended that “the life of a writer is absolute hell compared with the life of a businessman. ... Two hours of writing fiction leaves this particular writer absolutely drained. For those two hours he has been miles away, he has been somewhere else, in a different place with totally different people, and the effort of swimming back into normal surroundings is very great. ... A person is a fool to become a writer. His only compensation is absolute freedom. He has no master except his own soul, and that, I am sure, is why he does it.”

Dahl was married twice, the first time to Oscar-winning actress Patricia Neal, and had five children with her. He

died in 1990 in England at the age of 74. The city of Cardiff, Wales, renamed one of its historic landmarks, the Oval Basin Plaza, in Dahl’s honor.

Today, the Roald Dahl Foundation provides money to promote literacy and medical research, two causes Dahl felt were very important. In recent years, his birthday, September 13, has been widely celebrated as Roald Dahl Day; on that day in 2007, Google (the internet search engine) reworked its famous logo with characters from Dahl’s books. A few months later, a poll found that Dahl was the most popular British children’s author ever, beating *Harry Potter* creator J.K. Rowling.

Critic’s Corner

Often compared to the works of Guy de Maupassant, O. Henry, and Saki, Dahl’s stories employ surprise endings and shrewd characters who are rarely what they seem to be. Of Dahl’s work, critic Michael Wood has commented: “His stories are not only unfailingly clever, they are, many of them, *about* cleverness.” Gerald Haigh, writing in the *Times Literary Supplement*, said that Dahl had the ability to “home unerringly in on the very nub of childish delight, with brazen and glorious disregard for what is likely to furrow the adult brow.”

However, many critics have objected to Dahl’s rough treatment of adults. Eleanor Cameron, for example, in *Children’s Literature in Education*, found that “Dahl caters to the streak of sadism in children which they don’t even realize is there because they are not fully self-aware and are not experienced enough to understand what sadism is.”

Dahl explained in the *New York Times Book Review* that the children who wrote to him “invariably pick out the most gruesome events as the favorite parts of the books. ... They don’t relate it to life. They enjoy the fantasy. And my nastiness is never gratuitous. It’s retribution. Beastly people must be punished.”

In *Trust Your Children: Voices Against Censorship in Children’s Literature*, Dahl contended that adults may be disturbed by his books “because they are not quite as aware as I am that children are different from adults. Children are much more vulgar than grownups. They have a coarser sense of humor. They are basically more cruel.” Dahl often commented that the key to his success with children was that he conspired with them against adults. Vicki Weissman, in her review in the *New York Times Book Review*, agreed that Dahl’s books are

aimed to please children rather than adults.

Other Books by Roald Dahl

For Adults

Sometime Never: A Fable for Supermen (1948)
My Uncle Oswald (1980)
Going Solo (1986)

For Children

Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life (1988)
The BFG (1982)
Boy: Tales of Childhood (1984)
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (1964)
Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator (1972)
The Complete Adventures of Charlie and Mr. Willy Wonka (1978)
The Dahl Diary (1992)
Danny: The Champion of the World (1975)
Dirty Beasts (1983)
The Enormous Crocodile (1978)
Esio Trot (1990)
Fantastic Mr. Fox (1970)
George: Marvelous Medicine (1981)
The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me (1985)
The Gremlins (1943)
James and the Giant Peach: A Children's Story (1961)
The Magic Finger (1966)
Matilda (1988)
The Minpins (1991)
More Tales of the Unexpected (1980)
My Year (1994)
Over to You: Ten Stories of Flyers and Flying (1946)
Rhyme Stew (1989)
Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes (1982)
Roald Dahl's Revolting Recipes (1994)
Roald Dahl's Tales of the Unexpected (1979)
Selected Stories of Roald Dahl (1968)
Someone Like You (1959)
Switch Bitch (1974)
Taste and Other Tales (1979)
Twenty-nine Kisses from Roald Dahl (1969)
Two Fables (1986)
The Twits (1980)
The Umbrella Man and Other Stories (1998)
The Vicar of Nibbleswicke (1992)
The Witches (1983)
The Wonderful World of Henry Sugar and Six More (1977)

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Periodicals

Books and Bookmen, January 1969; May 1970.
Chicago Tribune, Oct. 21, 1986.
Chicago Tribune Book World, Aug. 10, 1980; May 17, 1981.
Entertainment Weekly, Jan. 24, 1994, p. 57.
Horn Book, October 1972; December 1972; February 1973; April 1973; June 1973; January/February 1989, p. 68; January/February 1992, p. 64.
New Republic, Oct. 19, 1974, p. 23; April 19, 1980.
New York, Dec. 12, 1988.
New Yorker, Dec. 12, 1988, p. 157; Nov. 25, 1991, p. 146.
New York Times, Nov. 8, 1953; April 29, 1980.
New York Times Book Review, Feb. 7, 1960; Nov. 12, 1961; Oct. 25, 1964; Nov. 8, 1970; Sept. 17, 1972; Oct. 27, 1974; Oct. 26, 1975; Dec. 25, 1977, pp. 6, 15; Sept. 30, 1979; April 20, 1980; March 29, 1981; Jan. 9, 1983; Jan. 20, 1985; Oct. 12, 1986; Jan. 15, 1989, p. 31; Oct. 27, 1991, p. 27; May 1, 1994, p. 28.

Internet

"Roald Dahl—the Official Website," www.roalddahl.com

“Roald Dahl Teacher Resource Unit,”
<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/dahl.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roald_Dahl

General Objectives

1. To analyze the BFG’s unique speech patterns
2. To trace the novel’s plot
3. To recognize the themes of friendship and justice
4. To analyze the characters, especially Sophie and the BFG
5. To understand the author’s use of fantasy
6. To explore the setting
7. To find elements from traditional fairy tales and legends
8. To appreciate the novel’s use of humor and wit
9. To describe the novel’s mood or atmosphere
10. To predict what the future holds for Sophie and the BFG

Specific Objectives

1. To explore the magic of fantasy
2. To analyze the BFG’s kindness
3. To probe the relationship between Sophie and the BFG
4. To understand the Queen’s character
5. To see how different people deal with unexplained events
6. To trace how the author creates humor
7. To understand the story’s fantasy
8. To compare and contrast the BFG and the other giants
9. To appreciate the novel’s clever plot
10. To identify the novel’s structure, especially its climax

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Roald Dahl’s style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

Fantasy: a kind of writing that describes events that could not take place in real life. Fantasy has unrealistic characters, settings, and events. *The BFG* contains many elements from traditional fantasy stories, such as the cruel giants, the kindly giant (the BFG), the orphaned child (Sophie), and the kindly Queen (the Queen of England). The novel also contains many elements of magic, including the giant catching and reusing dreams, his ability to travel great distances very quickly, and the

otherworldly setting. Fantastic events include the existence of the giants themselves and their unlikely capture and resettlement.

Humor: the funny parts of a story. Humor can be created through sarcasm, word play, irony, and exaggeration. In this novel, Dahl enjoys using exaggeration to create humor. This is evident on pages 66-69 when the BFG shares with Sophie the pleasures of “whizzpoppers.” He delights in passing gas, which he does with great gusto. On page 68, his “whizzpopper” lifts the enormous giant clear off his feet, like a rocket. This type of humor, the mainstay of many popular contemporary adolescent films, is likely to delight young readers.

Dialect: the way people speak in a certain region or area. In a dialect, certain words are spelled and pronounced differently. Writers use dialects to describe their characters and setting more fully. In *The BFG*, Dahl creates his own dialect to show the BFG’s unique speech patterns. The dialect has some nonsense words but is also largely based on “spoonerisms,” switched initial letters, and British English. For example, the BFG explains that he has read the works of “Dahl’s Chickens,” switching the letters in “Charles Dickens” (pronounced with a British accent). The BFG’s dialect also contains many funny puns and word plays, such as his explanation that the giants eat children from around the world because they all taste different. Humans from Panama taste of hats; those from Wales taste of fish. Those from Jersey taste of cardigans (“jersey” is a British term for “cardigan”); those from Wellington taste of boots. (“Wellingtons” are boots with tops that come to or above the knee.)

Cross-Curricular Sources

Books

Beverly Cleary, *Beezus and Ramona*; *Ramona Quimby, Age 8*; *Ramona the Pest*; and *Ramona’s World*
 Ian Fleming, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*
 Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories* and *Plain Tales from the Hills*
 J.K. Rowling, the *Harry Potter* series
 George Selden, *The Cricket in Times Square*

DVDs/Videos

36 Hours (adaptation of Dahl’s short story “Beware of the Dog”) (1964)
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968)
James and the Giant Peach (1996)

Matilda (1996)
Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (1971)
The Witches (1990)

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Roald Dahl's *The BFG* should include these aspects:

Themes

- alienation
- dreams and nightmares
- education
- friendship
- loneliness
- humor
- the joy of reading and writing
- rescue
- revenge
- suspense

Motifs

- dealing with terrifying creatures
- looking at life through a child's eyes
- the importance of reading
- the powerful effect of friendship
- helping to save lives
- being clever and resourceful
- appreciating humor and pathos
- unexplained creatures
- British royalty
- coping with danger and death

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. Suddenly she froze. There was something coming up the street on the opposite side. It was something black. ... Something tall and black. ... Something very black and very thin. ... ('The Witching Hour,' p. 11)
(This suspenseful opening captures the reader's attention by plunging us into an eerie and even terrifying situation. Who—or what?—is this strange apparition? Is it good or evil? And what will it do to Sophie?)

2. "What do the people of Wellington taste of?" Sophie asked.
"Boots," the Giant said. ("The BFG," p. 30)
(This chapter is full of delightful puns that are likely to present problems for the average American reader. Here, for example, the pun is on Wellington boots, the ubiquitous knee-high boots the British use for wet weather and gardening. Other puns include Panama hats, Wales/Whales, jerseys/cardigans (both "jersey" and "cardigan" mean "sweater"), Labrador and Great Dane.)
3. "Human beans is the only animals that is killing their own kind." ("Journey to Dream Country," p. 78)
(Amid the silly jokes and outrageous puns, Dahl slips in a serious point: no matter how monstrous the giants seem as they eat humans, even the giants do not kill their own kind. That supreme barbarity is found only among humans, the BFG notes. His comment places the giants' actions—and our own—in context.)
4. He aimed the instrument directly at the Fleshlumpeater's face. He took a deep breath, puffed out his cheeks, and then whoof! He blew!
("A Trogglehumper for the Fleshlumpeater," p. 90)
(In a delicious plot twist, the BFG gives to the Fleshlumpeater [the cruel giant who had been torturing the kindly BFG] a terrible nightmare that he had netted. This plot twist is typical of Dahl's writing style: the underdog [usually a child] gets revenge through his own cleverness and bravery.)
5. "Jack is the only human bean all giants is frightened of," the BFG told her. ("A Trogglehumper for the Fleshlumpeater," p. 92)
(In his nightmare, the Fleshlumpeater believes that Jack the Giant Killer is coming after him. The giants have garbled the fairy tale and now believe that Jack attacks with his terrible spiked beanstalk. This misreading makes the story even funnier.)
6. "I is beginning to see where you is driving to," the BFG said. "If the Queen is knowing the part of her dream is true, then perhaps she is believing the rest of it is true as well." ("The Great Plan," p. 122)
(Sophie creates a clever plan to enlist the Queen's aid in capturing the mean giants. She convinces the BFG to give the Queen a dream about the giants eating the children and how she and the BFG are trying to stop the giants. Then Sophie will make her case to the Queen in person. This plan reveals Sophie's cleverness.)

erness and bravery, and the BFG's essential kindness.)

7. Suddenly, unexpectedly, the BFG leaned forward and kissed her gently on the cheek. ("The Palace," p. 146)
(As he leaves her behind at the Queen's palace as they had arranged, the BFG kisses Sophie. This kiss shows his worry for her welfare and his admiration for her bravery. It also shows that the BFG has grown very fond of Sophie. The BFG becomes the parent/family that Sophie never had.)
8. She remembered the sapphire brooch the Queen had pinned on her chest. ("Capture!" p. 192)
(All the giants have been captured except the dreaded Fleshlumpeater. Sophie stabs the giant in his ankle with the pin as the BFG convinces him that he has been bitten by a poisonous snake. Sophie's actions show that she is quick-thinking, courageous, and clever.)
9. "Snozzcumbers!" he cried. ("Feeding Time," p. 201)
(In a delightfully ironic twist, the BFG has brought sacks of the vile snozzcumbers to feed the imprisoned giants. The BFG has also brought snozzcumber plants to ensure a never-ending supply of the repulsive vegetable.)
10. But where, you might ask, is this book that the BFG wrote? It's right here. You've just finished reading it. ("The Author," pp. 208)
(After the giants are safely imprisoned, Sophie helps the BFG learn to read, write, and speak more clearly. He decides to write the story of his adventures. However, he is too modest to put his own name on the book, so he uses someone else's name—Roald Dahl! Here, the author is pretending to be the BFG. As an adult, he would be a giant to children. Whether or not he is friendly only the children can determine.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. Who is the BFG? How is he the same as and different than the others of his kind?
("BFG" stands for "Big Friendly Giant." Alone among

the giants, the BFG refuses to eat people; instead, he eats only a vegetable called a "snozzcumber.")

2. Why does he kidnap Sophie?
(The BFG kidnaps Sophie because she saw him delivering sweet dreams to children. He is terrified that she will reveal his identity and he will be placed in a zoo for visitors to mock. Then children will no longer have sweet dreams. Sophie sadly agrees with him.)
3. What does the BFG do with the dreams he collects?
(He saves some in glass jars and shares others with sleepers. He also mixes dreams to make them even nicer for the lucky sleepers who receive them.)
4. How do Sophie and the BFG convince the Queen to help them stop the Giants?
(The BFG creates a dream that describes how the giants eat the children around the world. Then the BFG plants the dream in the ear of the Queen of England. Sophie stays behind as concrete proof that the dream was real. Then Sophie and the BFG talk to the Queen about the situation.)
5. How do Sophie and the BFG help capture the Fleshlumpeater?
(Sophie pricks him in the ankle with a brooch. The BFG convinces him that it is a poisonous snake bite. While the Fleshlumpeater is thus distracted, the soldiers truss him up like a chicken.)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretative Level)

6. What is the author's attitude toward the Queen of England? How is this shown?
(The author is very impressed by the Queen. This is shown in his portrayal of her. She emerges as courageous, courteous, and gracious. For example, the Queen does not scream when she sees the BFG; rather she calmly speaks to him. She checks Sophie's story and then springs into action to save the world from the flesh-eating giants.)
7. How does each giant's name reflect his character? Select any three giants to use as examples.
(Possible response: The "BFG" is indeed a big, friendly giant. The Bonecruncher enjoys chewing the bones of his victims, while the Fleshlumpeater likes to eat his victims' flesh. The Childchewer attacks children; the Meatdripper is likely a messy eater.)
8. Why do you think children might enjoy this book?
(Children are apt to enjoy the humor, wildly exagger-

ated giants, and Sophie's bravery. They will also enjoy the BFG'S kindness, despite his fierce appearance. Most of all, young readers will likely enjoy seeing how the underdogs [Sophie and the BFG] triumph over the bullies [the fierce giants].

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. What is the author's tone in this novel?
(Dahl's tone is light, arch, and humorous. Especially in the early chapters, he is also silly, spouting outrageous puns.)
10. Do you think the BFG's unusual speech patterns added to this book or made it more difficult to read?
(Answers will vary, depending on each reader's individual taste in humor. In the main, the BFG'S dialect is not easy to read. Many of the jokes and puns will be unfamiliar to American audiences as well, and thus are likely to cause frustration.)

Questions 11-12 (Creative Level)

11. Working with a small group of classmates, discuss some ways that you might have coped with Sophie's situation had you been in her place.
12. Argue that the jokes about the whizzpoppers are funny or crude.

Across the Curriculum

Art and Music

1. Design a medal for the Queen to give Sophie and the BFG for their courage and cleverness.
2. Create a storyboard for a cartoon version of this novel. Include at least two scenes for each chapter.
3. Draw the beautiful sapphire brooch the Queen gave Sophie.
4. Divide a piece of paper the long way. On the left, draw a dream. On the right, draw a nightmare. Use colors and shapes to show the mood of each.
5. The BFG claims that he can hear the "music of the stars." Find or make some music to describe this beautiful sound.

Drama/Speech

1. The BFG has his own special language. Write a skit showing the way you and your friends speak every day. Include your own "dialect" and slang

words. Then share your skit with the class. Challenge them to find your special dialect words.

2. Using music, dance, and words, describe a lovely dream that you once had.
3. Do a dramatic reading of "Jack and the Beanstalk" for some younger students. Make simple props, such as a beanstalk of rolled-up newspapers.
4. Imagine that the Queen did not believe Sophie and the BFG. Working with two classmates, try to convince the Queen that she must take action against the giants.
5. Speaking as the Queen, give a radio speech to people around the world explaining the situation with the giants.

Geography and History

1. Locate England on the map and explain its climate, history, and topography.
2. Make an atlas showing where the pilots fly when they capture the giants.
3. Make a map showing the different landscapes the BFG travels through.
4. The BFG refers to "human beans" from Wales. Where is Wales? Find it on a map and learn more about its culture and customs.
5. Make a genealogy showing the current British royal family.

Language Arts

1. Create a new title for the novel. Explain how it fits the story's plot, mood, and theme.
2. Write a poem about the "witching hour." In your poem, describe all the "dark things" that come out from hiding and have the world to themselves.
3. Dahl uses many British words, such as "rasher" for "slice" of bacon. Make a dictionary of British and American words for the same items. Here are some American words to get you started: car trunk, elevator, lawyer, fries, chips, and napkin.
4. Make a list of the words the BFG uses. See if you can figure out how his words are formed. What pat-

tern do you see? (Hint: Look at the first letters.)

- List at least five more books that you would recommend that the BFG read on his own. Next to each book, write a sentence or two explaining why it deserves to be on his reading list.

Math

- The giants describe different ways that they catch children to eat. Of course, there are no giants, but there are still things that hurt children. Make a safety poster showing your classmates ways that they can protect themselves against strangers.
- Make a booklet showing effective ways for getting a good night's sleep. Possibilities include going to bed at the same time every night, turning off the TV, and avoiding sugary foods and drinks.
- The BFG convinces the Fleshlumpeater that he has been bitten by a poisonous snake. Find out which snakes (if any) in your region are poisonous. Show your results on a poster or other display.

Student Involvement Activities

- Imagine that you are Sophie. Write a news story describing all the events that happened to you since you were kidnapped by the BFG.
- Write a new ending for the dream on page 101.
- Stage a news conference in which the police explain how they captured the giants.
- Using scenes from the novel, create a mural that shows its main themes.
- Recast this novel as a fairy tale. Assemble your story as a children's picture book and read it to some younger children.
- Read another book by Roald Dahl. Compare and contrast it to *The BFG*.

Alternate Assessment

- List three other people who might have helped capture the giants if the Queen had not been willing to help. Next to each name, explain why you choose this person.

- Retell the events in this novel from the BFG's point of view.

- Write another chapter in the novel in which you explain what life is like for Sophie and the BFG ten years in the future.

- Write a critical review of the novel for publication in the school newspaper.

- Make a chart showing the relative size of Sophie, the BFG, and the rest of the giants.

- Giants rarely sleep. How much sleep do humans need? Record the amount of sleep you get in two weeks. Compare and contrast your results to the amount of sleep children your age are supposed to get.

- Pity Mr. Tibbs, the Queen's butler! He has to figure out how much food the BFG can eat for breakfast. Do the math for the butler and plan the BFG's breakfast menu.

Science and Health

- Poor BFG! He has to eat awful snozzcumbers! List at least ten foods that taste good and are good for you.
- The BFG loves making whizzpoppers. Fortunately, few people agree with him—and want less gas, not more! Find out what causes gas and how we can help reduce it.

Vocabulary Test

Complete the following chart by matching each word with its definition. Write the letter of the definition in the space by the word.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ 1. desolate | A. changed |
| _____ 2. girth | B. sweep away |
| _____ 3. groan | C. huge |
| _____ 4. repulsive | D. cry of distress |
| _____ 5. reverberated | E. odd |
| _____ 6. intercept | F. barren |
| _____ 7. translucent | G. flowers |
| _____ 8. blurted | H. wisdom |
| _____ 9. peculiar | I. grab, catch |
| _____ 10. winsome | J. size |
| _____ 11. colossal | K. charming |
| _____ 12. sagacity | L. shocked |
| _____ 13. perambulator | M. cry out accidentally |
| _____ 14. runt | N. small weak animal |
| _____ 15. whisk | O. confused |
| _____ 16. muddled | P. baby carriage |
| _____ 17. grotesque | Q. transparent |
| _____ 18. aghast | R. horrid |
| _____ 19. primroses | S. hideous |
| _____ 20. transfigured | T. echoed |

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blanks provided.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ___ 1. horrible-tasting vegetables | a. the BFG |
| ___ 2. the Queen's butler | b. Sophie |
| ___ 3. the Queen's maid | c. the Queen of England |
| ___ 4. a delicious fizzy drink | d. snozzcumbers |
| ___ 5. orders the giants captured and put in a huge pit | e. frobscottle |
| ___ 6. the orphan girl kidnapped by the BFG | f. whizzpoppers |
| ___ 7. smelly gas | g. Fleshlumpeater |
| ___ 8. the terrible nightmare the BFG gives to the Fleshlumpeater | h. Mr. Tibbs |
| ___ 9. the fierce giant who resists capture | i. trogglehumper |
| ___ 10. the giant who catches dreams | j. Mary |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- ___ 1. When the story opens, Sophie sees a mysterious figure blowing something into the room across the street where the Goochey children are sleeping.
- ___ 2. The BFG explains that all humans have different flavors, depending on the place where they live.
- ___ 3. The BFG explains that he snatched Sophie because he collects children.
- ___ 4. The BFG has huge eyes, which enable him to see everything, even creatures on other planets.
- ___ 5. He also explains that giants aren't born—they simply appear—and they live forever.
- ___ 6. Readers learn in this book that all giants are the same.
- ___ 7. Giants eat other giants when they are very hungry.
- ___ 8. The BFG taught himself to read from a book he "borrowed" from a little boy.
- ___ 9. The Queen invites the BFG and Sophie to breakfast.
- ___ 10. The Army and Navy try to capture the giants, but Fleshlumpeater gets away.

Part III: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Underline the term that best completes each sentence.

1. When the Giant grabs her, Sophie thinks that he is going to (**eat her, sell her**).
2. BFG stands for ("**Big Fierce Giant,**" "**Big Friendly Giant**").
3. The BFG's cave is filled with rows of (**skulls, glass jars**).
4. The BFG collects (**dreams, strange vegetables**).
5. The (**Bloodbottler, Snozzcumber**), a huge and fierce giant, busts into the BFG's cave looking for the human being he suspects the BFG has hidden.
6. Giants are most afraid of (**Jack and the Beanstalk, the Queen of England**).
7. Sophie hides in the BFG's (**nose, ear**) as they travel to England.
8. Before he leaves, the BFG gives Sophie a (**special pin, gentle kiss**).
9. The Fleshlumpeater thinks he is being attacked by a (**snake, lion**).
10. According to the last chapter, the author of this book is (**the BFG, Sophie**).

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- Describe how Sophie is heroic.
- Compare and contrast the BFG and the Fleshlumpeater.
- Explain the role the Queen plays in the story.
- Describe the trick the BFG plays on the Fleshlumpeater.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Underline a word or phrase from the list below to complete each of the following statements.

1. The story opens at a time the author calls the (**Witching Hour, Scary Time**).
2. Sophie is (**a brat, an orphan**).
3. The BFG lives in a(n) (**cave, apartment building**) in a deserted land.
4. When Sophie saw him, the BFG was (**getting ready to eat a child, blowing a dream to a child**).
5. The BFG eats (**Bloodbottlers, snozzcumbers**), huge vile-tasting vegetables.
6. The delicious fizzy drink the BFG likes is called (**whizzpoppers, frobscottle**).
7. The BFG collects (**memories, dreams**) and saves them in glass bottles.
8. The BFG and Sophie ask (**the Queen of England, the Sultan of Baghdad**) to help them capture the giants and put them in a prison.
9. The Army and Navy use (**atomic bombs, helicopters**) to capture the giants.
10. All together, there are (**9, 10**) giants.

Part II: Motivation (20 points)

Complete each of the following statements.

1. Sophie is kidnapped because
2. When the story opens, the BFG is at the child's window because
3. As he speaks to Sophie, the BFG cries because
4. The BFG can hear far-away sounds because
5. The other giants hate the BFG because
6. The BFG travels to Dream Country to
7. The BFG shoots the nightmare into the Fleshlumpeater's ear because
8. Sophie and the BFG visit the Queen of England because
9. The Queen calls leaders all over the world because
10. Only the BFG can untie the giants because

Part III: Identification (20 points)

Explain why each is important in the story.

1. the Queen of England
2. the Fleshlumpeater
3. dreams
4. snozzcumbers
5. the sapphire brooch

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe the plan Sophie has for capturing the giants.
2. Compare and contrast the BFG to the other giants. Show how he is the same as, and different from, them.
3. Explain what the BFG does with dreams and nightmares.
4. Select two names from the novel and explain how they reveal each character's personality.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY TEST

1. F
2. J
3. D
4. R
5. T
6. I
7. Q
8. M
9. E
10. K
11. C
12. H
13. P
14. N
15. B
16. O
17. S
18. L
19. G
20. A

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

1. D
2. H
3. J
4. E
5. C
6. B
7. F
8. I
9. G
10. A

Part II: True/False (20 points)

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. T
6. F
7. F
8. T
9. T
10. F

Part III: Sentence Completion (20 points)

1. eat her
2. Big Friendly Giant
3. glass jars

4. dreams
5. Bloodbottler
6. Jack and the Beanstalk
7. ear
8. gentle kiss
9. snake
10. the BFG

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Sentence Completion (20 points)

1. Scary Time
2. an orphan
3. cave
4. blowing a dream to a child
5. snozzcumbers
6. frobscottle
7. dreams
8. the Queen of England
9. helicopters
10. 10

Part II: Motivation (30 points)

1. the BFG is afraid that she will turn him in.
2. he sends sweet dreams their way
3. he is sad that Sophie had such a wretched childhood
4. his ears are huge and very sensitive
5. he refuses to eat people
6. gather dreams to share with children
7. he wants to get revenge for the Fleshlumpeater's cruelty to him
8. they need her help stopping the giants from eating children
9. she wants to verify the story Sophie and the BFG tell her
10. the giants won't eat other giants

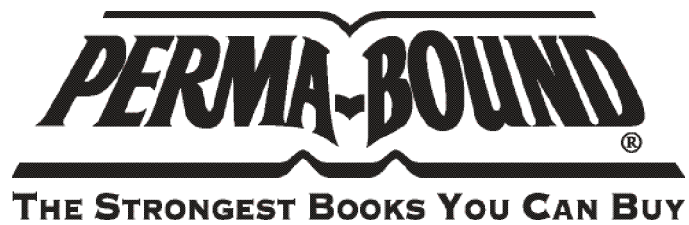
Part III: Identification (20 points)

1. The Queen of England puts the plan Sophie created into action, so the giants are captured and the children are safe.
2. The Fleshlumpeater is the opposite of the BFG. He is a cruel giant who teases the BFG and eats children.
3. The BFG collects dreams and uses them to make children happy. They are also the means by which Sophie and the BFG convince the Queen to help them.
4. Snozzcumbers are the vile vegetables the BFG eats. At the end of the novel, he forces the other giants to eat them.

5. The Queen gives Sophie the sapphire brooch. Sophie stabs the Fleshlumpeater with the pin, tricking him into thinking that he is being bitten by a snake.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.



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