

Reading extract and questions:

Five Children and It (abridged) By E Nesbit



Anthea suddenly screamed.

"Cyril! Come here! Oh, come quick—It's alive! It'll get away! Quick!"

They all hurried back.

"It's a rat, I shouldn't wonder," said Robert.

"Perhaps it is a snake," said Jane, shuddering.

"Let's look," said Cyril, jumping into the hole. "I'm not afraid of snakes. I like them. If it is a snake I'll tame it, and it will follow me everywhere, and I'll let it sleep round my neck at night."

"No, you won't," said Robert firmly. He shared Cyril's bedroom. "But you may if it's a rat."

"Oh, don't be silly!" said Anthea, "it's not a rat, it's much bigger. And it's not a snake. It's got feet... I saw them! And fur! No—not the spade. You'll hurt it! Dig with your hands."

"And let it hurt me instead! That's so likely, isn't it?" said Cyril, seizing a spade.

"Oh, don't!" said Anthea. "It sounds silly, but it said something. It really and truly did."

"What?"

"It said, '*You let me alone.*'"

But Cyril merely observed that his sister must have gone off her head, and he and Robert dug with spades while Anthea sat on the edge of the hole, jumping up and down with hotness and anxiety.

Then Anthea fell on her knees and began to scratch like a dog does when he has suddenly remembered where it was that he buried his bone.

"Oh, I felt fur," she cried, half laughing and half crying. "I did indeed! I did!" Then suddenly a dry husky voice in the sand made them all jump back, and their hearts jumped nearly as fast as they did.

"Let me alone," it said. And now everyone heard the voice and looked at the others to see if they had heard it too.

"But we want to see you," said Robert bravely.

"I wish you'd come out," said Anthea, also taking courage.

"Oh, well—if that's your wish," the voice said, and the sand stirred and spun and scattered, and something brown and furry and fat came rolling out into the hole, and the sand fell off it, and it sat there yawning and rubbing the ends of its eyes with its hands.

"I believe I must have dropped asleep," it said, stretching itself.

The children stood round the hole in a ring, looking at the creature they had found. It was worth looking at. Its eyes were on long horns like a snail's eyes, and it could move them in and out like telescopes; it had ears like a bat's ears, and its tubby body was shaped like a spider's and covered with thick soft fur; its legs and arms were furry too, and it had hands and feet like a monkey's.

"What on earth is it?" Jane said.

The thing turned its long eyes to look at her, and said —"Don't you know a sand fairy when you see one?"

Questions for *Five Children and It* Set A

Vocabulary

1. "Perhaps it is a snake," said Jane, shuddering.

What does the word *shuddering* suggest about how Jane feels about snakes?

2. Look at the beginning of the story. **Find** and **copy one** word that means the same as *maybe*.

3. Look at the sentence beginning: "And let it hurt me instead!..."

What does the word *seized* mean in this sentence?

Retrieval

4. Look at the section that begins "Let's look," said Cyril. What does Cyril say he would let a snake do after he tamed it?

5. How does Anthea know that the creature is not a rat?

6. What is the first thing that the creature says to the children?

Inference

7. "No, you won't," said Robert firmly. Why do you think Robert says this?

8. Look at the section beginning: 'The children stood round the hole in a ring...'

Look at the description of the creature. Do you think it would be good at climbing? **Circle one:** yes no
Explain why you think this.

9. What was Anthea thinking when she 'fell on her knees and began to scratch like a dog'?

Tick **one** thought.

I've lost my bone!

I want to find the snake!

I hope I don't find anything!

I really want to find this creature!

Summarise

10. Look at the whole text. Draw lines to show whether the statements below took place at the **beginning**, **middle** or **end** of the story.

The creature rolled out of the hole.

beginning

Anthea feels fur.

middle

Cyril jumps into the hole.

end

Meaning as a whole

11. Imagine you are writing a story review. Write two statements about the text in the table below.

A piece of information about the story.	<hr/> <hr/>
Something exciting that happens in the story.	<hr/> <hr/>

Compare

12. How is the creature...

a. **Different** from a snail?

b. **Similar** to a snail?

Answers for *Five Children and It*

Set A:

Vocabulary

1. She doesn't like them / is scared of them.
2. perhaps
3. grabbed/took hold of

Retrieval

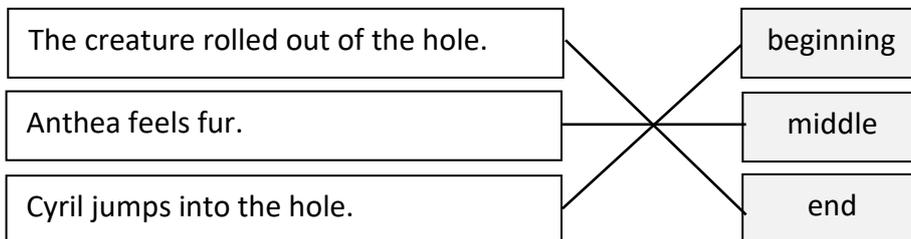
4. He would let it sleep round his neck at night.
5. Because the creature is much bigger / it has feet / has fur.
6. "You let me alone". Pupils must include 'You'.

Inference

7. Because Robert is scared of snakes / scared of having a snake in his bedroom at night / Robert shares a room with Cyril and he doesn't want a snake in there.
8. **yes** – because it has the hands and feet of a monkey
9. I really want to find this creature!

Summarise

10.



Meaning as a whole

11.

A piece of information about the story.	Pupils should choose a key statement, e.g. <i>The story is about some children who discover a creature when they dig a hole; Some children find a strange creature.</i>
Something exciting that happens in the story.	Responses will vary but what is chosen should be exciting, e.g. <i>Anthea screams at the start of the story when she finds something alive in the sand; The creature speaks to the children; When the sand fairy rolls out of the hole and the children see it for the first time.</i>

Compare

12.

a. **Different** from a snail?

Answers should include at least one of these facts: It does not have a shell or a snail's body / It has hair over its body / It has bat-like ears and it has hands and feet.

b. **Similar** to a snail?

It has eyes on stalks / Its eyes were on long horns like a snail's

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