

Vinnie's Vile Vegetables

Vinnie was a 9 year old rotter from Mapletown,
He was an un-healthy, grumpy, cross child, with a frown.
He sat on his bed, day after day,
Playing computer games, there he would stay.
He'd sit and he'd munch any snack his mum brought,
"This is a good life!" he so often thought.



She'd bring him fizzy-pop, the yummiest sweets,
All sorts of sugary delights as his treats.
The trouble was Vinnie was stubborn and mean,
He'd shout at his mum if she brought any green.
No, we're not talking Smarties or bright jelly beans,
I mean vegetables... Oh yes, THOSE greens.

Vinnie ate lots of white bread filled with butter,
Any mention of "vegetables" made him splutter.
He drank full-sugar-coke by the glass-full
And shovelled in sweets by the mouthful.
He savoured each delightful lolly he would lick
Just the mention of water made him feel sick!

When asked, "Why no veggies?" Vinnie just shrugs,
"Don't get me started on mushrooms... they're slugs!"
Mum tried to hide vegetables in his dinner,
But every time he found them, she was never a winner.
She tried fruit in his breakfast and veg in his lunch,
Every time met with tantrums and a stubborn fist-punch

Vinnie was told, "You should be healthy eating,"
But on his sweets, he felt he was cheating.
He'd miss their bright colours, their taste, their chew,
He'd miss how they'd turn his greedy tongue blue!
Vinnie munched through chocolate, jellies and pop,
He ate biscuits and crisps... He just couldn't stop.



The thing was... Ssshhh! No one really knew...
He never TRIED vegetables, not one or two!
So all this nonsense, this fuss, and this trouble,
He'd created himself, in an un-healthy bubble.
Vinnie was starting to feel really pig-sick,
Of feeling so tired and not running so quick.

The turning point came in the school hall at lunch,
Vinnie asked, as usual, "No veggies to munch."
But the sneaky cook had training in camouflage,
A piece of carrot, so small, it would sabotage.
Vinnie, back at the table, his friends he did greet,
There was veg in his food that Vinnie might eat!



Vinnie was shovelling food from his plate to his mouth,
Chatting to mates, his grub travelling South.
Then, all of a sudden, his mouth stopped, mid-chew...
What was he eating? He had a look through.
He dug through his mash, to find one more shard.
What was this taste, that had hit him so hard?



Orangey goodness, glistened there on his plate,
Another carrot he guzzled, he chomped and he ate.
"More vegetables, please!" he stood and declared,
The cook took one look, winked and she shared
All of the veggies on the menu that day,
Vinnie ate each one and left not a stray.

"Oh wow!" said Vinnie, "what have I missed?"
He ran home after school, with a shake and a twist.
He shared with his mum his delights from his lunch,
And refused his usual bag of crisps to crunch.
He swapped, instead, to an apple from the fridge,
Which he thought he preferred to the crisps... Just a smidge.

And now, after time, Vinnie's a different boy,
Eating vegetables and fruit gives him such joy.
The water he drinks keeps him feeling not tired,
And it's easy to eat the food that's required.
He swaps and he changes his favourite sweets,
To healthier options and non-sugary treats.



1. Why might Vinnie be described as a lazy child? (P5/2d)

2. Why didn't Vinnie know if he liked vegetables? (C6/2b)

3. What does the word 'sabotage' mean? Use a dictionary to help. (L3)

4. What do you think people can learn from Vinnie? (C4)

5. Why did Vinnie think he had a 'good life'? (C6/2b)

6. Why do you think that Vinnie just 'shrugs' when he is asked why he doesn't like vegetables? (P5/2d)

7. Why does the author describe the cook as 'sneaky'? (C1/2a)

8. What benefits has Vinnie had by eating fruit and vegetables? (C6/2b)

9. Why do you think Vinnie is described as a 'rotter' in the first line? (C7)

10. Why does the author use the word 'stubborn' to describe Vinnie's action? (C1/2a)

11. What does the author mean when he says Vinnie 'left not a stray'? (P5/2d)

12. Summarise the poem in a few sentences. (S2/2c)

13. Why might Vinnie be described as selfish? (P5/2d)

14. Why do you think Vinnie continued to eat unhealthily, even though people tried to help him? (P5/2d)

15. What effect does using an ellipsis at the end of 'mid-chew...' have? (P5/2d)

16. What other benefits do you think Vinnie experienced from changing his diet? (C6/2b)

