

# Under the Lights

## Chapter One "It's no big deal."

Ever since Mr Rivers told me that I'd got the lead part in our school play, Robin Hood: Superstar!, I'd dreamed about opening night. Whenever I was stuck on a tricky maths question or drifting off in assembly, my mind would wander to the moment I would step on stage in front of a hundred wide-eyed, gaping-mouthed kids and parents, and belt out my first solo number...

*I'm Robin Hood - Superstar!  
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But now that the moment had arrived, I had the jitters. This made it very hard to get my costume on.

"Ash?"

I tried to tie my laces, but they ended up looking like balls of spaghetti.

"Ash..."

I pulled on my green leggings, only to realise one leg was inside-out and twisted around and *very* uncomfortable.

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I tried to balance my feathered cap on my head, but somehow it fell off and rolled under the art trolley.

"Earth to Ash." A grubby hand waved in front of my face. "Are you ready? Everyone's waiting to go on."



That's when I realised that the classroom was empty. Everyone had already put on their costumes and trotted off to the hall. Everyone but me and Hassan, that is.

My friend Hassan stood in front of me in his peasant costume. It wasn't much of a costume: just one of Hassan's foster dad's shirts over some joggers with the legs cut off in zigzags at the knees. It was no surprise that he hadn't made an effort. Hassan dislikes anything to do with music and drama almost as much as he dislikes running in PE.

"Give me a minute, Hassan," I said. "Can't seem to get my costume on." I reached over my shoulders to fasten the Velcro on my Robin Hood top.

"You're doing it up all wonky," Hassan said. Before I could stop him, he ripped the Velcro apart. "Oops," he muttered, nearly too quietly for me to hear.

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"Nothing," he said, in a high-pitched voice that meant he was definitely lying. "Just a minor Velcro mishap. I'll sort you out, don't worry." He tugged at my costume for a while and patted my back reassuringly. "Don't know why you went and got yourself the lead part anyway," he said. "Just means you have to learn more lines than anyone else, and actually sing instead of just pretending to." He fished my cap from under the art trolley and plonked it back on my head so hard that it wedged right over my eyes. "Plus, you're wearing tights."



Extract from Twinkl Originals story 'Under the Lights'

# Questions

1. Who is Ash?

- a girl
- a teacher
- a boy

2. Which character is Ash playing?

- Robin Hood
- Sherriff of Nottingham
- Friar Tuck

3. Match these nouns with the adjective that describes them.

grubby

green

feathered

cap

hand

leggings

4. Label these events 1-4 in the order that they happened.

- Ash realised that the classroom was empty.
- Hassan ripped Ash's costume.
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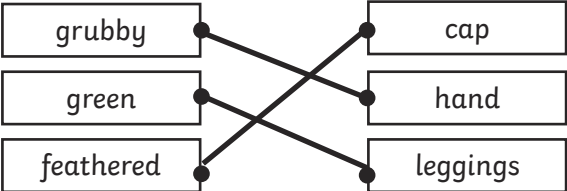
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6. Find and copy one word that means one person performing.

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# Answers

Answer	I can
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6. Find one word that means one person performing. <b>solo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.</li> </ul>

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"Give me a minute, Hassan," I said. "Can't seem to get my costume on." I reached over my shoulders to fasten the Velcro on my Robin Hood top.

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"They're leggings," I said, yanking the cap up, "not tights." Usually, I didn't get that tingly feeling before a performance until I was just about to go on stage. Not today; my head was already spinning.

"You! In tights! In front of all those people! Unbelievable!"

"Hassan, can you stop blathering and actually help?" I was starting to not be able to breathe very well, even though I'm not asthmatic and there were no cats nearby. What if I went on stage and I couldn't breathe and then I passed out in front of everyone? What if I fell over and knocked into the dancers and they went down in a long line, like dominoes?

Now that I'd started, I couldn't stop thinking of all the things that might go wrong.

"Ooh, nice tights, Ash," said Janelle, sticking her head round the door.

"They're leggings," I repeated, trying to untwist the left leg.

"Hey, no judgment from me. I'm wearing tights, too." Janelle flicked her braids over her shoulder and put her hand on her hip. Her costume was even fancier than mine, with a silk tunic and real leather boots. Janelle had been ill on the day of the audition and had ended up with the part of Merry Man 6. She wasn't too pleased about it; Janelle loves to be centre stage and singing her heart out, almost as much as I do.

Almost as much as I *normally* do, that is.

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1. Match these nouns with the adjectives that describe them.

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4. Read the last line of the extract. Why is the word *normally* in italics?

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5. Which of these words best describes how Ash feels?

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Explain your choice.

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6. Why was Ash short-tempered with Hassan? Explain your answer.

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7. Read through the paragraph that begins: "They're leggings," I said... How do you think Ash was feeling? Which words or phrases give you this impression?

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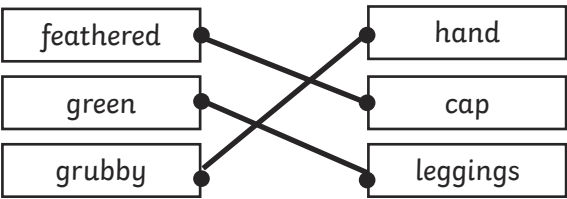
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<p>4. Read the last line of the extract. Why is the word <i>normally</i> in italics?</p> <p><b>Example: Because it is unusual behaviour for Ash.</b> <b>The word is in italics to get it noticed.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.</li> </ul>
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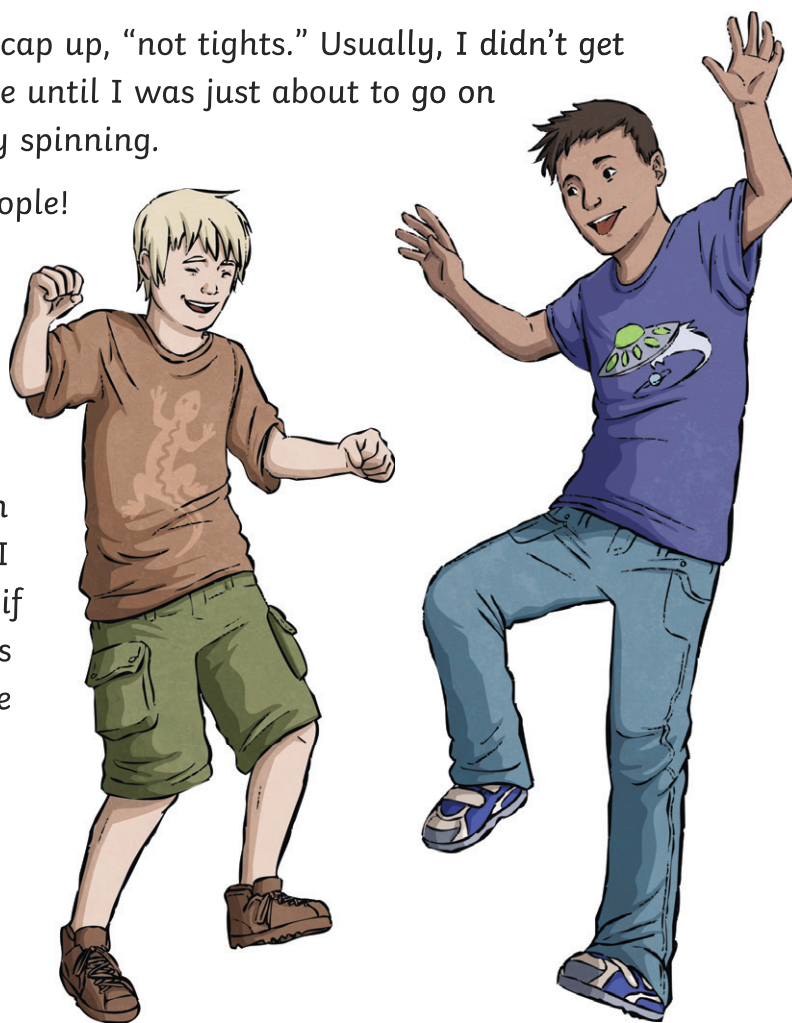
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“Come on, Ash, we’re all waiting,” said Janelle, as if I didn’t already know. Suddenly, I started to think: what if Mr Rivers decided to start the play without me? What if I forgot all of the words to my solo number? What if there was a power cut in the middle of the show?

I was halfway through imagining all of the parents getting out their phones to light the stage with their built-in torches when Janelle said, “Um, Ash? Did you know that your Velcro is broken?”

“Shut up, Janelle,” said Hassan urgently, but it was too late.

“My Velcro’s *broken*?” I whirled round to face a sheepish Hassan. “You *broke* my costume? On opening night?”

This was a disaster that I hadn’t even thought of. I felt prickles in my eyes and wobbles in my chin. But I wasn’t going to cry; I was too old for that.

“Look, we can fix it,” said Janelle. “I’ll get some glue from the art trolley. It’s no big deal, Ash.”

“It is -” I tried to tell her, but suddenly, I couldn’t breathe properly again.

What was wrong with me?



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# Questions

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9. Hassan tells Ash that there has been a 'Velcro mishap'. What is a mishap? What does the prefix 'mis' mean? How many words do you know that begin with mis-?

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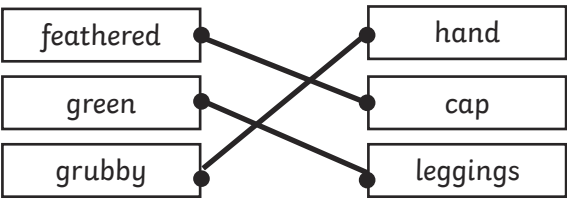
10. Can you summarise the main points in this chapter?

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<p>4. Read the last line of the extract. What does this tell you about Ash?</p> <p><b>Example: The line, 'What was wrong with me?' shows that Ash was worried and had no idea why he was feeling this way.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Which of these words best describes how Ash feels?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> bored</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> anxious</p> <p><input type="radio"/> happy</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> nervous</p> <p>Explain your choice.</p> <p><b>Example: Ash appears to be anxious as he is finding it hard to breathe and nervous as he finds even tying his shoe laces difficult.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence.</li> <li>• check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.</li> </ul>
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<p>7. Read through the paragraph that begins: "They're leggings," I said... How do you think Ash was feeling? Which words or phrases give you this impression?</p> <p><b>Example: Ash's anxious state is shown by him yanking his cap up and explaining his leggings were 'not tights' in an abrupt way. He says he was beginning to get a 'tingly feeling' before the performance and also tells how his head was spinning.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.</li> <li>• discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination.</li> <li>• discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.</li> </ul>
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<p>9. Hassan tells Ash that there has been a 'Velcro mishap'. What is a mishap? What does the prefix 'mis' mean? How many words do you know that begin with mis-?</p> <p><b>Example: A mishap is another description for an accident or mistake. The prefix mis- means wrong or incorrectly. Mis- words include: mislead, mishear, misunderstood, misbehave, misfire, mislay...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the first three or four letters of a word to check spelling, meaning or both of these in a dictionary.</li> <li>• use knowledge of morphology and etymology in spelling and understand that the spelling of some words needs to be learnt specifically, as listed in English Appendix 1.</li> <li>• use further prefixes and suffixes and understand the guidance for adding them.</li> </ul>

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<p>10. Can you summarise the main points in this chapter?</p> <p><b>Main points in the extract:</b></p> <p><b>Ash got the lead role in a school play and was excited about it up until the opening night.</b></p> <p><b>Ash is feeling stressed and anxious about going on stage, which is something that has never happened before.</b></p> <p><b>He imagines all kinds of bad things are going to happen when he goes on stage.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• summarise the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identify key details that support the main ideas</li></ul>