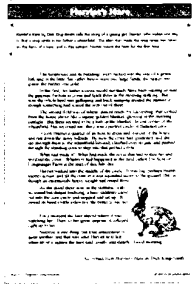


Harriet's Hare



Question Book:

Year 3, pages 2-3

Author / Source:

Dick King-Smith

Genre:

Fiction — novel extract

Cross-curricular links:

- Geography (valleys)
- Science (hares; crop circles)

Introduction

Dick King-Smith was an extremely prolific and popular children's author, and some pupils may already be familiar with his books. Inspired by his childhood love of animals and the years he spent as a farmer, many of his books are centred on animals. *Harriet's Hare* is unique as it also contains an element of science fiction — the hare of the title is an alien. This alien has taken on the form of a talking hare, who is discovered by 8-year-old Harriet in her father's wheatfield, leading to their firm friendship. Note that in this extract, "corn" refers to cereal plants in general, rather than a specific crop.

Answers

1. E.g. The green field is a field of grass; the gold field is a field of wheat.
2. E.g. The cows would usually be waiting near the gate of their field for Harriet's father to take them to be milked, but instead, they're running and jumping around in the field.
3. E.g. The field is completely covered by wheat, so it looks as though a golden blanket has been spread over it. It seems like there's a hole in the blanket because there's a circle of flattened corn in a corner of the field.
4. E.g. She wants to find out what has made the circle in the field of corn.
5. E.g. It means that the hillside is covered in drops of water.
6. E.g. To show that Harriet is puzzled and curious about what has happened.
7. E.g. She is surprised because wild animals don't usually get so close to humans, and then she is amazed because animals can't talk, but the hare talks to her.

Extra Activities

- Ask the pupils to imagine that they are the author of *Harriet's Hare*. Get them to continue writing the story, which should focus on Harriet's reaction to the talking hare.
- Discuss the author's use of descriptive language to introduce the agricultural setting and how the extract builds an atmosphere of intrigue and mystery. Get the pupils to write their own short story, paying particular attention to the setting and creating an atmosphere of mystery.
- To help pupils understand the setting of *Harriet's Hare*, explain what a valley is using pictures from books or the Internet. Ask pupils to draw what they imagine the setting of the extract to look like.
- Make sure the class understands what a hare is by exploring the differences between a hare and a rabbit. Get pupils to make a list of their similarities and differences.
- Explain that the hare in the book is an alien which has taken on the form of an animal. Explain that, although evidence suggests crop circles are man-made, some people believe they are made by aliens. Show pupils pictures of crop circles and initiate a discussion about what could have made them.