

Further activities

- Ensure that the children have a basic understanding of what philosophy is, as explained in the pointer.
- Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary – for example, ‘sect’, ‘surlly’ and ‘unkempt’ – and discuss any words that the children find interesting.
- Ask the children to investigate the current meaning of ‘cynical’. (A person who is ‘cynical’ tends not to believe that people can sometimes act in a selfless way.)
- Invite the children to list any words in the passage that are outside their active vocabulary, such as ‘frugality’ and ‘intellect’, adding the related adjectives, ‘frugal’ and ‘intellectual’.
- Challenge the children to make these ‘words of the week’ and find ways to use them as often as possible in different contexts during the next few days. Make sure that you also take part in this challenge!
-  Start a class discussion on materialism (the way of life that focuses almost entirely on material things and money, to the exclusion of other things like friendship, love, art, music or religion). Ask the children what non-material things are most important to them.

Welcoming Grace

Contained in: Book 4 (page 28)

Source: *The Woodlanders*

Genre: Classic fiction

Author: Thomas Hardy

Introduction

The Woodlanders (first published in 1887) is a gloom-ridden story of false pride, wounded love, loyalty versus disloyalty, and ultimate tragedy – typical of Hardy’s novels. Nevertheless, this extract demonstrates Hardy’s inimitable eye for humour: he describes the incident masterfully through observation of social ineptitude, graphic detail and comic timing. Read in isolation, it cannot fail to amuse. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers

1a. ‘they’ **1b.** (one of:) ‘Tis’, meaning ‘it is’ or ‘that is’; ‘bain’t’, meaning ‘aren’t’ **2.** *by using both sides of the plate – one for the main course and the other for the dessert* **3.** c) invite Grace to marry him **4.** (one of:) he snuffed out candles; he stuffed bread into his mouth **5.** he gives a warning **6.** *Cawtree’s suggestion of a kiss* **7.** *lack, shortage* **8.** (accept any reasoned answer).

Further activities

- Explain that much of the success of this passage can be summed up as ‘actions speak louder than words’. Point out that what the characters say (to be polite) does not always match what they think or feel. Highlight speeches that are left unfinished. Discuss why they are abandoned.
- Discuss how Giles’s choice of mismatched guests was one of the causes of his party’s failure. Invite the children to imagine that they are having a party to which their best friends are invited. Challenge them to suggest an ill-matched guest – or a gatecrasher – who is a liability or embarrassment (not another member of the class). Encourage them to describe the events that follow. (The guest might be a fictional character: a wizard, Oliver Twist, a frog prince.)
-  Challenge some of the children, working in small groups, to rewrite the text as a playscript and to act it out in class. There will be speaking parts for Giles Winterborne, Robert Creedle, Farmer Cawtree, Grace Melbury and her father George Melbury (the timber merchant); other children can play additional guests.