



Big stories, fewer barriers.



The Secret Garden

Teaching and Learning Resources

Summary

The Secret Garden is a story about a young girl called Mary Lennox. She grew up in India where she was given everything she needed from servants, but she was not shown love from her parents. When they died, she moved to live with her uncle in England.

Through her new experiences she learns to love nature and spends a lot of time in his secret garden. When she finds her cousin and helps him feel better, she finally becomes part of a loving family.

Context

The Secret Garden was written by Frances Hodgson Burnett and published when she was 19 years old. It was first published in an American magazine before becoming a book. The Secret Garden is one of Burnett's most famous books and has been rewritten many times, as well as becoming a film. The Secret Garden is known as a classic English children's book, meaning that even though it was written a long time ago people will always enjoy and appreciate the story.

Glossary

servant

People who are paid to do housework, and look after a family and their guests.

experience

An experience is something that you do or happens to you.

Activity 1: Art curriculum link. Go outside and have a look around and see what you can find. You could take photos and practice your photography skills or focus on your drawing skills and sketch what you see.

Activity 2: PSHE link. Think about the word 'secret'. What is a secret and when are secrets appropriate. Are secrets good or bad?

Questions based on the book cover

Activity 1: Front Cover Analysis

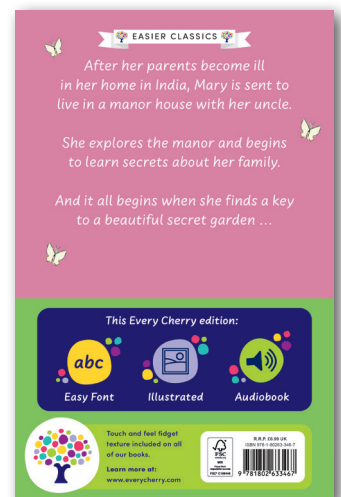
Label the front cover looking for:

- Its main features
- Genre clues
- Inferences about the text
- What does the title tell us about the story? Who are the main characters and what do you think they will be like?
- Who wrote the book?
- Mary looks happy on the front cover. Do you think she has always been a happy girl?



Activity 2: Back Cover Analysis

- What have you learnt already about the story?
- What genre do you think the book is? Why do you think this?
- How do you think Mary felt when she moved in with her uncle? Do you think her feelings changed when she found the secret garden? What clues does the text give us about this?



Challenge: Design your own secret garden. What would be inside it and how would it make you feel? Draw, collage, sculpt or build your garden.

Activity: As you read the story, collect examples for each theme on a post-it note and add them to a working wall.

Loneliness

Mary spent her life in India living with servants and no friends. She didn't know her family and was not sad when they died. She then moved into a manor house with her uncle, where lots of doors were closed and she was told to stay alone in her bedroom. She didn't see her uncle or cousin for a long time as they stayed alone in their bedrooms.

Friendship

At the start of the story Mary has no friends. However, over time she learns to make friends and develops friendship with many characters, encouraging them to become friends as well. Mary teaches her uncle and cousin about the importance of friendship and love.

The Power of Thought

Colin, Mary's cousin, was a sick young boy. He could not walk and was in a wheelchair. Everybody believed he was unwell. However, after spending time with Mary, in the secret garden, and seeing how beautiful life could be, he began to walk and returned to full health.

Glossary

manor

A big house in the countryside. Often rich people live there.

Challenge: Thinking time - have you ever experienced any of the themes above? What happened and how did you feel?

Using the information from the text below create a word bank followed by a character profile about Mary.

Before Mary could ask anything else, she was distracted by the green hills of the Missel Moor outside her window.

So, Mary explored the big house. Then, she walked outside until she found a garden.

Mary wanted to know all about the garden.

Mary really wanted to know more about the secret garden. But she also wanted to learn about Martha's mother.

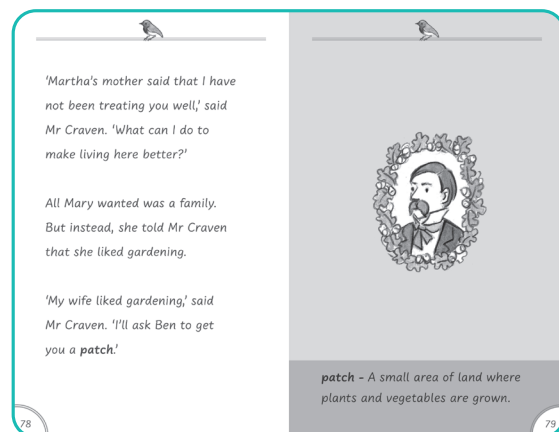
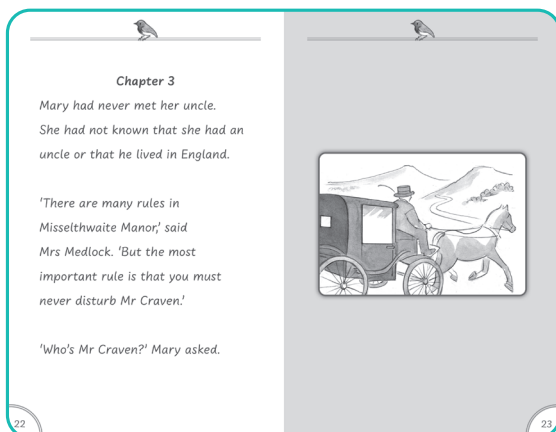
Word bank

Draw a picture

Character description

Challenge: Can you create a character spotlight for Mrs Medlock?

- How do you think Mary felt when she lived in India? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- **Pages 22 - 26** What do these pages make you think about Mr Craven?
- Why did Mary feel like she did not know her mother?
Mary felt sad. She realised she had not really known her mother at all.
- What similarities and differences were there between the servants in India and the maids in England?
- Mary was an inquisitive child. She wanted to learn about new things. What evidence from the text can you find to support this?
- Why did Mary want to learn about Martha's mum?
- Why did Martha tell Mary to make sure nobody knew she had found the secret garden?
- Why was the garden a secret? What was special about it?
- **Page 78** - Why did Martha tell Mr Craven he had not been treating her well?
- When Mary first found Colin he was angry. How did their relationship change throughout the story?
- Why do you think Colin started to walk again? Why had he not done this before he met Mary?
- How did Mr Craven's personality change at the end of the story?
'Mary, without you, none of this would have happened. This garden belongs to our family, and now we are your family,' said Mr Craven.





*This Teaching and Learning Resource has been written by
Katie Corrigan as part of Every Cherry Publishing.*

*For more resources like this one, please visit:
<https://www.everycherry.com/resources>*