

# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS



**CELIA LEOFSY**

READING GUIDE: Sessions 1-6

# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS

## BACKGROUND

Goblins are green – goblins are evil – goblins are grotesque ... or are they?

I love mythology, especially anything to do with Anglo-Saxon and Norse mythology, but when I started researching for my book and delving deeper into those myths something became apparent – our modern perception of what goblins are like is not supported by Anglo-Saxon literature and folk tales at all. It seems the idea of these creatures as malevolent monsters was developed later, little is known about exactly when, the mention of them in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* from 1678 appears to be the earliest, although it is not until the Victorian era that there was an explosion of tales.

This led me to the question, what were goblins really like? What did our Anglo-Saxon ancestors believe them to be? Then I started to think of an even more fascinating question – if goblins had been unfairly portrayed as bad, blamed for all the evil things and devious stories, how would they feel after centuries of being besmirched?

*The Company of Goblins* forms a wonderful basis for core learning as well as engaging the children in discussion on topics such as mythology. It has also been a journey for me, during which I took great care with the structure and grammar of the writing, resulting I hope in a book that you will consider using as the text for Literacy Learning.

## INTRODUCTION

This reading guide is to help with the use of *The Company of Goblins* for core learning in literacy. The notes below are designed to provide suggestions for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 literacy lessons across year 4, year 5 and year 6.

I have divided these notes into fifteen sessions that provides approximately three weeks of literacy lesson focus. If *The Company of Goblins* is studied as a guided reading text, it may be studied for two terms.

If *The Company of Goblins* is used as a class mentor text, some out of class reading time will be necessary.

For group reading, children should be asked to read each chapter independently, as home learning. The following sessions can be used to enhance understanding of the sections read.

Some interactive options can be found on my website [www.thecompanyofgoblins.com](http://www.thecompanyofgoblins.com) such as 'The Goblin's Gallery', and 'Make Your Own Goblin'. There is also the opportunity to find out more about the mythology behind the characters used to inspire the story, plus competitions, including writing competitions for children, with links to the Hampshire Writers' Society and the Winchester Writers' Festival.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Celia Leofsy was born in England but lived in Egypt when she was young. A war started in Egypt and she had to escape with her family leaving all their possessions behind. This was all before she was eight.

Although Celia trained to be an accountant, she has always been interested in reading, writing and drawing; her favourite books are J R R Tolkein's *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. Over the years Celia has had many pets – including a large ginger cat called Orlando, of course!

## BREAKDOWN OF SESSIONS

The sessions have been split into sections to help in the structure of a lesson. Each session can be downloadable as a separate file.

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

A précis is given of each chapter/excerpt together with suggestions for the session.

## LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The Literacy Learning Objectives are based on the Primary Framework Strands and Years 4, 5 and 6 are referenced to allow for differences in learning progress.

## FOCUS ON TEXT

In some sessions there is a focus on extracts of text – page numbers relate to the pages in *The Company of Goblins*.

## READING SKILL EMPHASIS

Questions focus on the skill in each of these areas.

*Deduction, Inference, or Literal* reading skills are targeted by session.

## REFLECT

Here, suggestions are made for children to discuss and reflect on what they have read. Predictions about future possibilities can also be explored.

## PLOT REVIEW

A discussion on the major plot points and overall flow of the story should be held at the end of each session. This will help the children to understand the direction of the novel.

## ASSESSMENT FOCUS

Each session makes reference to assessment opportunities allowing teachers to record pupil progress. References cover levels 3, 4 and 5.

## FOLLOW UP

Many features of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 curriculum are covered in the book *The Company of Goblins*. However, follow up activities are also suggested to encourage home based learning.

# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS

## SESSION ONE: The Mythology Behind the Story

### FACTUAL PAGE SYNOPSIS:

In this session the cover design and also the blurb may be considered. Time may also be given to study the mythology behind the story, 'A History of Elves' (pages 209/210) and 'Glossary of Names' (page 211). Pages 209/210 provide information on the facts behind the mythology which inspired the story and give the book its basis in the real world. Page 211 provides a guide to the many mythical creatures featured in the story.

### LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

**Strand 7:** Understanding and interpreting texts.

**Year 4:** 7.4c Use knowledge of different organisational features of texts to find information effectively.

**Year 5:** 7.5c Compare different types of narrative and information texts and identify how they are structured.

**Year 6:** 6c Understand how writers use different structures to create coherence and impact.

### FOCUS ON TEXT:

Please see pages 209/210 'A History of Elves', and page 211 'Glossary of Names'. Also see the quotation by Thomas Jefferson at the very beginning of the book.

Demonstrating how different texts are used to show fact and fiction.

### READING SKILL EMPHASIS: LITERAL

1. Pages 209/210/211. How does the formatting of this information help you understand that this section of the book is non-fiction?  
(The information is placed on a separate page with a bold heading, and is at the end of the story in a separate section and is not part of the fictional story.)
2. What words are included to help you understand this section is not made up or fictional?  
(Names of actual people and dates are used: J. R. R. Tolkien, Snorri Sturluson a 12<sup>th</sup> Century Icelandic Poet, Jacob Grimm – Teutonic Mythology published in 1883. All facts.)

3. What is a myth?  
(A myth develops when a collection of stories and beliefs are passed down over thousands of years by word of mouth; they can also be written down. The stories, or myths, grow in the telling becoming embedded in our culture.)
4. How can a 'quotation' from an actual source be distinguished?  
(When a quotation from another person's work is used, it is easily identifiable by the 'quotation marks' enclosing it, and the use of italics which sets it apart from the rest of the text.)
5. Has the author included any speech in this section? If not, why not?  
(No- this would not be appropriate for a factual page.)
6. In The Glossary of Names, page 211, why does the author use brackets?  
(Brackets are used to show additional information, and also to highlight that help is given in the phonetic pronunciation of certain words.)
7. How does this use of brackets help the reader?  
(When difficult and unusual names are used in a novel, it is helpful for the reader to, a) have some background information about the source of the name and, b) to know how to pronounce the name.)
8. The author has chosen to use a quotation by Thomas Jefferson at the very beginning of the book. How can you tell that this is non-fiction?  
(By the quotation marks and italics, and because the source is listed – Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Pleasants with the date and source.)

### **REFLECT:**

1. How do pages 209/210/211 contrast with the blurb of the book?  
(The 'blurb' is short and snappy and only hints at what is inside the book. Pages 209/210/211 in contrast are meant to be fully explanatory.)
2. Why write a 'blurb'? What does the writer hope to achieve with a blurb?  
(A 'blurb' is designed to intrigue the reader and encourage a desire to read the book. Pages 209/210/211 in contrast are simply explaining the background history of the book.)
3. What writing techniques should be used in a blurb?  
(The 'blurb' should use dramatic vocabulary to draw the reader in, and to pose questions about the plot.)
4. Why did the author choose to include a quotation by Thomas Jefferson at the very beginning of the book?  
(To alert the reader to a problem that will always be part of the human psyche – greed, and as a hint about the subject matter included in the story.)
5. Have you heard of any of the places or people mentioned on pages 209/210/211?
6. Have you heard of Thomas Jefferson or Thomas Pleasants?

7. Have you heard of J.R.R. Tolkien, Snorri Sturluson or Jacob Grimm?
8. When you look at the cover on the front of the book, and after reading 'A History of Elves', do you think that goblins are really bad? Or could they have they been misjudged? Are the elves any better than the goblins and why?

### **PLOT REVIEW:**

Do you think the author makes it clear that the characters in the story are drawn from the many mythical creatures which can be found in Snorri Sturluson's Edda, and Jacob Grimm's Teutonic Mythology? The origins of these creatures and their stories date back thousands of years to the Germanic tribes of northern Europe called the Anglo-Saxons. After reading the information in 'A History of Elves', do you think the author intends that the characters in the story will be easily identifiable as good or bad?

Based on the information to be found in the 'Glossary of Names', can you write a description of a Nixie or one of the Huldrufolk?

**(The Nixies could have gills, or be covered in scales, and the Huldrufolk could have branches and leaves protruding from their backs or roots for feet, etc.)**

### **ASSESSMENT FOCUS:**

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>AF4</b>      | <b>To identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level.</b>  |
| <b>Level 3:</b> | Make straightforward inferences (best guesses) based on a single word or phrase in the text.<br>Points about a text show there is a straightforward understanding of it.                         |
| <b>Level 4:</b> | Identify some structural choices with simple comment.<br>Identify some basic features of organisation at text level.   |
| <b>Level 5:</b> | Comment on structural choices, showing some general awareness of the writer's craft.<br>Identify various features relating to organisation at text level, including form, with some explanation. |

### **FOLLOW UP:**

If you go to [www.thecompanyofgoblins.com](http://www.thecompanyofgoblins.com) website you will discover more about the history of the characters listed in the 'Glossary of Names'.

Draw your own Goblin or Nixie to be displayed in the 'Goblins' Gallery'.

Also you can find out more about QUANTUM POWER by exploring the mythology section on *The Company of Goblins* website.



# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS

## SESSION TWO: An Unexpected Visitor

### CHAPTER SYNOPSIS:

This session features chapter one of the book. Consideration should be given to the way this first chapter sets up a story question. It should be noted that the events are seen from Orlando's point of view because Izzy is asleep.

The opening chapter shows Orlando, a ginger kitten, being approached in the middle of the night by an unusual visitor, Lord Falcon. He enlists Orlando's help to watch over Izzy Green, who is just a baby. From this moment everything changes – Orlando is sworn to protect Izzy from a danger that is as yet unknown.

### LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

**Strand 7:** Understanding and interpreting texts.

**Year 4:** 7.4b Deduce characters' reasons for behaviour from their actions.

**Year 5:** 7.5b Infer writers' perspectives from what is written and from what is implied.

**Year 6:** 6b Understand underlying themes, causes and points of view.

### FOCUS ON TEXT:

The focus is on characterisation, suspense and point of view.

1. Why do you think author has chosen to start the story in the middle of the night with an unexpected visit from a stranger?  
(An exciting or atmospheric start will draw the reader in and tempt them to read on. Tension is also created with the unexpected.)
2. How do we know that the chapter is written from Orlando's viewpoint?  
(Everything is seen through Orlando's eyes. 'Before him stood a tiny man, no bigger than him and dressed like a warrior.')
3. How would the opening scene be written if it was from Lord Falcon's point of view?  
(“Shh, don't wake the child,” said Lord Falcon. He tapped the ginger kitten on the nose; the kitten stopped purring and pricked his ears.)

### READING SKILL EMPHASIS: INFERENCE

1. Why do you think a mysterious elf has turned up in the middle of the night?

2. Who is he?
3. What does he look like?  
(This is shown by description and dialogue.)
4. What does he do and say to gain Orlando's trust?  
(He asks for Orlando's help, and there is something about his bearing and the way he speaks that is reassuring.)
5. What else does Lord Falcon say that convinces Orlando to trust him?  
(He asks Orlando to swear an oath to watch over Izzy.)
6. Is Lord Falcon decisive in his speech to Orlando? What does this tell you about his character?  
(That he is used to giving orders, and commands respect.)
7. What effect does being asked to swear an oath, have on Orlando?  
(He becomes alarmed for Izzy's safety.)
8. What does this tell you about the relationship between Orlando and Izzy?
9. What is the danger that threatens Izzy?  
(As yet the danger is unknown.)

#### **REFLECT:**

1. Why doesn't the author explain what the danger is?  
(This is left unexplained to create suspense – a cliff-hanger chapter ending.)
2. At the very end of the chapter why does Orlando ask, “What enemies? Will they come for her?”?  
(Short snappy sentences add to the tension.)
3. Why is the comment Lord Falcon makes about Izzy being a special child to the Ljosalfar important?  
(It raises an important story question.)
4. Who is Izzy? Why is she important?  
(Although the book is called The Company of Goblins, Izzy Green is featured on the back cover which indicates that she will play an important part in the story.)

#### **PLOT REVIEW:**

Do you think it is clear that Izzy Green will be a key character in the story, together with her cat, Orlando, and Lord Falcon? We know that she will be in danger, and that she is a special child to the Ljosalfar – the highest order of elves.

Chapter one is set in the past. How do we know this?

(On the back cover of the book Izzy is shown as a young girl and not a baby.)



Is there another clue on the cover which might give a hint about the danger mentioned?  
(There is a picture of a silver sphere hovering over Izzy's bed and she looks afraid.)

#### **ASSESSMENT FOCUS:**

**AF3**                    **To deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts.**

**Level 3:**            Identify the simple, most obvious points though there may also be some misunderstanding.  
Make some comments that include quotations from the text.

**Level 4:**            Comments make inferences (like best guesses) based on evidence from different points in the text. , e.g. interpret a character's motive from their actions.  
Inferences are often correct, but best words and phrases are not always used from the text to make the point.

**Level 5:**            Comments develop an explanation of inferred meanings drawing on evidence across the text – reading between the lines.  
Comments make inferences and deductions based on textual evidence, e.g. drawing conclusions about a character's feelings on the basis of their speech and actions.

#### **FOLLOW UP:**

Can you write the beginning of the chapter from Izzy's point of view?  
(Izzy opened her eyes and saw a tiny man ...)

# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS

## SESSION THREE: The Silver Sphere

### CHAPTER SYNOPSIS:

Chapter two starts with Izzy and Orlando in the same bedroom, but ten years later. Izzy is reading by torchlight when a strange silver sphere enters her bedroom. Orlando seizes the sphere and runs off with it. Izzy is terrified and calls her father, but he believes she has made the story up.

Family conflicts are revealed as Izzy's deceased grandmother gets the blame for her behaviour, "“She filled her head with all kind of folktales and nonsense.”" It is clear that her father is feeling guilty about cancelling their holiday and about putting work first.

### LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

**Strand 7:** Understanding and interpreting texts.

**Year 4:** 7.4e Explain how writers use figurative and expressive language to create images and atmosphere.

**Year 5:** 7.5e Explore how writers use language for comic and dramatic effects.

**Year 6:** 6e Recognise rhetorical devices used to argue, persuade, mislead and sway the reader.

### FOCUS ON TEXT

Chosen to allow discussion about characterisation.

In chapter two how does the writer focus on the characters of Izzy, her father, and her grandmother?

### READING SKILL: DEDUCTION

1. What can you tell about Izzy's character in the opening pages?  
(That she likes to take chances by reading 'forbidden' books under the covers.)
2. What can you tell about her father's character when he talks about things being difficult at work?  
(He feels guilty for putting work first, and becomes defensive – blaming Izzy's grandmother for Izzy's attention seeking behaviour.)

3. At the end of the chapter what can you tell about Izzy's relationship with her grandmother?  
(**Izzy was very close to her grandmother and misses her.**)
4. When a writer describes something by comparing it with something else, this is using figurative language.  
(**'A silver sphere hovered towards her, its blue aura trailing a faint stream of light in its wake. It was small, no larger than a golf ball.'**)
5. Another example of figurative speech is when Izzy's father compares her explanation of what has happened to a 'fairy story'.  
(**"Settle down now, Izzy, and no more fairy stories."**)
6. Can you make up your own example of figurative speech?
7. Rhetorical device: When a writer repeats a word or expression for emphasis this is called amplification. *Persuading the reader.*  
(**'Car headlights, it was probably just car headlights.'**)
8. Another example of amplification can be found at the very end of the second chapter. *Persuasion* again.  
(**"Trust your instincts. Trust Orlando."**)
9. Rhetorical device: A simile uses the words 'like' or 'as' to compare one object or idea with another to suggest they are alike. Can you find a simile in the text?  
(**'In one of its metallic claws it clasped a note; the other snapped the air like a pincer.'**)
10. Explore how writers use language for comic and dramatic effects. Pages 5/6.  
(**'There was a scrambling noise from the next room, a squeak, and a heavy thump on the landing. Izzy's father hopped into her room rubbing his foot. "And pick up Orlando's toys, I nearly broke my neck."**)
11. Rhetorical device: Parallelism is when a writer can use words or phrases with a similar structure – I went to the store, parked the car and bought a pizza. Example when Orlando seizes the sphere:  
(**'He ran for the window, heaved himself up and over, and disappeared into the night.'**)

## REFLECT:

1. At the beginning of the chapter we are told that 10 years have passed. How old would that make Izzy in chapter one?  
(**On page 6 Izzy says, "Dad, I'm nearly twelve." This would make her two in chapter one.**)
2. Do you think there is something strange about the note that was left by the tooth fairy?  
(**Collection of teeth by a silver sphere is not what one would expect from a tooth fairy. Too mechanical.**)

3. At the very end of the chapter, when Izzy is sleep-talking to her grandmother, does this make you wonder if Izzy does have special powers?  
(This is confirmation of what Lord Falcon said in the first chapter, and a hint of things to come.)

### **PLOT REVIEW:**

Can you think of a plot device used by writers to keep in the protagonist's point of view (POV) when a conversation between others takes place, and the protagonist is not in the room?

(When Izzy listens to her parents talking through the wall, we are still in her POV – even though she is not in the room with them.)

Try to think of instances in other books when this type of plot device is used. Why do authors do this?

(Several plot devices of this type can be used, one of which is when the protagonist is dreaming. Authors often keep to POV because it makes the story much more interesting to feel like you are seeing everything through a particular character's eyes.)

Can you think of another example?

Orlando disappears into the night with the silver sphere. Is this a story question?

(Yes. Orlando is a key character, and he suddenly disappears. Where has he gone?)

How do we know Izzy is upset by her father's words?

(A tear rolls down her cheek, and she says, "Nanny Ellen would've believed me.")

### **ASSESSMENT FOCUS:**

**AF2** To understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text.

**Level 3:** Identify the simple, most obvious points, although there may be some confusion if points are made in different places in a text.  
Make some comments that include quotations and references to a text, even if they are not always relevant.

**Level 4:** Identify some relevant points, with comments supported by some generally relevant quotation or references to a text. Points might be a bit vague.

**Level 5:** Identify most relevant points clearly, including those selected from different places in the text. Comments generally support them using relevant quotation, even when points made are not always accurate.

### **FOLLOW UP:**

Can you write a description of Izzy to include personality traits as well as physical qualities? How does Izzy demonstrate her courage when the silver sphere approaches her bed? Does she like to disobey her parents?

**(She remains calm and doesn't scream for help straight away. She keeps her nerve and watches the sphere for a while. She disobeys by reading a book under the covers.)**

**Write a description of Izzy's grandmother. Do you think she is kind, and does she miss Izzy? ("Night, night, my lovely girl, God bless you, and keep you safe." She reached out and put her hand on Izzy's shoulder.)**

# THE COMPANY of GOBLINS

## SESSION FOUR: The Deal

### CHAPTER SYNOPSIS:

Izzy wakes in the morning to find that Orlando is still missing. Her parents are going to take her to stay with her grandfather for the holidays, and they don't seem at all concerned that she is worried about her cat.

A telephone call from the office excites her parents about the prospect of a possible promotion for her father. The head of the entire company wants to meet Izzy, but Izzy just wants to find Orlando.

Izzy strikes a deal with her father – if she goes to the office with him without a fuss, then he must promise to look for Orlando upon their return.

### LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

**Strand 8:** Engaging and responding to texts.

**Year 4:** 8.4b Interrogate texts to deepen and clarify understanding and response.

**Year 5:** 8.5b Compare the usefulness of techniques such as visualisation, prediction and empathy in exploring the meaning of texts.

**Year 6:** 6b Sustain engagement with longer texts, using different techniques to make the text come alive.

### FOCUS ON TEXT:

The development of empathy and prediction.

In chapter three can you try to understand how Izzy feels about going to her grandfather's without Orlando? And how do you think she feels about not being believed by her parents? Also what predictions can you make about the events in this chapter?

### READING SKILL: DEDUCTION

1. Can you understand and share Izzy's feelings when Orlando hasn't returned by morning?  
(She is worried about him, she is going away, and she doesn't want to go without him. Also he makes her feel safe somehow.)
2. Why does Orlando make Izzy feel safe?



**(He has been her constant companion since she was a small child, and they have a special bond.)**

3. Can you understand and share Izzy's feelings as to why she thinks she isn't safe?  
**(The appearance of a strange silver sphere has frightened her. Even worse, her parents think she is lying, and she still misses her grandmother.)**
4. How do you think Izzy feels after overhearing her parents' conversation?  
**(She knows it would only cause more trouble if she tried to explain that she didn't feel safe.)**
5. Are you able to make a prediction as to where Orlando has gone with the silver sphere?  
**(We know in chapter one that Orlando has sworn an oath to Lord Falcon. Could he be taking the sphere to him?)**
6. What clues has the author given you to be able to predict that something strange is about to happen at the office?  
**(There is a build up of tension from the start of the journey into work; a building larger than Izzy had ever imagined, a statue that gives her the creeps, the staff look like zombies, Mr McAllister's cold, clammy skin, and then the cliff-hanger at the end of the chapter – "Hold tight, Izzy. We're going up to the sixty-sixth floor.")**
7. What do you imagine or predict, that Izzy will find on the sixty-sixth floor?  
**(The clue is in the title of the book – The Company of Goblins.)**

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Would you understand better how Izzy was feeling if any of the following things happened to you?

- a) Your pet went missing.
- b) Your parents didn't believe you when you were telling the truth.
- c) You were sent away for the summer holidays.

How is speech set out in the chapter? Can you point out grammar points like speech marks, placement of exclamation marks, question marks, new speaker new line rule? Also when are italics are used, and the rule for the use of a comma in direct address?

**(An example with the use of the comma in direct address: -**

**"Have you noticed, Dad? There's not one living thing up here."')**

**This question asks Dad if he has noticed that there is not one living thing.**

**If the direct address comma is not used then we get: -**

**"Have you noticed Dad? There's not one living thing up here."')**

**This question is asking if Dad has been noticed.)**

When would you use a capital letter for Dad, Grandma or Mum, and when would you use a lower case letter?

**(An example of using a capital letter for Dad is when it replaces someone's name.**

“‘Why does your boss want to see me, Dad?’”.

An example when a lower case letter would be used for dad.

‘Izzy followed her dad back to the lift.’

Can you write a small section of speech?

### REFLECT:

1. Do you think Izzy and her parents will resolve their problems? Talk about their different personalities as demonstrated in the chapter. What are their strengths and weaknesses?
2. Discuss the scene at the end of the chapter when Izzy is at the office. Is she under any stress? How does that affect the way she looks at things? Is there a sense that something is about to happen?  
(Izzy gets a warning look from her father (meaning, ‘don’t let me down.’). Also she is still worried about Orlando so this will colour the way she is feeling and heighten her stress levels. The feeling that something is about to happen comes from the slow build up of tension.)
3. What line in particular makes you apprehensive?  
(This could be ‘She shook his hand gingerly. Then wished she hadn’t when she felt his cold, clammy skin.’ or perhaps, ‘They were like the zombies from her book, except these people didn’t eat human flesh ... hopefully.’)

### PLOT REVIEW:

- a) Why is it important for Izzy to meet the head of her father’s company?
- b) Try writing a description of the building and Izzy’s impression when she first arrives.  
a) It might lead to promotion for her father.  
b) ‘Izzy stared wide-eyed at the grandeur of the foyer’, etc.

### ASSESSMENT FOCUS:

**AF4** To identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level.

**Level 3:** Make straightforward inferences (best guesses) based on a single word or phrase in the text, e.g. ‘he was upset because it says “he was crying”’. Points about a text show there is a straightforward understanding of it.

**Level 4:** Identify some structural choices with simple comment, e.g. ‘he describes the accident first and then goes back to tell you why the child was in the road’. Identify some basic features of organisation at text level.

**Level 5:** Comment on structural choices, showing some general awareness of the writer’s craft. Identify various features relating to organisation at text level, including form, with some explanation.

(Examples: 'Izzy kept a tight hold of her father's hand until they got off.')

**AND**

('She moved closer to her father and slipped her hand into his.' Build up of tension.)

**FOLLOW UP:**

Two examples of fun options to write half a page on:

- a) What has happened to Orlando? OR
- b) What will Izzy find on the sixty-sixth floor?

# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS

## SESSION FIVE: A Strange Meeting

### CHAPTER SYNOPSIS:

In chapter four, Izzy meets the head of the company, but she only hears his voice, the videoconference screen shows a picture of the St Onoman's logo. She has an uneasy feeling when she enters the penthouse and throughout the interview, as though she is being watched.

The Chief Executive asks Izzy some very strange questions, and when she leaves she hears an angry exchange when the intercom is left on. Her father and Mr McAllister don't seem to notice, and Izzy's unease deepens.

### LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

**Strand 7:** Understanding and interpreting texts.

**Year 4:** 7.4e Explain how writers use figurative and expressive language to create images and atmosphere.

**Year 5:** 7.5e Explore how writers use language for comic and dramatic effects.

**Year 6:** 6e Recognise rhetorical devices used to argue, persuade, mislead and sway the reader.

### FOCUS ON TEXT:

Chosen to look at descriptive language.

Chapter four.

### READING SKILL: INFERENCE

1. What would be an example of figurative speech for the Chief Executive's voice?  
(**"Now tell me young lady," the voice was oily, sugar sweet.'**)
2. How does the author use other senses to add to Izzy's sense of unease?  
(**'Izzy shivered in the draft of cold air that hit her. The expensive rugs did little to soften the feel of the hard floor.'** Cold and touch as well as sight.)
3. Why do you think there are huge stone monoliths, and an enormous mahogany desk?  
(**They are designed to give the impression of power, and give Izzy 'the creeps'. Creating image and atmosphere.**)

4. What does Izzy think about the penthouse?  
(She notices that there is not one living thing – only the horrible stones. “It’s like a cave.” Use of a simile.)
5. Why do you think the author has created this image of the penthouse?  
(To increase Izzy’s unease and build the tension. Mystery – is there something usual about this place?)
6. How do we know Izzy is nervous?  
(She lowers her voice and, ‘Izzy shifted uncomfortably in her large chair.’ ‘Izzy glanced around the room feeling uneasy.’)
7. Can you spot another tell-tale sign that she is nervous?  
(She looks at her father for reassurance when questioned by the Chief Executive.)
8. Why do you think the author didn’t let the other characters see the Chief Executive in the interview?  
(To emphasise the anonymity of the Chief Executive – he could be anyone. It also accentuates the disembodied, harsh voice. Mystery.)
9. Why does the writer use the following sentences?  
“‘Sir. Excuse me, sir. I think the intercom’s still on.’”  
“‘IMBECILE! Perhaps you need a spell in the mines.’”  
“‘No, no it wasn’t me. I think you knocked it ...’”  
(The writer is using language for dramatic or comic effect. It further adds to the mystery that something is not right about the Chief Executive and the penthouse.)
10. Can you give another example of language used for dramatic or comic effect?  
(“‘Izzy followed her father back to his office. He headed straight for the coffee machine.’” This shows her father is stressed and needs a coffee.)
11. Enumeratio (enumeration) is a rhetorical term for the listing of details – a type of amplification. Can you give an example?  
(“‘I’ll show you my new project on the Island. There’s going to be a marina, with shops and hotels.’”)
12. Onomatopoeia – words that imitate the sound they describe – plunk, whiz, pop, a rhetorical device. Can you find an example?  
(A harsh, guttural voice came through the speakers. Harsh, guttural.)

## REFLECT:

1. Do you think Izzy is right to feel uneasy in the penthouse?  
(The chill in the air, the large stones and the strange disembodied voice, plus the feeling of being watched make Izzy feel uneasy.)
2. Do you believe Mr McAllister’s explanation that the Chief Executive has become a ‘bit of a recluse’, and, ‘that is how big business is run.’?

(It is a very convenient explanation, but even more worrying is that the adults don't seem to care. "The shareholders don't really care as long as profits keep rising.")

3. Discuss the Island Project that Izzy's father is working on. Reflect on why this is so important to the Chief Executive.  
(This is a story question. It is mentioned earlier and then again, right at the end of the chapter to make the reader remember it.)

### PLOT REVIEW:

1. What else have you discovered about Izzy's character?  
(Izzy is observant and intuitive. She senses when things are not right.)
2. What significance can be attached to the snatched conversation Izzy hears just before the lift doors close? Do you think it is about the old lady on the island or something more sinister?  
(“She doesn't believe, so they can't make contact, but we'd better keep a close watch.” Definitely another story question.)

### ASSESSMENT FOCUS:

<b>AF5</b>	<b>To explain and comment on writers' use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level.</b>
<b>Level 3:</b>	Identify a few basic features of a writer's use of language, but with little or no comment.
<b>Level 4:</b>	Identify some basic features of a writer's use of language, e.g. <i>'all the questions make you want to find out what happens next'</i>
<b>Level 5:</b>	Identify various features of a writer's use of language, with some explanation, e.g. <i>'when it gets to the climax they speak in quick, short sentences which makes it seem more tense'</i> , and <i>'the use of rhetorical devices to create more interesting or persuasive content'</i> , also the use of description to create <i>'atmosphere and suspense'</i> . Comments show some awareness of the effect of the writer's language choices, e.g. <i>'"inked up" is a good way of describing how the blackberries go a bluey, black colour as they ripen'</i> .

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

If you go to the Mythology Section at [www.thecompanyofgoblins.com](http://www.thecompanyofgoblins.com) and study two or three of the characters under The Creature Collection this will help you to better understand characterisation in creative writing, and enhance narrative skills.

### FOLLOW UP:

Would you like to write about a mythical character of your own creation with interesting characterisation and description?



# THE COMPANY *of* GOBLINS

## SESSION SIX: The Scrolls of Alfheimer

### CHAPTER SYNOPSIS:

This chapter finds Izzy at her grandad's with Orlando. A spell has been put on her so that she can understand when he talks to her. This is the only way that Lord Falcon can make contact, because if Izzy doesn't believe in elves, he would be turned to dust.

Izzy learns that there is a crisis of magic because the silver spheres have been snatching children's teeth before the tooth fairies can get to them. Children's teeth are the source of all magic. She is told that she holds special powers to help restore the balance of nature and also that she may be in danger. Lord Falcon asks Izzy to come away with him, but it is all too much, and Izzy needs time to think.

### LITERACY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

**Strand 7:** Understanding and interpreting texts.

**Year 4:** 7.4b Deduce the characters' reasons for their behaviour from their actions.

**Year 5:** 7.5b Infer writers' perspectives from what is written and from what is implied.

**Year 6:** 6b Understand underlying themes, causes and points of view.

### FOCUS ON TEXT:

Chosen to show character interaction and themes behind writing.

Chapter five.

### READING SKILL: DEDUCTION:

1. Why does Izzy scream and call for her grandad when Orlando speaks to her?  
(Because she is frightened and thinks she is hearing voices.)
2. Why doesn't her grandad believe her?  
(Because like her parents, he suspects her of attention seeking, and doesn't take her seriously. "You're taking this too far. I know all about your 'Tooth Fairy' nonsense. Go back to sleep.")
3. Chapter one was written from Orlando's POV, how do we know that we are now in Izzy's POV?

**(‘After a brief pause, she could hear the sound of her grandfather clomping and wheezing his way upstairs.’ We don’t know what Orlando can hear, or see, or Grandad either.)**

4. A parallelism is when words or phrases with a similar structure are used. Can you find one on page 18?  
**(‘Orlando got up, bounced up the bed, and butted his great head against her shoulder.’)**
5. What other behaviour shows that Izzy is frightened?  
**(‘She sat clutching the bedclothes’, ‘pulled the bedclothes right over her head’, ‘pulled Orlando onto her lap and smoothed him.’)**
6. Why does Izzy resolve to hold her nerve if it happens again?  
**(She is worried that her grandfather might call her parents, ‘She put her hands over her mouth stifling a scream; then took a deep breath.’)**
7. Amplification is when a word or expression is repeated for emphasis. Can you find an example? *Persuasion* again.  
**(Orlando says, “No. No you’re not. I really am talking to you.”)**
8. Izzy doesn’t believe in elves. What convinces her they are real?  
**(Orlando’s logic wins her over. “You’re talking to me and I’m a cat,” said Orlando. “You believe that, don’t you?”)**
9. What is Izzy’s reaction when Lord Falcon tells her she is the child in the scrolls of Alfheimer?  
**(Izzy’s reaction is one of disbelief. “ME! Why me? What power?”)**
10. When Lord Falcon asks Izzy to come away with him, why does she refuse?  
**(She is worried about what her parents would say, and she thinks she would be better off with her family if she is in danger. She doesn’t really believe she is in danger.)**
11. How do we know Izzy doesn’t really believe she is in danger?  
**(‘Izzy’s head was spinning. She sat quietly for a moment thinking about everything that had happened, and then she smiled. “Now I can talk to you, Orlando, I want to hear everything.”)**
12. When Lord Falcon disappears, what rhetorical device does the writer use?  
**(A simile: ‘The air around him wavered like a summer heat haze, and he was gone.’)**
13. Why does the writer choose to end a tense and dramatic chapter with comedy?  
**(“There’s lots of time for that, Izzy. We have a big day tomorrow and you need to rest. There is one very important thing though; that cat food you buy me, ‘Mr Kitkins’ ... it’s horrible.”)**  
**This breaks the tension and creates a comedic ending and a change of pace. Action and excitement is heightened by comic relief.**

14. What does the last sentence of the chapter tell you about Orlando's character?  
(It tells you that he likes his food, and he likes to be in charge. 'Orlando held up his paw again.')

### REFLECT:

1. What have you learnt about Izzy in this chapter?  
(She is brave; holding her nerve when Orlando speaks to her, upset about her parents cancelling their holiday, and she finds it hard to believe she has special powers. She is sensible – believing that she will be safer with her parents. She has only just met Lord Falcon after all.)
2. Discuss the scrolls of Alfheimer. Do you think Izzy is the child that is mentioned? She doesn't appear to have any special powers – has Lord Falcon made a mistake?
3. Despite the recent strange events do you think Izzy is correct in not going with Lord Falcon?
4. How important is it for the elves to get Izzy's help?  
(“We only know that the spheres are snatching the teeth before us. Children's teeth are the source of all our magic. Without magic, the consequences are unthinkable.”) Pretty important, then.
5. Izzy asks how to get to the magical world. Lord Falcon replies, “This isn't a fairytale, Izzy. There aren't any holes to fall down or rabbits to follow. You are here already. Magic is all around us. I simply have to take you to the palace. It's not far – it's on an island just off the coast.”  
An analogy has been used here. Why do you think the writer did that?  
(This analogy argues how different things are similar. In this instance between a fairytale and the real world. The writer wants to show that although this story is magical, it is set in the real world.)

### PLOT REVIEW:

1. Has Izzy experienced a build up of strange events since the second chapter?  
(Yes. The silver sphere, the strange visit to the office, Orlando talking to her, and the meeting with Lord Falcon. )
2. Predict the action Izzy will take?
3. Are there any clues, so far, as to where the danger to Izzy might come from?  
(Lord Falcon fears that whoever is making the spheres might have found her.)
4. Why does Lord Falcon dismiss the strange meeting at the office as unimportant?  
(“No, I mean anything supernatural or magical. It won't be anything to do with humans.”)
5. Why does Lord Falcon think it is safe for Izzy at the office?  
(A magical creature would be turned to dust if seen by someone who didn't believe. Therefore, no magical creature could run a human company.)

## **ASSESSMENT FOCUS:**

**AF3**            **To deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts.**

**Level 3:**        Identify the simple, most obvious points though there may also be some misunderstanding.  
Make some comments that include quotations from the text.

**Level 4:**        Comments make inferences (like best guesses) based on evidence from different points in the text. , e.g. interpret a character's motive from their actions.  
Inferences are often correct, but best words and phrases are not always used from the text to make the point.

**Level 5:**        Comments develop an explanation of inferred meanings drawing on evidence across the text – reading between the lines.  
Comments make inferences and deductions based on textual evidence, e.g. drawing conclusions about a character's feelings on the basis of their speech and actions.

## **FOLLOW UP:**

Would you like to write a magical story set in a magical world?

**(Perhaps it might be set down a rabbit hole, inside a tree trunk or inside the television.)**