

James and the Giant Peach - Phase 1 Day 8

By Roald Dahl



RECALL:

How would you describe the Old Man?
Write 2 or 3 sentences to describe him, think about the adjectives you are using.

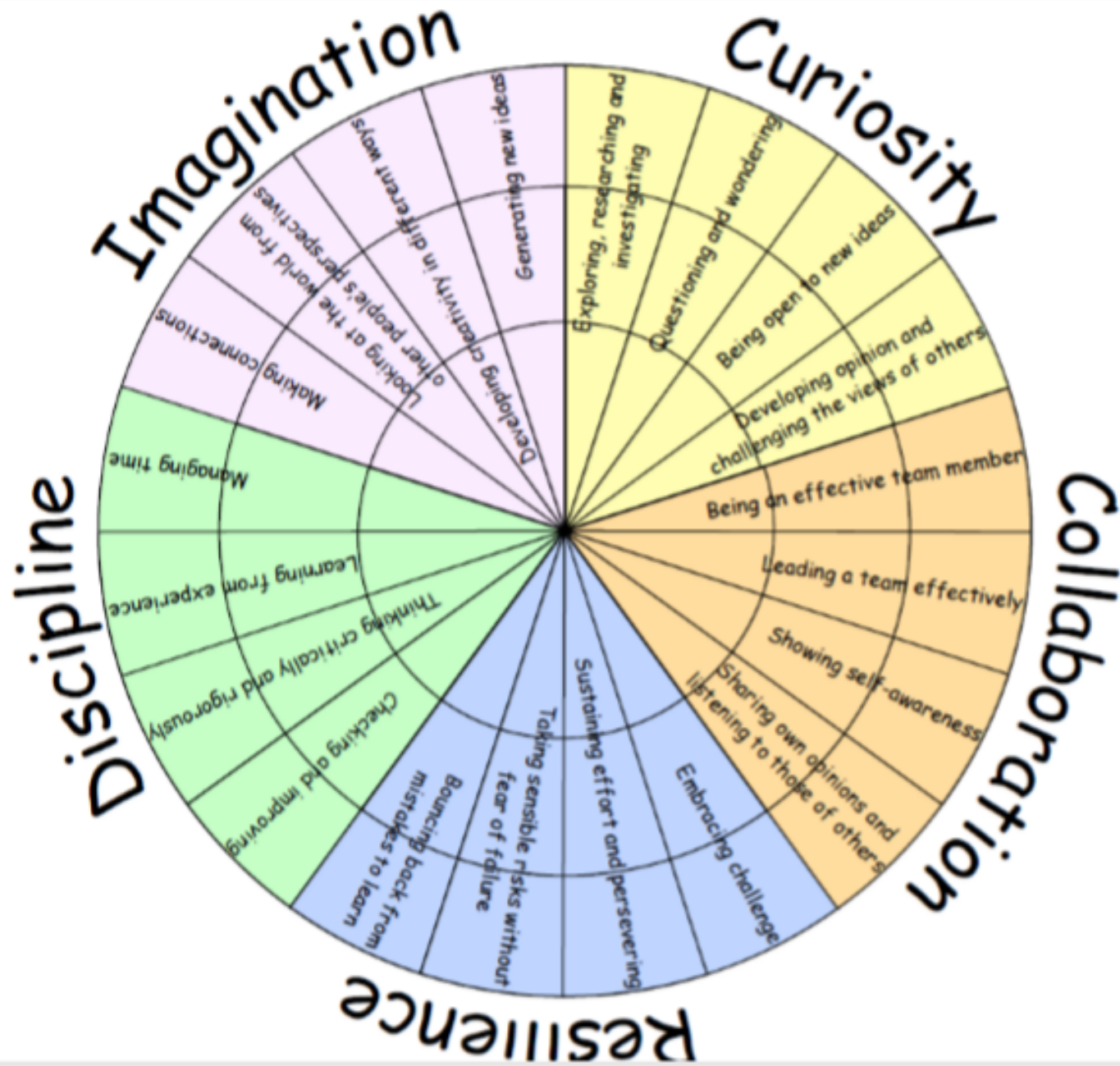
LEARNING LADDER AND SKILLS:

RESPONDER: p13 step 5

I can find answers in the text. I can make simple inferences about character's thoughts and feelings.

SKILLS:

- Reading
- Thinking
- Collaborating
- Improving



LEARNING HABITS:

Which learning habits do you think we will need to use today?

Chapter Five

The next moment, James was running back towards the house as fast as he could go. He would do it all in the kitchen, he told himself – if only he could get in there without Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker seeing him. He was terribly excited. He flew through the long grass and the stinging nettles, not caring whether he got stung or not on his bare knees, and in the distance he could see Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker sitting in their chairs with their backs towards him. He swerved away from them so as to go round the other side of the house, but then suddenly, just as he was passing underneath the old peach tree that stood in the middle of the garden, his foot slipped and he fell flat on his face in the grass. The paper bag burst

open as it hit the ground and the thousands of tiny green things were scattered in all directions.

James immediately picked himself up on to his hands and knees and started searching around for his precious treasures. *But what was this?* They were all sinking into the soil! He could actually see them wriggling and twisting as they burrowed their way downward into the hard earth, and at once he reached out a hand to pick some of them up before it was too late, but they disappeared right under his fingers. He went after some others, and the same thing happened! He began scrabbling around frantically in an effort to catch hold of those that were left, but they were too quick for him. Each time the tips of his fingers were just about to touch them, they vanished into the earth! And soon, in the space of only a few seconds, every single one of them had gone!

James felt like crying. He would never get them back now – they were lost, lost, lost forever.

But where had they gone to? And why in the world had they been so eager to push down into the earth like that? What were they after? There

was nothing down *there*. Nothing except the roots of the old peach tree ... and a whole lot of earthworms and centipedes and insects living in the soil.

But what was it that the old man had said? *Whoever they meet first, be it bug, insect, animal, or tree, that will be the one who gets the full power of their magic!*



Good heavens, thought James. What is going to happen in that case if they do meet an earthworm? Or a centipede? Or a spider? And what if they do go into the roots of the peach tree?

'Get up at once, you lazy little beast!' a voice was suddenly shouting in James's ear. James glanced up and saw Aunt Spiker standing over him, grim

and tall and bony, glaring at him through her steel-rimmed spectacles. 'Get back over there immediately and finish chopping up those logs!' she ordered.

Aunt Sponge, fat and pulpy as a jellyfish, came waddling up behind her sister to see what was going on. 'Why don't we just lower the boy down the well in a bucket and leave him there for the night?' she suggested. 'That ought to teach him not to laze around like this the whole day long.'

'That's a very good wheeze, my dear Sponge. But let's make him finish chopping up the wood first. Be off with you at once, you hideous brat, and do some work!'

Slowly, sadly, poor James got up off the ground and went back to the woodpile. Oh, if only he hadn't slipped and fallen and dropped that precious bag. All hope of a happier life had gone completely now. Today and tomorrow and the next day and all the other days as well would be nothing but punishment and pain, unhappiness and despair.

He picked up the chopper and was just about to start chopping away again when he heard a shout behind him that made him stop and turn.

Chunk and Query 1



In Chapter 5, how does the author create suspense and excitement?

Chapter Six

'Sponge! Sponge! Come here at once and look at this!'

'At what?'

'It's a peach!' Aunt Spiker was shouting.

'A what?'

'A peach! Right up there on the highest branch! Can't you see it?'

'I think you must be mistaken, my dear Spiker. That miserable tree *never* has any peaches on it.'

'There's one on it now, Sponge! You look for yourself!'



'You're teasing me, Spiker. You're making my mouth water on purpose when there's nothing to put into it. Why, that tree's never even had a *blossom* on it, let alone a peach. Right up on the highest branch, you say? I can't see a thing. Very funny ... Ha, ha ... *Good gracious* me! Well, *I'll be blowed!* There really *is* a peach up there!'

'A nice big one, too!' Aunt Spiker said.

‘A beauty, a beauty!’ Aunt Sponge cried out.

At this point, James slowly put down his chopper and turned and looked across at the two women who were standing underneath the peach tree.

Something is about to happen, he told himself. Something peculiar is about to happen any moment. He hadn’t the faintest idea what it might be, but he could feel it in his bones that something was going to happen soon. He could feel it in the air around him ... in the sudden stillness that had fallen upon the garden ...

James tiptoed a little closer to the tree. The aunts were not talking now. They were just standing there, staring at the peach. There was not a sound anywhere, not even a breath of wind, and overhead the sun blazed down upon them out of a deep blue sky.

‘It looks ripe to me,’ Aunt Spiker said, breaking the silence.

‘Then why don’t we eat it?’ Aunt Sponge suggested, licking her thick lips. ‘We can have half

each. Hey, you! James! Come over here at once and climb this tree!’

James came running over.

‘I want you to pick that peach up there on the highest branch,’ Aunt Sponge went on. ‘Can you see it?’

‘Yes, Auntie Sponge, I can see it!’

‘And don’t you dare eat any of it yourself. Your Aunt Spiker and I are going to have it between us right here and now, half each. Get on with you! Up you go!’

James crossed over to the tree trunk.

‘Stop!’ Aunt Spiker said quickly. ‘Hold everything!’ She was staring up into the branches with her mouth wide open and her eyes bulging as though she had seen a ghost. ‘*Look!*’ she said. ‘*Look, Sponge, look!*’

‘What’s the matter with you?’ Aunt Sponge demanded.

‘It’s *growing!*’ Aunt Spiker cried. ‘It’s getting bigger and bigger!’

‘What is?’

‘The peach, of course!’

'You're joking!'

'Well, look for yourself!'

'But my dear Spiker, that's perfectly ridiculous. That's impossible. That's – that's – that's – Now, wait *just* a minute – No – No – that can't be right – No – Yes – Great Scott! The thing really *is* growing!

'It's nearly twice as big already!' Aunt Spiker shouted.

'It can't be true!'

'It is true!'

'It must be a miracle!'

'Watch it! Watch it!'

'I am watching it!'

'Great heavens alive!' Aunt Spiker yelled. 'I can actually see the thing bulging and swelling before my very eyes!'



Chapter Seven

The two women and the small boy stood absolutely still on the grass underneath the tree, gazing up at this extraordinary fruit. James's little face was glowing with excitement, his eyes were as big and bright as two stars. He could see the peach swelling larger and larger as clearly as if it were a balloon being blown up.

In half a minute, it was the size of a melon!

In another half-minute, it was *twice* as big again!

'Just *look* at it growing!' Aunt Spiker cried.

'Will it ever stop!' Aunt Sponge shouted, waving her fat arms and starting to dance around in circles.

And now it was so big it looked like an enormous butter-coloured pumpkin dangling from the top of the tree.

'Get away from that tree trunk, you stupid boy!' Aunt Spiker yelled. 'The slightest shake and I'm sure it'll fall off! It must weigh twenty or thirty pounds at least!'

The branch that the peach was growing upon was beginning to bend over further and further because of the weight.

'Stand back!' Aunt Sponge shouted. 'It's coming down! The branch is going to break!'

But the branch didn't break. It simply bent over more and more as the peach got heavier and heavier.

And still it went on growing.

In another minute, this mammoth fruit was as large and round and fat as Aunt Sponge herself, and probably just as heavy.

'It *has* to stop now!' Aunt Spiker yelled. 'It can't go on for ever!'

But it didn't stop.

Soon it was the size of a small car, and reached halfway to the ground.

Both aunts were now hopping round and round the tree, clapping their hands and shouting all sorts of silly things in their excitement.

‘Hallelujah!’ Aunt Spiker shouted. ‘What a peach! What a peach!’



‘Terrifico!’ Aunt Sponge cried out. ‘Magnifico! Splendifico! And what a meal!’

‘It’s still growing.’

‘I know! I know!’

As for James, he was so spellbound by the whole thing that he could only stand and stare and murmur quietly to himself, 'Oh, isn't it beautiful. It's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.'

'Shut up, you little twerp!' Aunt Spiker snapped, happening to overhear him. 'It's none of your business!'

'That's right,' Aunt Sponge declared. 'It's got nothing to do with you whatsoever! Keep out of it.'

'Look!' Aunt Spiker shouted. 'It's growing faster than ever now! It's speeding up!'

'I see it, Spiker! I do! I do!'

Bigger and bigger grew the peach, bigger and bigger and bigger.

Then at last, when it had become nearly as tall as the tree that it was growing on, as tall and wide, in fact, as a small house, the bottom part of it gently touched the ground – and there it rested.

'It can't fall off now!' Aunt Sponge shouted.

'It's stopped growing!' Aunt Spiker cried.

'No, it hasn't!'

'Yes, it has!'

'It's slowing down, Spiker, it's slowing down! But it hasn't stopped yet! You watch it!'

There was a pause.

'It has now!'

'I believe you're right.'

'Do you think it's safe to touch it?'

'I don't know. We'd better be careful.'

Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker began walking slowly round the peach, inspecting it very cautiously from all sides. They were like a couple of hunters who had just shot an elephant and were not quite sure whether it was dead or alive. And the massive round fruit towered over them so high that they looked like midgets from another world beside it.

The skin of the peach was very beautiful – a rich buttery yellow with patches of brilliant pink and red. Aunt Sponge advanced cautiously and touched it with the tip of one finger. 'It's ripe!' she cried. 'It's just perfect! Now, look here, Spiker. Why don't we go and get a shovel right away and dig out a great big chunk of it for you and me to eat?'



'No,' Aunt Spiker said. 'Not yet.'
'Why ever not?'
'Because I say so.'
'But I can't *wait* to eat some!' Aunt Sponge cried out. She was watering at the mouth now and a thin trickle of spit was running down one side of her chin.

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'My dear Sponge,' Aunt Spiker said slowly, winking at her sister and smiling a sly, thin-lipped smile. 'There's a pile of money to be made out of this if only we can handle it right. You wait and see.'

Chunk and Query 2



How has the author shown the difference between the characters in their reaction to the peach?

At the end, Spiker says to Sponge, they are going to make money. How do you think they are going to make money out of the peach?