

Skellig

David Almond

Mid morning. Mina's mother brought cups of tea for us. She sat beside us on the step. She talked about the fledglings, the flowers that were bursting into bloom, the air that every day became warmer, the sun that every day was a little higher and a little warmer. She talked about the way spring made the world burst into life after months of apparent death. She told us about the goddess called Persephone, who was forced to spend half a year in the darkness deep underground. Winter happened when she was trapped inside the earth. The days shrank, they became cold and short and dark. Living things hid themselves away. Spring came when she was released and made her slow way up to the world again. The world became brighter and bolder in order to welcome her back. It began to be filled with warmth and light. The animals dared to wake, they dared to have their young. Plants dared to send out buds and shoots. Life dared to come back.

"An old myth," I said.

"Yes," she said. "But maybe it's a myth that's nearly true. Look around you, Michael. Fledglings and blooms and bright sunshine. Maybe what we see around us is the whole world welcoming Persephone home."

She rested her hand on my arm.

"They can do marvellous things, Michael. Maybe you'll soon be welcoming your own Persephone home."

Recall:

Remind yourself of who Persephone is and how she escaped from the underworld.

Go to the BBC website (using the link below) and listen to the recording.

What deal did Hades strike with Hermes?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/ks2-primary-history-ancient-greece-persephone-and-hades/z4qvpg8>

Recall:

What's similar and what's different about these three words?

What spelling patterns can you see?

force

forceful

forcing

LO: Use verbs to help the reader visualise more.

Examine: Read the first chunk and underline the verbs.

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LO: Use verbs to help the reader visualise more.

Examine: Why has the author chosen the verbs that are highlighted?

Mid morning. Mina's mother brought cups of tea for us. She sat beside us on the step. She talked about the fledglings, the flowers that were **bursting** into bloom, the air that every day became warmer, the sun that every day was a little higher and a little warmer. She talked about the way spring made the world **burst** into life after months of apparent death. She told us about the goddess called Persephone, who was **forced** to spend half a year in the darkness deep underground. Winter happened when she was **trapped** inside the earth. The days **shrank**, they became cold and short and dark. Living things **hid** themselves away. Spring came when she was **released** and made her slow way up to the world again. The world became brighter and bolder in order to welcome her back. It began to be filled with warmth and light. The animals **dared** to wake, they **dared** to have their young. Plants **dared** to send out buds and shoots. Life dared to come back.

Identify:

Mid morning. Mina's mother brought cups of tea for us. She sat beside us on the step. She talked about the fledglings, the flowers that were **bursting** into bloom, the air that every day became warmer, the sun that every day was a little higher and a little warmer. She talked about the way spring made the world **burst** into life after months of apparent death. She told us about the goddess called Persephone, who was **forced** to spend half a year in the darkness deep underground. Winter happened when she was **trapped** inside the earth. The days **shrank**, they became cold and short and dark. Living things **hid** themselves away. Spring came when she was **released** and made her slow way up to the world again. The world became brighter and bolder in order to welcome her back. It began to be filled with warmth and light. The animals **dared** to wake, they **dared** to have their young. Plants **dared** to send out buds and shoots. Life dared to come back.

The author used these verbs to help the reader visualise Persephone's story: despair and optimism. As the reader builds a clearer picture (understanding) of despair and optimism, they can relate the myth more to the problems for Michael and his life, his sister and his worries. The reader can see how Mina's mother is taking what positives she can from what is happening around her. For example, she can see the flowers bursting into bloom (not just "opening"). David Almond is wanting us to see how the characters have different impressions of what is happening. This makes the reader understand more about the characters and what is happening in their lives. The reader is left wondering (gripped) - will Mina's mother's positivity and hope lead to more positive changes in Michael's life.

LO: Use verbs to help the reader visualise more.

- Some will explain why a certain verb is more effective than another one in a particular sentence.
- Some will write their own sentence and think of their own verbs.
- Most will use verbs to write their own sentence.
- All will identify verbs and understand why authors use certain verbs.

Apply:

1. Use one of the highlighted verbs and write a sentence about Persephone.
2. Write your own sentence and come up with your own verb to describe Persephone's escape. You could ask an adult at home to use an online thesaurus.
3. Why is the verb "dare" more effective than decide in the sentences below?

*It began to be filled with warmth and light. The animals **dared** to wake, they **dared** to have their young. Plants **dared** to send out buds and shoots.*