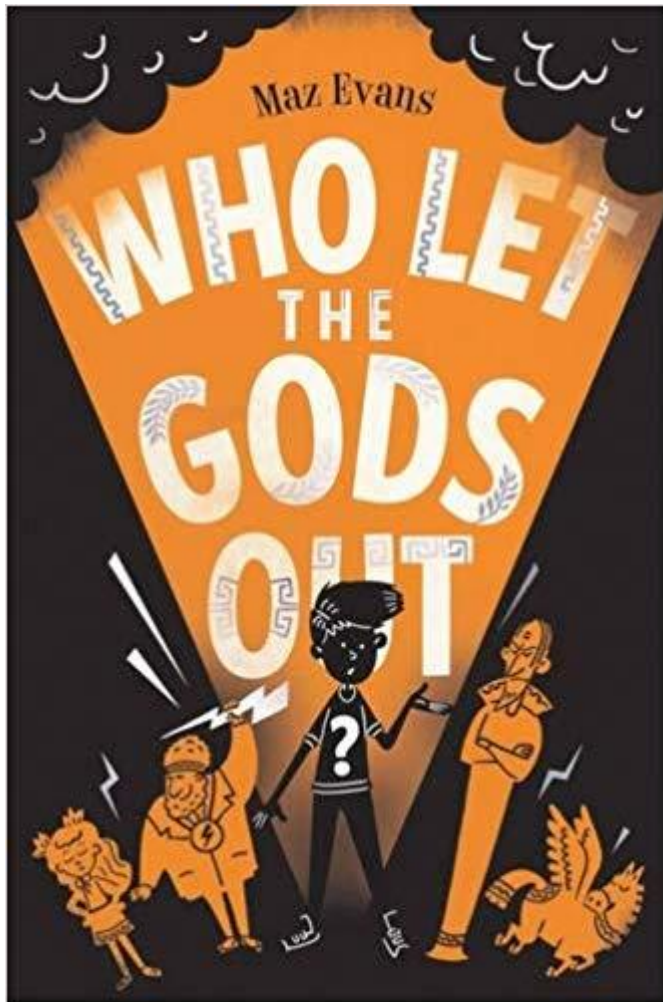


Wednesday



Elliot's mum is ill and his home is under threat, but a shooting star crashes to earth and changes his life forever. The star is Virgo - a young Zodiac goddess on a mission. But the pair accidentally release Thanatos, a wicked death daemon imprisoned beneath Stonehenge, and must then turn to the old Olympian gods for help. After centuries of cushy retirement on earth, are Zeus and his crew up to the task of saving the world - and solving Elliot's problems too?

1) Look at the front cover: make a prediction about the story by using the title and the images on the front of the book.

(2 marks)

2) Read the blurb. Clarify what a *cushy retirement* is.

(1 mark)

3) What do you think Elliot's problems are?

(2 marks)

Chapter One

A Not Quite Normal Day

It began on a Friday, as strange things often do. This particular Friday had been stranger than most, although it had started normally enough. Elliot Hooper got up at 7.30am as normal, made his Mum breakfast at 8.15am as normal, went to school at 8.55am as normal and was in the Headmaster's office by 9.30am, which was in fact, slightly later than normal.

'Oh Elliot,' sighed Graham Sopweed, headmaster of Brysmore Grammar School. 'What are we going to do with you?'

He looked into the blue-green eyes of the 13-year-old boy before him, as Elliot scratched his shaggy blonde head for an answer. Two years earlier, Graham Sopweed had watched as Elliot was proudly escorted through Brysmore's gates by his Mum, Nan and Grandad. The reports from his primary school had been glowing. "Elliot Hooper is a wonderful student who is sure to set Brysmore alight," his previous headmistress promised. There was no doubt that Elliot was a bright boy, but after a promising start, the past year had seen a big change in this young man and not for

the better. Elliot Hooper hadn't set Brysmore alight. But Mr Sopweed was more than a little concerned that he might set the school on fire.

'It's a tricky one, Sir,' Elliot replied after a lengthy pause. 'It's really a question of everyone's best interests. And the simple fact is that I don't want to be at this school, the teachers don't want me to be at this school, the pupils don't want me or the teachers to be at this school, so perhaps it's time we admitted defeat and everyone got home in time for *Deal or No Deal*.'

Read the extract of chapter one, 'A Not Quite Normal Day.'

4) Why has the author repeated the word 'normal' in the first paragraph?

_____ (1 mark)

5) Find a word that is a synonym for guided.

_____ (1 mark)

6) What is Mr Sopweed worried that Elliot might do to the school?

_____ (1 mark)

7) Find evidence that Elliot doesn't want to stay at school.

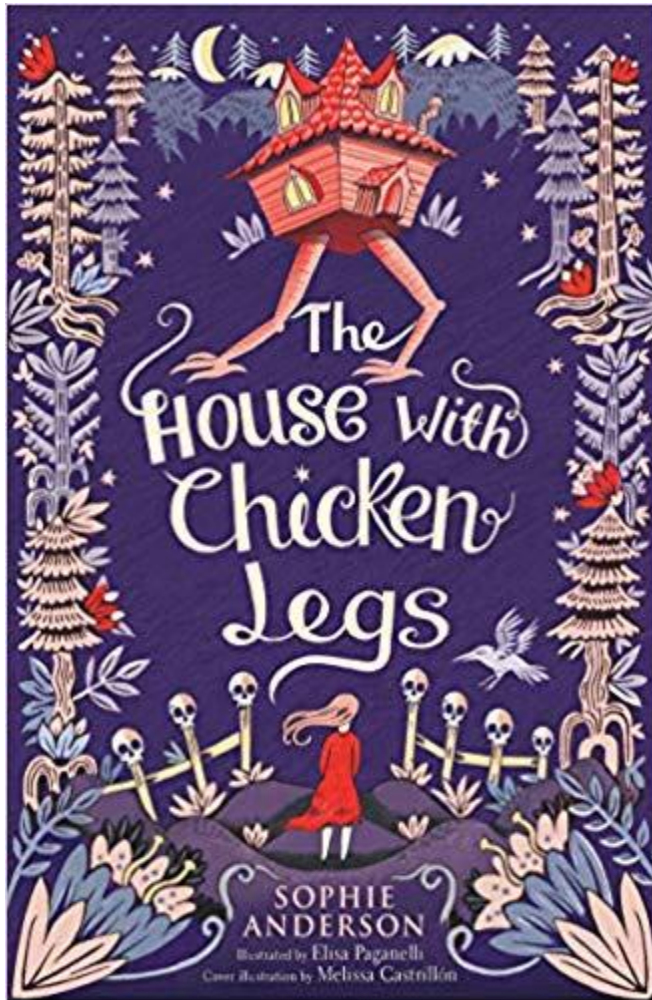
_____ (1 mark)

Grammar focus

8) Find an example of an apostrophe for contraction. _____ (1 mark)

9) Find 3 adjectives from the text. _____ (1 mark)

Thursday



Marinka dreams of a normal life, where her house stays in one place long enough for her to make friends. But her house has chicken legs and moves on without warning.

For Marinka's grandmother is Baba Yaga, who guides spirits between this world and the next. Marinka longs to change her destiny and sets out to break free from her grandmother's footsteps, but her house has other ideas...

1) Look at the front cover: make a prediction about the story by using the title and the images on the front of the book.

_____ (2 marks)

2) Why does Marinka struggle to make friends?

_____ (1 mark)

3) Clarify what Marinka's grandmother does.

_____ (1 mark)

4) What does it mean to break free from someone's footsteps?

_____ (1 marks)

My house has chicken legs. Two or three times a year, without warning, it stands up in the middle of the night and walks away from where we've been living. It might walk a hundred miles or it might walk a thousand, but where it lands is always the same. A lonely, bleak place at the edge of civilization.

It nestles in dark forbidden woods, rattles on wind-swept icy tundra, and hides in crumbling ruins at the far edge of cities. At this moment, it's perched on a rocky ledge high in some barren mountains. We've been here two weeks and I still haven't seen anyone living. Dead people, I've seen plenty of those of course. They come to visit Baba and she guides them through The Gate. But the real, live, living people, they all stay in the town and villages far below us.

Maybe if it was summer, a few of them would wander up here, to picnic and look at the view. They might smile and say hello. Someone my own age might visit—maybe a whole group of children. They might stop near the stream and splash in the water to cool off. Perhaps they would invite me to join them.

"How's the fence coming?" Baba calls through the open window, pulling me from my daydream.

Read the extract of chapter one, '**Prologue.**'

4) Explain what the narrator's house does a few times a year.

_____ (1 mark)

5) What is the same about where the house ends up?

_____ (1 mark)

6) Infer how the character might feel when their house moves again. Explain your answer.

_____ (2 marks)

7) Find evidence that the narrator is desperate to have company.

_____ (2 marks)

Grammar focus

8) Find and copy a modal verb in the text.

_____ (1 mark)

9) Find and copy the word which is close in meaning to the word 'bleak'.

_____ (1 mark)

10) Find an adverbial phrase in the text.

_____ (1 mark)