

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

Golly-Grue, Grimbletoes and the Scratching on the Wall

Golly-Grue and Grimbletoes were dwarves who lived deep in the forest. Grimbletoes had bright eyes and a long, white beard. Golly-Grue had bright eyes and long, white braids.

Late one night, as the moon shone overhead and the stars twinkled like tiny diamonds, Grimbletoes was awoken by a *scritch-scratch* in the bedroom. He tossed back his covers and lit a candle. Soft, yellow light filled the room.

Scritch-scratch.

Grimbletoes peered into the darkness. He was sure the sound was coming from his boots.

“What is it?” Golly-Grue asked, sleepily. “What’s wrong?”

“There’s something scritch-scratching in my boots,” Grimbletoes whispered.

“Are you scared? Do you want me to go take a look?” Golly-Grue asked with a chuckle.

Grimbletoes scowled at her and tiptoed across the room to where his boots sat against the wall. He picked up the left boot and peered into it.



Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

There was nothing there.

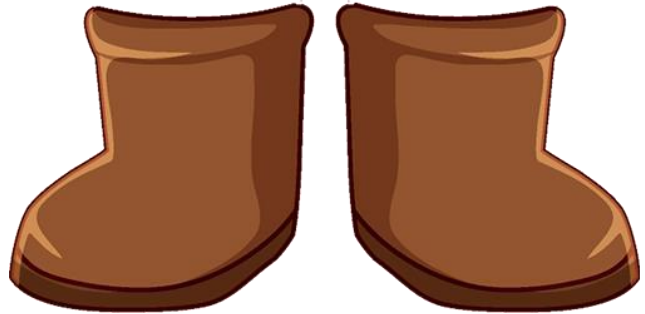
He picked up the right boot and peered into it.

There was nothing there.

He gave the right boot a shake.

There was nothing there.

He gave the left boot a shake.



There was nothing there.

Grimbletoes leaned down close to the floor and peered under the dresser.

There was nothing there.

Grimbletoes peered under the bed.

There was nothing there.

With a sigh, Grimbletoes climbed back into bed and blew out the candle.

Grimbletoes had just fallen asleep when something *scritch-scratched* on the other side of the room. He sat up and tugged on his beard. He knew the sound wasn't coming from his boots this time. What could be making the noise?

"Maybe it's a wooly-booger," he whispered. The hair on the back of his neck stood up at the thought. Wooly-boogers were known for their long teeth.

"Maybe it's a gobbeldy-gum," Golly-Grue whispered with a grin.

"A what?" Grimbletoes asked.

"A gobbeldy-gum." Golly-Grue dropped her voice so low Grimbletoes could barely hear her, but she smiled as she spoke.

"They have breath so bad it can stink up a cottage for a month."

Grimbletoes shuddered at the thought. He could just picture a goopy creature blowing its foul breath all over his home.

"Maybe it's Slither Snake," Grimbletoes said after a moment. "He's known for creeping into houses in the middle of the night."

The wind howled around the small cottage, and the trees outside creaked and groaned. Grimbletoes moved just a little closer to Golly-Grue.



"Maybe we should relight the candle," Golly-Grue whispered, pretending to be scared. "I don't like the sound of a wooly-booger, a gobbeldy-gum, or that Slither Snake." She whispered even softer. "I heard he got into Merrypail's house the other day and ate everything in her pantry. Can you believe it?" Golly-Grue clamped her lips shut to keep from laughing.

Grimbletoes gripped Golly-Grue's hand tightly. He couldn't see her smile. "It will be all right, Golly-Grue. I'll find out what it is." He lit the candle on the bedside table.

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The gentle flame flickered and danced. Shadows loomed on the walls. Grimbletoes and Golly-Grue sat very still.

Scritch-scratch.

Scritch-scratch.

Scritch-scratch.

A huge shadow rose against the wall. It danced with the candle's flame.

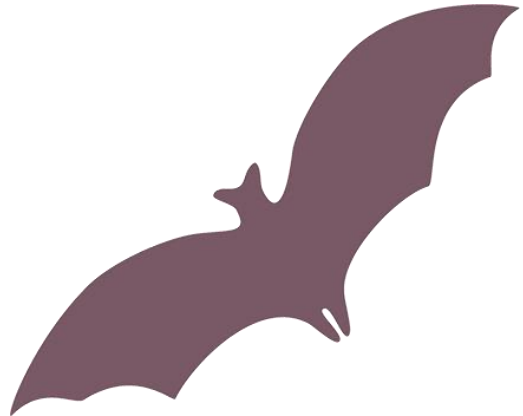
Golly-Grue took the candle and stood behind Grimbletoes. Grimbletoes had a hard lump in his throat. He strained his eyes at the shadow, but he couldn't tell what it was.

Was it a wooly-booger?

Was it a gobbeldy-gum?

Was it Slither Snake?

Grimbletoes bit his lip to keep it from trembling.



"I'll go see what it is," Grimbletoes whispered. "You hold up the candle so I can see."

Golly-Grue nodded but didn't say anything. She took the candle and held it up high. The candle flame danced as she chuckled softly. Grimbletoes had such a vivid imagination.

Grimbletoes crept across the room. His legs shook as he got closer to the wall.

Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

The shadow danced faster. It grew larger. It grew smaller. Oh, surely it was a wooly-booger! Nothing else could move like that.

Grimbletoes looked down at the floor and froze. He tugged his beard. He blinked his eyes. He threw back his head and laughed, his big, booming voice filling the house. "Dog leaves and horse flowers!"

"What is it?" asked Golly-Grue.

"It's a tiny bat!" Grimbletoes was laughing so hard he couldn't say anything more.

"A bat?" Golly-Grue laughed with Grimbletoes. "All that over a bat." She placed the candle on the side table and walked over to the dresser. The small bat clung to the side and shook. It opened and closed its wings, making its shadow dance over the walls.

Golly-Grue opened the window and the little bat flapped its wings and disappeared into the night.

Golly-Grue and Grimbletoes blew out the candle, went back to bed and fell asleep.



Questions:

1. What creature made the noise?

2. What is a gobbeldy-gum?

3. What did Slither Snake do to Merrypail?

4. Why does Grimbletoes laugh?

5. How can our imaginations turn everyday things into something frightening?

Answers:

1. What creature made the noise?

A bat made the noise.

2. What is a gobbeldy-gum?

A gobbeldy-gum is a creature with really bad breath.

3. What did Slither Snake do to Merrypail?

Slither Snake ate everything in Merrypail's pantry.

4. Why does Grimbletoes laugh?

Grimbletoes laughs because he's relieved. He was afraid of a monster, and it was just a bat.

5. How can our imaginations turn everyday things into something frightening?

Answers will vary.