

Frances Hodgson Burnett
The Secret Garden

One day, in India, nine-year old Mary wakes up and finds that she's all alone. She's sent to England to live with an uncle she has never met. His house is a strange, lonely place where, little by little, she'll discover secret after secret in a new and magical world.

In this reader you'll find:

- Information about Frances Hodgson Burnett
- A section providing background and contextual information
- A glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension and grammar activities including A2 Key style exercises and 21st century skills activities
- Final text

Tags

Friendship | Emotions

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STAGE 3	1000 headwords	Intermediate	B1	Preliminary

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Frances Hodgson Burnett

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Stage 2 A2

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Classic

Frances Hodgson Burnett

The Secret Garden

illustrated by Philip Giordano



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TEEN ELI READERS
The Secret Garden
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Book brief

- 1** *The Secret Garden* is a novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett first published as a book in 1911.
- 2** Set in England at the start of the 20th century, it's one of Burnett's most popular novels and is considered a classic of English children's literature.
- 3** It tells the story of a little girl, Mary Lennox, who moves to England from India after her parents die.
- 4** In the story, we see how Mary changes from a rude, sick girl to a sweet, healthy child, thanks to the Secret Garden.
- 5** Mary starts to look after the garden, and through her love and care, the garden comes back to life, and happiness comes back to the Craven family when she becomes friends with Colin and helps him to get better.

Frances Hodgson Burnett

The Secret Garden

Retold and with activities by

Jane Bowie

Illustrated by

Philip Giordano

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Main Characters

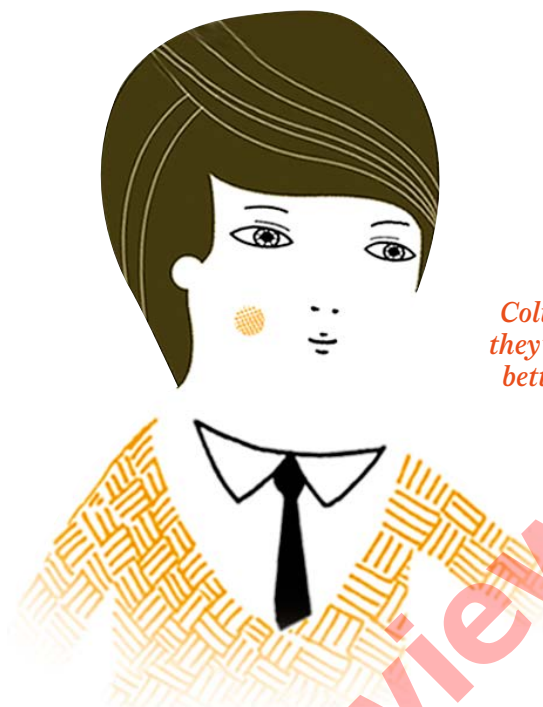
Mary

9 years old at the start of the story, she's an unhappy child until she finds the secret garden.



Dickon

2 years older than Mary, he's very good with animals and is very kind to Mary and Colin.



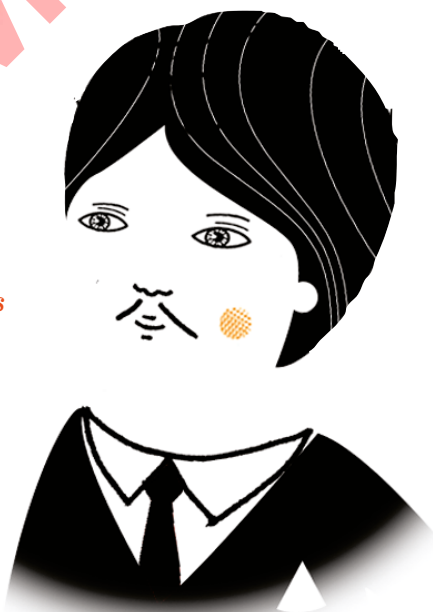
Colin

Colin is Mary's cousin and they're the same age. He gets better thanks to Mary and the secret garden.

For Review Only

Mr. Craven

A sad man because he has lost his wife. He travels around Europe, leaving his son Colin at home where the servants look after the poor boy.



Before you read

Vocabulary

- 1 Look at these words from *The Secret Garden* and match each word with its definition as in the example.

a housemaid	e nursery	h housekeeper
b clergyman	f doctor	i official
c corridor	g kitchen	j gardener
d entrance hall		

- 1 ☐ a person who looks after sick people.
- 2 ☐ a person who works for his / her country.
- 3 ☒ a girl or woman who works in a big house, cleaning it.
- 4 ☐ the head woman who tells others how to keep a big house in order.
- 5 ☐ the empty space you find on entering a house.
- 6 ☐ a long space with rooms that open off it.
- 7 ☐ the room in a house where food is prepared.
- 8 ☐ a person whose job is to look after a garden.
- 9 ☐ a room in a big house where children are looked after.
- 10 ☐ a man who works for the Church of England; he can get married.

Writing and Speaking

- 2 A Now put the words in the table.

Jobs	Places in a house
housemaid	

- 2 B Now talk to a partner about the different rooms in your house. Say which is your favourite room and why.

Reading A2 Key

3 Complete the text about *The Secret Garden* with one word for each space.

The Secret Garden is a story about a little girl called Mary Lennox. Mary isn't (1) _____ pretty and she's often sick. Nobody loves her and she's often horrible (2) _____ the people who look after her. At the start of the story, she's living (3) _____ India with her parents, but they don't have any time for (4) _____ daughter. Then Mary's life changes when everyone in the house gets ill and they all die except her. She's sent to her uncle in England, (5) _____ has a very big house, and it's here that Mary hears about the secret garden that helps (6) _____ to become a healthy, happy child.

Pair Work

4 At the start of the story, Mary is living in India.

Answer these questions with a partner.

Use the Internet to help you.

- 1 Where is India?
- 2 How many people live in India?
- 3 Which sport is India famous for?
- 4 What is the Taj Mahal?
- 5 What kind of food do they eat in India?
- 6 What is Bollywood?

21st
Century
Skills



Listening

5 Listen to the first part of Chapter 1 and decide if these sentences are true or false.

- Mary was born in India.
- 1 Mary is a very pretty little girl.
 - 2 Mary's parents loved her very much.
 - 3 Mary's parents die because they have nothing to eat.
 - 4 Everyone forgets about Mary.
 - 5 A soldier finds Mary.

T	F
☒	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

The Forgotten Girl



- 2 When Mary Lennox arrived at Misselthwaite Manor to live with her uncle, everybody said she was the ugliest child they knew. She was very thin and she looked¹ angry. She was born in India and her hair and face were yellow because she was often ill. In India, Mary's father was a Government official. Her mother was very beautiful and only liked going to parties. She didn't want Mary, so an ayah² looked after her daughter. The ayah had to do everything that Mary wanted so Mary became very selfish³.

Mary was born in India. Her parents have no time for her and she's a selfish, angry child. One morning the servants are frightened but they won't tell Mary why.

One very hot morning, when Mary was about nine, her ayah wasn't there. That morning was mysterious⁴. The servants were frightened. No one wanted to tell her anything.

Mary went into the garden and started to play under a tree. She played at making a flowerbed⁵ and put flowers into little heaps of earth⁶.

¹ **look** give the idea that

² **ayah** the Indian name for a woman who looks after a child or children for a family as a job

³ **selfish** selfish people only think of themselves

⁴ **mysterious** strange

⁵ **flowerbed**



⁶ **heap of earth**



The Secret Garden

Suddenly, she saw her mother come out with a young man.

‘Is it very bad?’ asked Mary’s mother.

‘Very bad. You should go away to the hills.’

At that moment there was a cry from the servants’ quarters¹.

‘Someone has died! You didn’t say your servants were ill!’

‘I didn’t know!’

Mary learned that there was cholera² about. Her ayah was dead, and before the next day three other servants died. Mary hid in her room and was forgotten by everyone. Nobody thought of her, nobody wanted her. She cried and slept.

When she woke, the house was silent³. She waited for someone to come and look for her. But no one came.

She saw a little snake but she wasn’t frightened. Then she heard voices⁴. A soldier⁵ opened the door and saw Mary.

‘There’s a child here!’ he cried. ‘Who is she?’

‘I’m Mary Lennox. Why does nobody come?’ asked Mary.

¹ **servants’ quarters** where the servants eat and sleep

² **cholera** you can get cholera if you drink dirty water and become very ill or even die

³ **silent** no noise

⁴ **voice** you use your voice to speak or sing

⁵ **soldier**



People start dying of cholera in Mary’s house. Nobody looks after her and she goes and hides. When she wakes up she waits. Then a soldier finds her.

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‘They have all forgotten her!’ said the soldier to the others. ‘Poor child. There’s nobody left to come.’

That was how Mary discovered¹ that her father and mother were dead and she was alone in the bungalow². ■

- ▶ 3 For a while Mary stayed with a poor English clergyman and his family, but not for long. One day, she was playing under a tree in the clergyman’s garden when his son, Basil, came. Mary was making a garden.

‘Go away!’ cried Mary. ‘I don’t like boys.’

The boy sang a song:

Mistress Mary, quite contrary,

How does your garden grow?

With silver bells, and cockle shells,

And marigolds all in a row.

The other children laughed and after that they called her “Mistress Mary, Quite Contrary”.

One day, the clergyman’s wife told Mary she was going to sail away to England to the home of her uncle, Mr Archibald Craven.

¹ **discover** find out

² **bungalow** a word from Bengali meaning a low house with one floor

Everyone in Mary’s house dies of cholera and she stays with a clergyman and his family until one day they tell her that she must go and stay with her uncle in England.



Mary is hiding in the house and she sees a snake but she isn’t frightened of it. She doesn’t know yet that everyone has died of cholera.



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Mary isn't very happy. She has to go and live with her uncle in a big empty house with nothing around it and they say her uncle isn't a nice person.

'He lives in a big, lonely house¹ in the country and no one goes near him,' said Basil. 'He's a hunchback² and he's horrid³'

An officer's wife went with Mary and they sailed to England on a big ship. In London, she met the housekeeper from Misselthwaite Manor, Mrs Medlock. Mrs Medlock was stout⁴, with a red face and dark brown eyes. Mary didn't like her, which was normal for Mary, and Mrs Medlock didn't like Mary.

'She's very plain⁵!' said Mrs Medlock to the officer's wife.

Mary was very curious about her uncle. She was starting to feel lonely⁶. Other children seemed⁷ to belong to fathers and mothers, but she seemed to belong to no one. Even when her parents were alive⁸ she seemed to be no one's little girl.

Mary and Mrs Medlock took the train. Mrs Medlock told Mary about the house and its garden, about her uncle, his poor back and his dead wife.

Mary didn't feel cheerful⁹. A house with a hundred rooms, almost all closed, on the edge

¹ **lonely house** a house with nothing around it

² **hunchback** 

³ **horrid** not friendly, horrible

⁴ **stout** big, fat and strong

⁵ **plain** not pretty

⁶ **feel lonely** feel sad because you have no friends: nobody who loves you

⁷ **seem** give the idea that

⁸ **alive** not dead

⁹ **cheerful** happy

The Secret Garden

of¹ a moor², and a hunchback who had no friends!

She looked out of the window at the rain and fell asleep³. When she woke it was dark and they were in a station. They got into a carriage⁴ and drove off.

‘What’s a moor?’ asked Mary suddenly.

‘Look out of the window in ten minutes and you’ll see,’ answered the woman. ‘You won’t see much because it’s a dark night, but you’ll see something.’

It was very dark and the wind made a strange sound.

‘Is the sea near here?’ asked Mary.

‘No, it’s just miles⁵ and miles of wild land,’ answered Mrs Medlock.

After a while⁶ they saw a light. After another two miles they arrived at a long, low house. The door was huge⁷, and the entrance hall was enormous, full of portraits⁸ and armour⁹. Mary felt very small. She followed Mrs Medlock up a stair and down a long corridor, and another, and then into a room.

‘Here you are. This room and the next one are where you’ll live – and you must stay in them.

Mary arrives at her uncle’s house when it’s dark.

Everything is very big and Mary feels very small.

Mrs Medlock takes Mary to her rooms and says she must stay there.

¹ **on the edge of** next to

² **moor** a large area of natural land with no trees usually very windy and with no houses or farms

³ **fall asleep** start sleeping

⁴ **carriage** 

⁵ **mile** = 1.609 km

⁶ **after a while** after some time

⁷ **huge** enormous, very big

⁸ **portrait** painting of a person

⁹ **armour**



Frances Hodgson Burnett

Don't forget that!' said Mrs Medlock.

When Mary woke up next morning, Martha, a young housemaid, was lighting the fire¹.

'What's that?' asked Mary pointing out of the window.

'The moor. Do you like it?' asked Martha.

Mary was surprised. In India servants only did what you told them to do. They didn't ask questions.

'No,' answered Mary, 'I hate it. Are you going to be my servant? Are you going to dress me?'

'Can't you dress yourself?' asked Martha, surprised. She helped Mary to dress. Mary had new clothes. They were nicer than her old clothes.

'There are twelve of us in my family,' said Martha. 'Everyone learns to do things quickly and help the smaller ones. My brother, Dickon, he's twelve, he's got a young wild pony².'

Mary was interested in Dickon and his pet. It was the start of a healthy feeling. She went into the next room and found her breakfast.

'I don't want it,' she said.

'You don't want your food?' exclaimed³ Martha. 'It's very good! My family never have full stomachs. They're always hungry.'

'I don't know how it feels to be hungry' said Mary.

¹ **light the fire** start the fire

² **pony** a small kind of horse

³ **exclaim** say something suddenly because you're surprised

The next morning, Martha helps Mary. Martha is different from the servants in India. She doesn't just do as she's told but speaks to Mary, too. She tells Mary about her family and about the gardens outside. One garden that belonged to Mrs Craven is locked.

The Secret Garden

Martha helped Mary to put on her boots, coat and hat, and sent her outside. 'There are a lot of gardens, but one is locked¹. It was Mrs Craven's garden. Mr Craven locked it when she died ten years ago and no one can go there.'

Mary was curious about the locked garden, so she went outside to explore². She met an old man. He told her the gardens were kitchen gardens³ and orchards⁴. Then she saw a bird with a red breast sitting on the top of a tree.

'He's a robin redbreast⁵, the friendliest bird alive,' said the man. 'He's my only friend.'

'I have no friends,' said Mary. 'I've never had any. My ayah didn't like me and I never played with anyone.'

'Then we're the same. We're not good-looking and we both have bad tempers⁶.'

The man's name was Ben Weatherstaff. Mary spoke to him for a while, and then asked him about the locked garden. Ben was angry.

'I must get on with⁷ my work,' he said. 'Go and play.' And he walked away without saying good bye. 

Mary meets and old man in the garden. He says they're the same because they have no friends and have bad tempers. He tells Mary about the gardens but when she asks about the locked garden, he stops the conversation.

¹ **locked** closed with a key

² **explore** look around

³ **kitchen garden** a garden where you grow vegetables

⁴ **orchard** where fruit trees grow

⁵ **robin redbreast** 

⁶ **have a bad temper** get angry easily

⁷ **get on with** start or continue doing something

Think

Why do you think Mr Craven locked the garden after his wife died?

Reading

1 Look at the sentences and say if they're true (T) or false (F).

- | | T | F |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mary likes playing at making gardens. | ☒ | ☐ |
| 1 Mary has no friends and not many people know about her. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2 Other people usually like Mary very much. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3 Mary goes to live in a big city. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4 Mary can go anywhere she wants in the house. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5 Mary can't put on her clothes by herself. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6 Mary's new clothes are ugly. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7 Martha's family is very poor. | ☐ | ☐ |

Grammar

2 Complete the sentences about Chapter 1 with the words from the box.

~~anything~~ everyone something someone
nobody (3) anybody everything

No one wanted to tell her anything.

- Mary hid in her room and was forgotten by _____.
- _____ thought of her, _____ wanted her.
- She waited for _____ to come and look for her, but _____ came.
- The old man didn't like _____.
- In India, the servants did _____ for Mary.
- 'You won't see much because it's a dark night, but you'll see _____.

Speaking and Writing

21st
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Skills

- 3 In Chapter 1, Mary has to leave India to go and live in England. Discuss these questions with a partner and write your answers.

- 1 Why do people decide to go and live in another country?
- 2 What problems do you think people can have when they move to another country?
- 3 Which country would you most like to visit? Why?
- 4 Why do you think it's important to visit other countries?
- 5 Why is it important to study other languages?
- 6 What would you like to tell someone about the place where you live?



Before-reading Activity

Listening A2 Key

- 4 Listen to the first part of Chapter 2 and choose the correct answer (A, B or C) for each question.

- Every day...
- A ☐ was different for Mary.
- B ☒ Mary went outside.
- C ☐ Mary stayed in her room.
- 1 One day, she woke up and felt...
- A ☐ hungry.
- B ☐ angry.
- C ☐ sad.
- 2 In the garden, she saw...
- A ☐ the old man.
- B ☐ Dickon's pony.
- C ☐ the robin.
- 3 At Misselthwaite...
- A ☐ it was hotter than in India.
- B ☐ Mary felt less tired.
- C ☐ there was no wind.
- 4 Why does Mr Craven hate the garden?
- A ☐ Because his wife died there.
- B ☐ Because he doesn't like looking after it.
- C ☐ Because nothing grows there.
- 5 What does Mary think she hears?
- A ☐ The sound of the rain.
- B ☐ The sound of the wind.
- C ☐ The sound of a child crying.