

The Dome

Fiction

Content domain focus:

2b retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

2d make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text

2h make comparisons within the text

Extract summary

This short story, *The Dome* by Gill Matthews, gives an insight into life in the future when people live in capsules in Domes and go on virtual holidays. It sounds ideal but Mum sees things differently. She yearns for life in the 'olden days' when birds sang and people played cricket on the beaches.

As their virtual holiday draws to a close, Mum is clearly not keen on returning. And, at the end of the story, we discover that Dad plans to tell the leaders that, owing to a malfunction of the pod, they had come back without two of the family members.

Unit summary

Most of the questions in the unit focus on making inferences. These explore what life could be like in the future, events in the story, the impressions a reader gets of the characters, and the thoughts and opinions of those characters.



Teaching prompts

- Ask the children to discuss with their reading partners the techniques and strategies they are aware of, and can use, to make inferences when they read.
- As a class, create a definition of what making inferences entails. If appropriate, explain it as reading between the lines – looking for clues that an author has left in a text to help the reader fully understand what they are reading. Suggest to the children that they try to think about how they would feel or what they would do if they were in the story.
- Tell the children that the passage they are going to read is a complete story, rather than an extract. Ask how they think it might be organised, e.g. in paragraphs. Explain that it is set some time in the future. In the light of this, discuss what the children expect to find in the story.

Revisiting the text

Ask the children to:

- draw an annotated picture of the Dome, based on the descriptions and clues given in the story
- create a poster advertising home capsules for sale in the Dome
- write a list of what they would want to do if they lived in the future
- design the travel pod that the family go on holiday in
- highlight words and phrases that show the story is set in the future
- prepare a reading of the story, using expression to add drama.

 **Answers**

Links to content domain requirements are in brackets after the answer.

1. The leadership group have said it is the family’s turn to go on holiday. [2b]
2. She wants to go on holiday but would have preferred to go on a real holiday outside the Dome. [2d]
3. by hoverboard [2d]
4. It’s hi-tech – there are lots of gadgets such as the family control panel, and they live in capsules and travel in pods; everything seems very clean – it’s silver and white, steel and glass; it sounds very organised – they take it in turns to go on holiday. [2d]
5. It was a year she remembered from her childhood, and it was a good memory. [2d]
6. Because Mum was enjoying it and wanted to stay. Because they were on a virtual holiday – it wasn’t real life. [2d]
- 7.

Dad’s view of life in the Dome	Mum’s view of life in the Dome
The Dome keeps them safe.	They are living under surveillance.
There is no pollution.	They never feel a breeze on their faces.
They are looked after.	They never hear birds singing.

[2h]

8. In the text, it says what they did in the day and the evening and it says they were going home in the morning, so they must have been there longer than 35 minutes. They have been on a virtual holiday so time is different from real time. [2d]
9. They had stayed behind. They had escaped to live outside the Dome. [2d]
10. To go back and get Mum and the sister./To go back and join them. [2d]

 **Assessment**

Children can retrieve and record information if they are able to identify key words in questions and make links between these and words/information in the text.

The children are secure in their ability to make inferences if they are able to put themselves in the story, imagine what it would be like living in the future and empathise with the characters.

They are able to make comparisons if they can identify evidence of Mum and Dad’s different attitudes to their way of life in the Dome

Next steps

Develop the children’s inferential skills by showing images of places that could be used as settings in stories. Ask the children to ‘jump in’ to the pictures and to use their senses to explore what they could see, hear, smell and touch. Use the images to compare characteristics and features of settings.

When reading, support the children in making comparisons between beginnings and endings of stories in terms of where they are set, how characters are feeling and the relationships between characters.