



EDDIE THE SNEAK

1 Eddie the Sneak, I used to call him, though Mum told me off every time. Sneak was the right word. Whenever I threw a stick for Bosco out the back, Eddie's almost-bald head would pop up over the fence. He'd frown as he spied on us, making sure the stick didn't come in the direction of his precious dahlias and tomatoes.

I swear every time I wheeled outdoors, Eddie the Sneak was there. He must have listened for the sound of my wheelchair.

2 Eddie the Sneak was very wary of Bosco. I think it was because of what happened to his car. Eddie the Sneak treats his car like a baby. He washes and polishes it every Saturday. He even talks to it. I've often heard him humming while shining up the expensive dark-blue paintwork. When he's finished it gleams in the sun. But then he puts it away in the garage. What a waste.

3 Anyway, one afternoon, Eddie pulled into his driveway. Bosco bounded over to Eddie the Sneak's car and put his paws right up to the window. He was only trying to welcome Eddie home. Eddie screeched at Bosco and Bosco

slid down the door. Unfortunately, his claws left a whole set of long, wavering scrapes right down it.

Eddie shouted that Bosco had ruined the car door. He said he'd have to get it sprayed again and that they never matched the enamel properly. Mum had to pay for the respraying, and she wasn't too happy either.

4 Bosco's calmed down a lot, but Eddie the Sneak never forgot it. He treated Bosco like a dangerous criminal, and patrolled his side of the fence out the back.

Mum thinks Eddie and I should get on well, because his wife was in a chair too, but that just shows what Mum knows. Eddie just used to wheel his wife out into the sun and cover her up with a blanket. Me, I do wheelies around the lemon tree!

5 So that was why I didn't know what to do when I heard about an approaching hailstorm. Everyone knows what hailstorms do to cars. After that storm in the city last year, the cars looked as if someone had bashed them with a baseball bat. Lots of windscreens were smashed too.

6 I was listening to the radio when they interrupted for an alert about hail on the way. I knew Eddie the Sneak had left his car outside, while he finished cleaning out his garage. It was tempting to let him find out about the hail when it started smashing that dark-blue shine into dimples. But then I thought about the smile on his face on Saturday afternoons when his car was finished and I knew I had to warn him.

7 I raced out the front door with Bosco, and wheeled up the ramp to Eddie the Sneak's door. He had a sort of ping-pong ding-dong doorbell, and I could hear it carolling away through the house. It took an age for him to hike to the front door, and he scowled when he saw me. He was really suspicious, particularly about Bosco, but he changed when I told him about the hail.

8 "Thanks, young man," he said, and vanished to move his car. By that time, the hail had started and it was too late for Bosco and me to make it back to our house, so we stayed on the verandah with Eddie the Sneak and watched.

The hail smashed Eddie's roses in the front garden and pinged off his letterbox. Over time the hail piled up into large drifts.

9 "Will you look at that?" said Eddie quietly. "These things come out of clear skies, don't they?"

I knew somehow that he wasn't just talking about hailstorms. I sure wasn't expecting to fall out of a tree onto a big root and wreck my spinal cord. I guess Eddie the Sneak hadn't expected his wife to get cancer, either.

10 All of a sudden the hailstorm was over. Eddie walked down the ramp and picked up a handful of hailstones. "Big ones," he muttered. He looked at his roses and sighed. "Daisy loved those pink ones," he said to himself. Then he took a deep breath, straightened up and turned to me. "Want to see what the park looks like now?" he asked.

"Now?" I queried.

"We'll have to hurry. Hail melts quickly. I'll get a rug to cover the seat for your dog. And he'll need a ball."

11 I couldn't believe it. Was this really Eddie the Sneak?

"Well, come on," he said impatiently. "This car's used to wheelchairs. It's a waste just having it sit round. And I've been meaning to tell you that your dog needs some more exercise. Mind he only sits on the rug."

12 Like I said, I used to call him Eddie the Sneak. Not any more. Now, we go to the park every Tuesday and Thursday after school and throw

the ball for Bosco. And Bosco doesn't dig so many holes in the garden.



Questions

1 Who was in a wheelchair?

- a Eddie
- b Bosco
- c the narrator

2 Why was Eddie wary of Bosco?

- a He squashed his tomatoes.
- b He scratched his car.
- c He barked too much.

3 The car was

- a blue.
- b green.
- c black.

4 Why had Eddie left his car outside?

- a He was playing with Bosco.
- b He was listening to the radio.
- c He was cleaning out his garage.

5 Why was the narrator in a wheelchair?

- a The narrator had cancer.
- b The narrator had a broken leg.
- c The narrator had a wrecked spinal chord.

6 Why do you think Eddie was upset when the roses were smashed?

- a He would have to prune them.
- b They were his wife's favourites.
- c He would have to plant new ones.

Vocabulary

Match the words from the text to the clues.

The brackets show the text sections ().

drifts carolling dahlias
queried patrolled

7 Colourful garden flowers (1)

8 Walked and watched things closely (4)

9 Joyful singing (7)

10 Large piles of material (8)

11 Questioned something (10)

Grammar

A compound word is made of two separate words, e.g. *afternoon*. Make compound words from the following lists.

- | | |
|-----------|-------|
| 12 wheel | box |
| 13 base | storm |
| 14 hail | chair |
| 15 letter | ball |

Back To The Text...

16 In which part of the library would you find this text?

- a fiction
- b non-fiction

17 Prediction: What is likely to happen in the future?

- a Eddie will let the narrator drive his car.
- b Bosco will become fitter.

18 The purpose of this text is

- a to entertain.
- b to inform.

Sequencing

Look back through the card to find what happened first. Choose **a** or **b**.

- 19 a Eddie would put the car in the garage.
- b Eddie would polish the paintwork.
- 20 a Eddie got a rug.
- b Eddie picked up the hailstones.
- 21 a The hail smashed the roses.
- b They took a drive to the park.

Think About This

22 Another good name for this text would be:

- a When it Rains it Always Hails
- b One Good Turn Deserves Another
- c Never Trust a Person in a Wheelchair

23 What did "these things come out of clear skies" in section 9 mean?

- a Hail only forms after a clear sky.
- b Clear skies give you clean hail.
- c Trouble can come when you least expect it.

Challenge Option

Vocabulary: How many words can you make from the word HAILSTONE?

