

## In the Nursery

Answer the following questions carefully and be prepared to share your ideas with others in your class.

1. What sort of mood is Arthur in when he wakes up? What hints are there that he is not quite as cheerful and rested as he suggests?
2. What is the weather like as Arthur sets off for the house? Why do you think he chooses to have the weather like this?
3. Describe what Arthur does up to and including lunchtime.
4. Again Hill describes the weather and the environment in some detail; explain what the scene is like when Arthur and Spider are out for the walk after lunch.
5. As Arthur works late into the evening, and then goes to bed, the atmosphere becomes stiller and darker. Either make a list, or draw a flow chart of the words Hill uses to describe the increasingly quiet night up until the point at which Spider growls.
6. Before Arthur discovers the source of the noise, list all the ways he describes it, what he does to try to find where it is coming from, and his and Spider's reactions as they move towards it. How does Hill build the tension in this part of the chapter?
7. Describe the change in the weather the next day and when Arthur considers returning to Crythin Gifford. In what ways does this prepare the reader for more sinister happenings at Eel Marsh House?
8. Arthur looks through a slim packet of letters in the evening; what information do these hold and what significance, if any, do you think they might have to the strange events that keep occurring at the house?
9. List the series of events that take place between Spider becoming alert and tense again and eventually having to be brought back inside the house by Arthur. What does Arthur realise at this point in the novel?
10. What further incident terrifies Arthur when he goes back upstairs to investigate the noise once again? Why is he so terrified by this?
11. What does Arthur identify the noise as being? When he describes his own childhood memories of the noise he explains that the sound calms him but in what ways is this the opposite for the reader and why do you think this is the case?
12. Either draw a diagram, or describe, the room that Arthur finds when he goes into it. What sort of impression does Arthur get of the place and how does he feel about being in there?