

Dialogue

Extract from *The Magic Finger* by Roald Dahl

Mrs Gregg woke up. And when she saw Mr Gregg standing there on the floor, she gave a yell, too. For he was now a tiny little man!

He was maybe as tall as the seat of a chair, but no taller.

And where his arms had been, he had a pair of duck's wings instead!

'But ... but ... but ...' cried Mrs Gregg, going purple in the face.

'My dear man, what's happened to you?'

'What's happened to both of us, you mean!' shouted Mr Gregg.

It was Mrs Gregg's turn now to jump out of bed. She ran to look at herself in the glass. But she was not tall enough to see into it. She was even smaller than Mr Gregg, and she, too, had got wings instead of arms.

'Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!' sobbed Mrs Gregg.

'This is witches' work!' cried Mr Gregg. And both of them started running around the room, flapping their wings.

A minute later Philip and William burst in. The same thing had happened to them. They had wings and no

arms. And they were *really* tiny. They were about as big as robins.

'Mama! Mama! Mama!' chirruped Philip. 'Look, Mama, we can fly!' And they flew up into the air.

'Come down at once!' said Mrs Gregg. 'You're much too high!' But before she could say another word, Philip and William had flown right out the window.

Mr and Mrs Gregg ran to the window and looked out. The two tiny boys were now high up in the sky.

Then Mrs Gregg said to Mr Gregg, 'Do you think we could do that, my dear?'

'I don't see why not,' Mr Gregg said. 'Come on, let's try.'

Mr Gregg began to flap his wings hard, and all at once, up he went.

Then Mrs Gregg did the same.

'Help!' she cried as she started going up. 'Save me!'

'Come on,' said Mr Gregg. 'Don't be afraid.'

So out the window they flew, far up into the sky, and it did not take them long to catch up with Philip and William.

Task

1. Explain why the writer sometimes puts words in italics. For example:

- *she* gave a yell, too.
- And they were *really* tiny.

2. Find the words 'chirruped', 'flapping' and 'burst'. Why do you think Roald Dahl chose them?

3. Underline some examples of people speaking in the story. Why do you think Roald Dahl has used so much speech?

4. Your teacher will ask you to read part of the story out to the group. Think about how you will read it. For example:

- Will you all take turns or will you split it up into parts?
- Look carefully at the words. Which will you put a lot of stress on?

5. Listen to the other groups. Is there anything you particularly liked about the way they read it?

6. Is there any way you could have improved your reading?
