

**The Secret Garden**  
by Frances Hodgson Burnett

**Chapter 12: Mr Craven comes home**

<b>Author:</b> Adrian Tennant
<b>Level:</b> Pre-intermediate
<b>Age:</b> Teenagers / Young adults
<b>Time needed:</b> 45-60 minutes
<b>Preparation:</b> One copy of the worksheet per student for Activity 3



**Activity 1**

- At the end of Chapter 11, you asked the students to write a summary of the story so far. Now, put the students into groups of three to five and ask them to share their summaries with their group.
- Monitor and help where necessary.
- Ask for a volunteer from one of the groups to give a brief (oral) summary of the story so far.
- Ask other the groups / students to add more details.

**Alternative procedure**

- Tell the students to display / pin up their summaries on the classroom walls and then give them time to read a few of the summaries.
- Discuss the story so far with the whole class.

**Activity 2**

- Activity 3 at the end of Chapter 11 asked the students to predict what would happen in this final chapter.
- Put students in groups of three and ask them to discuss their ideas.
- Ask a few volunteer groups to tell the rest of the class their ideas / predictions. You might wish to write some of these ideas / predictions up on the board.
- Play the recording of Chapter 12. Ask the students to listen and see how accurate their ideas / predictions were.
- After they have listened, the students should work again with their groups to discuss what they heard.
- Open up a class discussion. How good were their predictions? Were there any surprises?

**Activity 3**

- Ask the students to work in pairs and hand out a copy of the worksheet to each student.
- Ask them to work together and decide whether the sentences are true or false. Tell the students to mark each sentence with a *T* or an *F* as appropriate.
- Play the recording again.
- Tell the students to listen for the sentences and to check their answers together.
- Play the recording one more time if necessary.
- Check the answers as a class.

**Key:**

a. *F*; b. *T*; c. *T*; d. *F*; e. *T*; f. *F*; g. *T*; h. *F*; i. *T*; j. *F*

**Activity 4**

- Ask the students to raise their hands if they enjoyed / liked the story.
- Ask a few students who raised their hands to elaborate / explain why.

**Are the sentences below true (T) or false (F)?**

- a** Mr Craven felt really sad in the mountains.
- b** Mr Craven was frightened when he thought of Colin.
- c** One night Mr Craven dreamt about his wife.
- d** Mr Craven wrote a letter to Martha's mother, Susan.
- e** Archie decided to travel back to Yorkshire.
- f** Archie didn't want to see the gardens again.
- g** When Archie arrived at Misselthwaite Manor he immediately went to the gardens.
- h** Mr Craven was angry when he saw Colin.
- i** Colin said he was never going to use his wheelchair again.
- j** Mrs Medlock was sad to see Mr Craven walking with Colin.

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LISTENING SKILLS TRANSCRIPT

**Transcript**



While the secret garden was coming alive, and two children were coming alive with it, Mr Archie Craven was travelling around beautiful places in Europe. His mind had been full of dark, sad thoughts for ten years. Something terrible had happened to him when he had been happy. And he had refused to let any light into his life since then. But slowly – slowly – as he walked among beautiful mountains and wandered by blue lakes, he began to grow stronger.

Mr Craven began to think about Misselthwaite Manor, and wondered if he should go home. Sometimes he thought about his son. He wondered how he would feel when he looked at Colin's white face once more. He felt frightened when he thought about it.

One beautiful day, Mr Craven went out walking all day. When he came back to the house where he was staying, the moon was high in the sky. The lake near the house was so still in the silver moonlight that he walked down and sat on a seat near the water. He breathed in the lovely smells of the night, and felt strangely calm. He felt calmer and calmer, until at last he fell asleep.

And as he slept, he dreamed a dream that seemed very real. It seemed so real that he wasn't even sure he had been dreaming. In his dream, he heard a sweet happy voice, calling to him from far away.

'Archie! Archie!' the voice said.

It was the voice of his dead wife.

'Lilies!' he cried out to her. 'Where are you?'

'In the garden,' she answered. 'In the garden!'

That was the end of Mr Craven's dream, but he did not wake up. He slept deeply all night, on the seat by the lake. When he woke, it was morning, and a servant was standing in front of him, holding a letter.

Mr Craven took the letter, and sat staring at the lake for a few moments. He was remembering his dream.

'In the garden,' he said to himself. 'But the door is locked and the key is buried.'

When he looked at the letter a few minutes later, he saw that it had come from Yorkshire. He opened the letter and read it.

Dear Sir,

I am Susan Sowerby, Martha's mother. I spoke to you about Miss Mary a little while ago when I met you in Thwaite. I would like to speak to you about something else. Please, sir, I think you should come home. I think you will be pleased that you have come back. And I think your wife would ask you to come if she was here.

Kind regards,  
Susan Sowerby

## Transcript

Mr Craven read the letter twice, and then put it down. He kept thinking about the dream.

'I will go back to Misselthwaite,' he said to himself. 'I'll go straight away.'

And he went back to the house and told the servants to get ready to go back to England.

On the way back to Yorkshire, he thought a lot about his son, Colin. When his wife had died, he had been like a madman. He had been angry because his wife was dead and his son was alive. He had not felt like a father at all. He had gone away travelling, and when he came back and saw his son, he could not look at him. Colin's eyes were so like his wife's happy eyes, and yet so different from them, because they were so sad. After that, he only went to see Colin when he was asleep. The servants told him that Colin was sick, and that he had big tantrums.

Mr Craven kept remembering the voice he had heard in his dream: 'In the garden, in the garden.'

'I will try to find the key,' he said to himself. 'I will try to open the door. I must – although I don't know why.'

When Mr Craven arrived back at Misselthwaite Manor, he went straight out into the garden. The flower beds were full of autumn flowers and the fountain was playing. Without knowing why, he walked across the lawn and down to the long walk at the back of the secret garden. When he got there, he wondered if he was dreaming again. There was thick ivy over the door still. But he could hear noises inside the garden. He could hear the noise of quiet laughter and running feet. He could hear someone running faster and faster. And then suddenly the door in the wall flew open, and a boy ran out very fast, straight into Mr Craven's arms.

Mr Craven held the boy away from him and looked at him, amazed. He was a tall handsome boy and his face was full of colour. When Mr Craven saw his eyes, he gasped. They were full of laughter.

This was not how Colin had planned to meet his father. He had come running out of the garden because he had just won a race with Mary and Dickon. But in fact, it was probably the best possible way of surprising Mr Craven.

'Father,' he said, 'I'm Colin. You can't believe it, I know. The garden made me well. Aren't you glad, Father? I'm going to live for ever and ever and ever!'

Mr Craven was trembling with happiness. He put his hands on the boy's shoulders and held him still. He couldn't speak for a moment.

'Take me into the garden, my boy,' he said at last. 'And tell me all about it.'

Mary and Dickon had run out of the garden after Colin, and together they all led Mr Craven back inside. The garden was full of autumn colour – gold and purple and red – and late roses climbed and hung all around. Mr Craven looked round and round.

'I thought it would be dead,' he said.

'That was what Mary thought, too,' said Colin. 'But it came alive.'

Then they sat down under the tree, and the children told him their story. They told him how Mary and Colin had met in the middle of the night. They told him about the spring coming, and about their great secret. Mr Craven laughed until

## Transcript

he cried, and sometimes he cried when he was not laughing.

'Now,' said Colin, at the end of the story, 'it doesn't have to be a secret any more. I am never going to go in the wheelchair again. I shall walk back with you to the house, Father.'

A few minutes later, Mrs Medlock was looking out of the kitchen window when she gave a little cry. All the servants came running over, and looked out with her.

Mr Craven, the Master of Misselthwaite, was walking across the garden towards them, looking happier than he had been for years. And next to him, his head up in the air, and his eyes full of laughter, was Master Colin. Walking as strongly as any boy in Yorkshire!