

# Slog's Dad

## After Reading

1. Davie doesn't believe that the man sitting on a bench outside the butcher shop is Slog's father. What does he look like? What kind of person is he? Compare the two men.

| Joe Mickley | The man ("The bloke") |
|-------------|-----------------------|
|             |                       |

2. Slog's dad promised him to return in the spring. He said he would follow the smells to the lovely earth. What does the earth smell like? What does it taste like? What does it feel, sound and look like? What does the story say? What do you think?

|                     | It smells like ... | It tastes like ... | It feels like ... | It looks like ... | It sounds like .. |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| What the story says |                    |                    |                   |                   |                   |
| What you think      |                    |                    |                   |                   |                   |

3. Which of the following adjectives, in your opinion, best describe the language of the story?

- a. complicated
- b. simple
- c. direct
- d. clear
- e. descriptive
- f. conversational

4. The story is written in English, but some words may puzzle readers because they are either in dialect or just ungrammatical. Find and underline all the examples of non-standard English. Think of the standard English equivalents for these phrases.

5. Why do you think the author makes his characters – Slog, his father and the bloke – speak like this?

a. to give a hint as to where they live

b. to show they are badly educated

c. to show they are badly-behaved

d. to contrast their speech with Davie's more educated speech

e. to make the story sound unrealistic

f. to make the language of the story

more authentic, more true-to-life

g. to make the language more colourful

h. to puzzle the readers

6. Describe the community which the characters of the story belonged to.

- 1) Is the town described in the story big or small?
- 2) What kind of houses do people live in?
- 3) How do the citizens learn about their neighbours' lives?
- 4) What are *the* butcher's, *the* doctor's, *the* priest's, *the* undertaker's names? Do people living in big cities always know their butcher's, postman's, policeman's names?
- 5) Slog's Dad was *skinny*. There is another minor character in the story who is described as *skinny*. Find who it is. Do the people of this community seem to be wealthy?

7. Look back at the text and find out how the characters socialize. Choose the right adjective(s) for each pair and complete the table. Explain your choice.

*sympathetic, intolerant, supportive, indifferent, cold, affectionate, understanding, caring, aggressive, kind, loving, tolerant, helpful, tender, cruel*

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Slog and Davie                |  |
| Slog and his parents          |  |
| Mr and Mrs Mickley            |  |
| The butcher and his customers |  |
| Slog's Dad and passers-by     |  |

8. The plot of the story is built around one peculiar event – Slog’s father coming back to his son from Heaven. How do the following characters react to this? Describe their attitudes providing evidence from the text.

**Slog**

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**David**

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**Billy the butcher**

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**the bloke himself**

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9. Whose belief in the event may be called complete and whose would you describe as sceptical? Do any of the characters change their attitude to the event through the story? Why/Why not? Whose feelings do you think the author sympathizes with?
10. What would you do if you were David? The butcher? The Bloke? What would you say to Slog and why?
11. Discuss the following questions with a partner.
- 1) What makes Slog special – his faith, his trustfulness, his love?
  - 2) What words does the author use to make Slog’s father such an attractive personality?
  - 3) Why does Slog’s father remain calm, despite the forthcoming death? What helps him?
12. Watching Mr and Mrs Mickley, Davie’s mother says “That’s love. True love” Why does she think so? (Support your answer with evidence from the text.) What is true love in your opinion? Have you read anything about true love? Name some books/stories.
13. You have just read a story - ‘Slog’s Dad’. Choose one of the project tasks or think of your own.
- 1) Imagine that you are an illustrator. Design the front and the back covers of the book.
  - 2) Imagine you are a film director. Draw a storyboard or write a scene-by-scene description to create the film.
  - 3) Dramatize the story.
  - 4) Design a poster or produce a collage for the film “Slog’s Dad”.
  - 5) Write the list of the main episodes of the story. Find pieces of music to illustrate them.