

Inference 1

“Tom stood behind Will and stared over his head into the shop window at the colours and artists’ paintbrushes. He remembered how Rachel used to spin with delight in there. Her long black hair, which was always tied in a knot at the nape of her neck, would spring constantly outwards in a curly disarray when she was excited. He looked down at Will who was making shapes with his finger in the mist of his breath on the window..

‘What you doin’?’

‘Drawrin’.‘

‘Humph!’ Tom turned abruptly away and headed towards the main street. “

(Adapted from ‘Goodnight Mr. Tom’ page 57)

Make up some questions e.g.

- Where are Tom and Will standing?
- What are they looking at?
- Who might Rachel be?
- Her hair “was always tied in a knot...” Look again at the sentence. Why does he talk about her like that (in the past tense)?
- What do you think has happened to Rachel?
- How does Tom feel about Rachel?
- How do you think he feels when he walks off? Why?
- How might Will be feeling?
- What’s ‘a curly disarray’?

Inference 2

“The pub was crowded, and of course everyone wanted to speak to Grandma, so we didn't get a chance to talk again that day, not alone. I was playing waiter with the tea and coffee, and plates of quiches and cakes. When we left for home that evening Grandma hugged me especially tight, and afterwards she touched my cheek as she'd always done when she was saying good night to me before she switched off the light. She wasn't crying, not quite. She whispered to me as she held me, "Don't you worry about me, Boowie, dear," she said. "There's times it's good to be on your own. I'll go for rides on Harley. Harley will help me feel better. I'll be fine." So we drove away and left her with the silence of her empty house all around her.”

Try to work out some questions to help your reading partner to work out what is really going on in this piece.

Examples (Don't look at these unless you need to – you can cover this up)

What does he mean when he says 'playing waiter...'?

Why do you think she touched his cheek that way?

How do you think she was feeling? (Tell me how you know that.)

Why do you think he noticed the silence?

What do you think has happened to his grandma?