

The Witches by Roald Dahl

With each word she spoke, flecks of pale-blue phlegm shot from her mouth like little bullets.

“I am asking you vye!” she screamed.

Nobody answered her question.

“Children smell!” she screamed. “They stink out the vurld! Vee do not vont these children around here!”

The bald heads in the audience all nodded vigorously.

“Vun child a veek is no good to me!” The Grand High Witch cried out. “Is that the best you can do?”

“We will do better,” murmured the audience. “We will do much better.”

“Better is no good either!” shrieked The Grand High Witch. “I demand maximum rree-sults! So here are my orders! My orders are that every single child in this country shall be rrrubbed out, sqvashed, sqvirted, sqvittered and frrittered before I come here again in vun year’s time! Do I make myself clear?”

A great gasp went up from the audience. I saw the witches all looking at one another with deeply troubled expressions. And I heard one witch at the end of the front row saying aloud, “All of them! We can’t possibly wipe out *all* of them!”

The Grand High Witch whipped round as though someone had stuck a skewer into her bottom. “Who said that?” she snapped. “Who dares to argue with me? It vos you, vos it not?” She pointed a gloved finger as sharp as a needle at the witch who had spoken.

“I didn’t mean it, Your Grandness!” the witch cried out. “I didn’t mean to argue! I was just talking to myself!”

“You dared to argue vith me!” screamed The Grand High Witch.

“I was just talking to myself!” cried the wretched witch. “I swear it, Your Grandness!” She began to shake with fear.

The Grand High Witch took a quick step forward, and when she spoke again, it was in a voice that made my blood run cold.

Red

Read this extract from `The Witches` by Roald Dahl. The Grand High Witch is speaking at a conference to the other witches- her words are highlighted in blue.

Write down:

- Verbs that show how she speaks
Screamed, cried out, shrieked, snapped
- Phrases that show how people react

“The witches all looking at one another with deeply troubled expressions”

“The bald heads in the audience all nodded vigorously”

“A great gasp went up from the audience”

- How would you describe her character?
She is a vicious character, who hunts down children. She likes to be totally in control and is very loud and angry in the way she speaks.

Yellow

Read this extract from `The Witches` by Roald Dahl. The Grand High Witch is speaking at a conference to the other witches- her words are highlighted in blue.

Answer these questions. You must use quotes from the text:

- Verbs that show how she speaks
Screamed, cried out, shrieked, snapped
- Phrases that show how people react

“The witches all looking at one another with deeply troubled expressions”

“The bald heads in the audience all nodded vigorously”

“A great gasp went up from the audience”

- Actions that show she is menacing

“flecks of pale-blue phlegm shot from her mouth like little bullets.”

“She pointed a gloved finger as sharp as a needle at the witch”

“when she spoke again, it was in a voice that made my blood run cold.”

- Which words show her violent side?

My orders are that every single child in this country shall be rrrubbed out, sqvashed, sqvirted, sqvittered and frrittered before I come here again in vun year's time!

- Describe her character in 5 words

Violent, menacing, authoritative, demanding and sinister.

- How do the other witches feel?

Terrified. They know what she is capable of. They are scared to say their opinions because of her actions.