The Secret Garden

Summary-based Activities
by Kenneth Brodey

Frances Hodgson Burnett
Read the summary of Chapters 1-3 below.

Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There are five words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as an example.

a     with     and     opens     next     puts     meets     on     knows     about     takes     carries     in     got     when     has

When Mary Lennox’s parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives with her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle’s wife is dead. The morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven’s garden a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, ‘Do you hear a child crying?’ ‘No,’ says Martha. One day the garden, Mary sees a robin. Mary looks down at the robin sees a key. Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden. She the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha gardens. ‘My brother Dickon can help,’ says Martha. One day, Mary Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha him to her garden.

When Mary Lennox’s parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives with her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle’s wife is dead. The morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven’s garden a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, ‘Do you hear a child crying?’ ‘No,’ says Martha. One day the garden, Mary sees a robin. Mary looks down at the robin sees a key. Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden. She the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha gardens. ‘My brother Dickon can help,’ says Martha. One day, Mary Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha him to her garden.
Scrambled word cloze with distractors (ii)

Read the summary of Chapters 1-3 below.
Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There are ten words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as an example.

**Mary Lennox**'s parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives 1. her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle's wife is dead. The 2. morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven's garden 3. a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, 'Do you hear 4. child crying?' 'No,' says Martha. One day 5. the garden, Mary sees a robin. Mary looks down at the robin 6. sees a key. Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden. She 7. the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha 8. gardens. 'My brother Dickon can help,' says Martha. One day, Mary 9. Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha 10. him to her garden.

**Words to use:** when, has, on, by, opens, takes, carries, next, also, after, and, with, puts, knows, about.

Multiple choice cloze

Read the summary of Chapters 1-3 below.
Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

- When
- by
- Next
- Also
- After
- And
- With
- A
- B
- C

0. Mary Lennox's parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives 1. her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle's wife is dead. The 2. morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven's garden 3. a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, 'Do you hear 4. child crying?' 'No,' says Martha. One day 5. the garden, Mary sees a robin. Mary looks down at the robin 6. sees a key. Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden. She 7. the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha 8. gardens. 'My brother Dickon can help,' says Martha. One day, Mary 9. Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha 10. him to her garden.
Open cloze

Complete the summary of Chapters 1-3 below. Write ONE word for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

When Mary Lennox’s parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives (1) her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle’s wife is dead. The (2) morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven’s garden (3) a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, ‘Do you hear (4) child crying?’ ‘No,’ says Martha. One day (5) the garden, Mary sees a robin. Mary looks down at the robin (6) sees a key. Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden. She (7) the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha (8) gardens. ‘My brother Dickon can help,’ says Martha. One day, Mary (9) Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha (10) him to her garden.

Correct the mistakes!

This is an oral activity, so do not give the students any photocopies. Tell them you are going to read a summary, but with some mistakes. When they hear a mistake they should correct it.

In the summary below there are 10 mistakes to read out, all written in italics. As a quick reminder to you, the correct version is given in brackets.

When Mary Lennox’s parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives with her brother (uncle), Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle’s sister (wife) is dead. The next morning Mary walks out to the sea (gardens). She sees Mrs Craven’s garden has a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, ‘Do you hear a child crying?’ ‘No,’ says Martha. One beautiful day in the garden, Mary sees a dog (robin). Mary looks down at the robin and sees a key. Mary then sees a small window (door) in the wall of the garden. She opens the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha about gardens. ‘My brother, Dickon, can help’ says Martha. One day, Mary meets Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha takes him to her garden.

Put the sentences in order

The sentences A-J of the summary of Chapters 1-3 are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order and number them 1-10.

A □ When Mary Lennox’s parents die, she moves from India to England.
B □ One day, Mary meets Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha takes him to her garden.
C □ She goes and lives with her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle’s wife is dead.
D □ One beautiful day in the garden, Mary sees a robin.
E □ She opens the door with the key and walks inside.
F □ Mary looks down at the robin and sees a key.
G □ One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant, ‘Do you hear a child crying?’ ‘No,’ says Martha.
H □ Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden.
I □ That evening she talks with Martha about gardens. ‘My brother, Dickon, can help’ says Martha.
J □ The next morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven’s garden has a wall around it. It is a secret garden.

Rub out

On the board / the interactive whiteboard, copy a short paragraph from the summary. Gradually, rub out individual words and even two- and three-word phrases. Begin by rubbing out some of the important content words. After each time you rub out some words get the whole class to read out the text, supplying the missing words from their memory. Eventually, when all the words on the board have been rubbed out, the class will — amazingly! — remember all the text.
**Dictogloss**

Sit the students in groups of two to five. Tell them that you are going to read out a summary of Chapters 1-3 of *The Secret Garden* twice, and that they may note down key words or short phrases. Read the text once at normal speed, pause for a minute, then read it again.

Tell the students to work together in their groups and use their notes to write a text which is grammatically and lexically correct but which doesn’t have to be the same as the original: the aim of their writing is to produce a correct text, not to show they have perfect memories!

Then students compare their written texts. Groups should try to point out any errors in the texts of other groups.

Finally, show or give the students the original text; ask them to identify any differences with their own texts, and ask them if they think the differences are important.

**Cut it down**

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen/highlighter or access to computer. Tell them that they must cut 15 words from the summary: their shortened version must still be grammatically correct. They can change punctuation, but they mustn’t add any words.

When they have finished, they should compare their shortened versions. They should decide which are the best cuts, and why.

**Build it up**

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen or access to computer. Tell them that they must add two details, which they must choose themselves, to the summary. Tell them that the details they add can be words, phrases or even sentences. Tell them they shouldn’t write fewer than five words, and that there is no upper limit, but they probably won’t need more than about 25 words.

When they have finished, they should compare their versions. They should decide which are the most interesting added details, and why.

**Rewrite it**

Tell the students to rewrite the summary changing some of the information. They should use their imagination to add details — which can be words, phrases or sentences — and change some of the words and phrases that are already there.

**SUMMARY**

When Mary Lennox’s parents die, she moves from India to England. She goes and lives with her uncle, Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Her uncle’s wife is dead. The next morning Mary walks out to the gardens. She sees Mrs Craven’s garden has a wall around it. It is a secret garden. One evening, after dinner, Mary says to Martha, a young servant. ‘Do you hear a child crying?’ ‘No,’ says Martha. One day in the garden, Mary sees a robin. Mary looks down at the robin and sees a key. Mary then sees a small door in the wall of the garden. She opens the door with the key and walks inside. That evening she talks with Martha about gardens. ‘My brother Dickon can help,’ says Martha. One day, Mary meets Dickon. She likes him and he likes her, so Martha takes him to her garden.

**KEY**

1, 2, 3, 5: 1 with; 2 next; 3 has; 4 a; 5 in; 6 and; 7 opens; 8 about
9 meets; 10 takes
4: 1 C; 2 A; 3 ; 4 A; 5 C; 6 B; 7 A; 8 B; 9 C; 10 A
6: 1 A; 2 C; 3 J; 4 G; 5 D; 6 F; 7 H; 8 E; 9 I; 10 B
Scrambled word cloze

Read the summary of Chapters 4-5 below. Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. The first one has been done as an example.

when make rainy when going someone straight must and become old fresh

One evening Mary hears (0) someone crying. She looks around (1) then finds a boy. His name is Colin and he is ten years (2). 'I think I am (3) to die. I am very ill – I am going to be hunchback,' says Colin. They (4) friends. One (5) day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the (6) air can help Colin. 'Let's (7) the garden beautiful,' says Dickon. (8) she returns home, Colin is angry with her. 'You (9) stay with me. I am going to be a hunchback and die,' says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his back. 'You're back is (10). You're going to live,' says Mary.

Scrambled word cloze with distractors (i)

Read the summary of Chapters 4-5 below. Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There are five words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as an example.

make rainy when going someone straight must and become old fresh

One evening Mary hears (0) someone crying. She looks around (1) then finds a boy. His name is Colin and he is ten years (2). 'I think I am (3) to die. I am very ill – I am going to be hunchback,' says Colin. They (4) friends. One (5) day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the (6) air can help Colin. 'Let's (7) the garden beautiful,' says Dickon. (8) she returns home, Colin is angry with her. 'You (9) stay with me. I am going to be a hunchback and die,' says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his back. 'You're back is (10). You're going to live,' says Mary.
3 Scrambled word cloze with distractors (ii)
Read the summary of Chapters 4-5 below.
Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There are ten words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as an example.

One evening Mary hears (0)…someone... crying. She looks around (1)...then finds a boy. His name is Colin and he is ten years (2)...‘I think I am (3)...to die. I am very ill – I am going to be hunchback,’ says Colin. They (4)...friends. One (5)...day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the (6)...air can help Colin. ‘Let’s (7)...the garden beautiful,’ says Dickon. (8)...she returns home, Colin is angry with her. ‘You (9)...stay with me. I am going to be a hunchback and die,’ says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his back. ‘You’re back is (10).... You’re going to live,’ says Mary.

going become rainy and old but age getting
make fresh open do next must when has
direct someone straight are rains

4 Multiple choice cloze
Read the summary of Chapters 4-5 below.
Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

One evening Mary hears (0)....Someone... crying. She looks around (1)...then finds a boy. His name is Colin and he is ten years (2)...‘I think I am (3)...to die. I am very ill – I am going to be hunchback,’ says Colin. They (4)...friends. One (5)...day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the (6)...air can help Colin. ‘Let’s (7)...the garden beautiful,’ says Dickon. (8)...she returns home, Colin is angry with her. ‘You (9)...stay with me. I am going to be a hunchback and die,’ says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his back. ‘You’re back is (10).... You’re going to live,’ says Mary.

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When she returns home Colin is angry with her. ‘You must stay with me. I am going to be a hunchback and die,’ says Colin.

One evening Mary hears someone crying. She looks around and then finds a boy. His name is Colin and he is ten years old. ‘I think I am going to die. I am very ill – I am going to be hunchback,’ says Colin. They become friends. One rainy day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the fresh fruit air can help Colin. ‘Let’s make the house (garden) beautiful,’ says Dickon.

She returns home, Colin is angry with her. ‘You are going to be a hunchback and die,’ says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his back. ‘You’re back is straight. You’re going to live,’ says Mary.

This is an oral activity, so do not give the students any photocopies. Tell them you are going to read a summary, but with some mistakes. When they hear a mistake they should correct it.

In the summary below there are 10 mistakes to read out, all written in italics. As a quick reminder to you, the correct version is given in brackets.

One evening Mary hears someone crying. She looks around and then finds a woman (boy). His name is Colin and he is four (ten) years old. ‘I think I am going to die. I am very intelligent (ill) – I am going to be hunchback,’ says Colin. They become friends. One rainy day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the fresh fruit (air) can help Colin. ‘Let’s make the house (garden) beautiful,’ says Dickon. When she returns home Colin is angry with her. ‘You must sing (stay) with me. I am going to be a teacher (hunchback) and die,’ says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his teeth (back). ‘You’re leg (back) is straight. You’re going to live,’ says Mary.
**Dictogloss**

Sit the students in groups of two to five. Tell them that you are going to read out a summary of Chapters 4-5 of *The Secret Garden* twice, and that they may note down key words or short phrases. Read the text once at normal speed, pause for a minute, then read it again. Tell the students to work together in their groups and use their notes to write a text which is grammatically and lexically correct but which doesn’t have to be the same as the original: the aim of their writing is to produce a correct text, not to show they have perfect memories! Then students compare their written texts. Groups should try to point out any errors in the texts of other groups. Finally, show or give the students the original text; ask them to identify any differences with their own texts, and ask them if they think the differences are important.

**Cut it down**

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen/highlighter or access to a computer. Tell them that they must cut 15 words from the summary: their shortened version must still be grammatically correct. They can change punctuation, but they mustn’t add any words.

When they have finished, they should compare their shortened versions. They should decide which are the best cuts, and why.

**Build it up**

Put the students in groups of two to five. Make sure that each group has a copy of the summary and a red pen or access to a computer. Tell them that they must add two details, which they must choose themselves, to the summary. Tell them that the details they add can be words, phrases or even sentences. Tell them they shouldn’t write fewer than five words, and that there is no upper limit, but they probably won’t need more than about 25 words.

When they have finished, they should compare their versions. They should decide which are the most interesting added details, and why.

**Rewrite it**

Tell the students to rewrite the summary changing some of the information. They should use their imagination to add details — which can be words, phrases or sentences — and change some of the words and phrases that are already there.

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**SUMMARY**

One evening Mary hears someone crying. She looks around and then finds a boy. His name is Colin and he is ten years old ‘I think I am going to die. I am very ill — I am going to be a hunchback,’ says Colin. They become friends. One rainy day Mary tells Colin about Dickon. The next day Mary tells Dickon about Colin. They think that the fresh air can help Colin.

‘Let’s make the garden beautiful,’ says Dickon. when she returns home, Colin is angry with her. ‘You must stay with me. I am going to be a hunchback and die,’ says Colin. Mary looks at Colin and then she looks at his back. ‘You’re back is straight. You’re going to live,’ says Mary.

**KEY**

1, 2, 3, 5: 1 and; 2 old; 3 going; 4 become; 5 rainy; 6 fresh; 7 make; 8 when; 9 must; 10 straight
4: 1 A; 2 C; 3 A; 4 A; 5 C; 6 B; 7 B; 8 C; 9 A; 10 A
6: 1 J; 2 E; 3 H; 4 A; 5 C; 6 G; 7 D; 8 I; 9 F; 10 B
The Secret Garden  Chapters 6-7

1 Scrambled word cloze

Read the summary of Chapters 6-7 below. Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. The first one has been done as an example.

when very comes them pushes start becomes with in one decides

The next day Dickon (0) .......... with his animals. Colin likes (1) ................. and Dickon. Dickon (2) ...................... him to the secret garden in his wheelchair. Colin thinks it is magic. ‘You can grow strong here,’ say Mary and Dickon. They (3) ................. to work in the garden. Colin (4) ................. strong. He is happy (5) ................. his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her. Mr Craven is (6) ...................... Italy in this period. (7) ...................... night he dreams about his wife. She is in the secret garden. He (8) ................. to return home (9) ................. he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden. He thinks he hears children in his wife’s garden. Suddenly a tall boy runs out. His father is (10) ................. surprised. It is Colin. They are all happy now. It is the magic of the garden.

2 Scrambled word cloze with distractors (i)

Read the summary of Chapters 6-7 below. Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There are five words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as an example.

when because very lot comes them pushes carries start becomes goes with in one a decides

The next day Dickon (0) .......... with his animals. Colin likes (1) ...................... and Dickon. Dickon (2) ...................... him to the secret garden in his wheelchair. Colin thinks it is magic. ‘You can grow strong here,’ say Mary and Dickon. They (3) ...................... to work in the garden. Colin (4) ...................... strong. He is happy (5) ...................... his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her. Mr Craven is (6) ...................... Italy in this period. (7) ...................... night he dreams about his wife. She is in the secret garden. He (8) ...................... to return home (9) ...................... he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden. He thinks he hears children in his wife’s garden. Suddenly a tall boy runs out. His father is (10) ...................... surprised. It is Colin. They are all happy now. It is the magic of the garden.
Scrambled word cloze with distractors (ii)

Read the summary of Chapters 6-7 below.
Choose one of the words from the box to write in each space. There are ten words you do not need to use. The first one has been done as an example.

when those because one very pushes becomes lot carries comes at in job on a decides
thinks them start goes with

The next day Dickon (0) comes with his animals. Colin likes (1) those and Dickon. Dickon (2) pushes him to the secret garden in his wheelchair. Colin thinks it is magic. 'You can grow strong here,' say Mary and Dickon. They (3) start to work in the garden. Colin (4) becomes strong. He is happy (5) at his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her. Mr Craven is (6) in Italy in this period. (7) night he dreams about his wife. She is in the secret garden. He (8) decides to return home (9) when he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden. He thinks he hears children in his wife's garden. Suddenly a tall boy runs out. His father is (10) surprised. It is Colin. They are all happy now. It is the magic of the garden.

Multiple choice cloze

Read the summary of Chapters 6-7 below.
Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

The next day Dickon (0) comes with his animals. Colin likes (1) those and Dickon. Dickon (2) pushes him to the secret garden in his wheelchair. Colin thinks it is magic. 'You can grow strong here,' say Mary and Dickon. They (3) start to work in the garden. Colin (4) becomes strong. He is happy (5) at his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her. Mr Craven is (6) in Italy in this period. (7) night he dreams about his wife. She is in the secret garden. He (8) decides to return home (9) when he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden. He thinks he hears children in his wife's garden. Suddenly a tall boy runs out. His father is (10) surprised. It is Colin. They are all happy now. It is the magic of the garden.

0 A comes B is C gets
1 A those B the C them
2 A pushes B carries C hits
3 A begins B start C starts
4 A becomes B goes C arrives
5 A at B by C with
6 A at B to C in
7 A An B One C Single
8 A decides B thinks C considers
9 A Then B When C AS
10 A must B very C lot
Complete the summary of Chapters 6-7 below. Write ONE word for each space. The first one has been done as an example.

The next day Dickon (0)....comes with his animals. Colin likes (1).................. and Dickon. Dickon (2).................. him to the secret garden in his wheelchair. Colin thinks it is magic. 'You can grow strong here,' say Mary and Dickon. They (3).................. to work in the garden. Colin (4).................. strong. He is happy (5).................. his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her. Mr Craven is (6).................. Italy in this period. (7).................. night he dreams about his wife. She is in the secret garden. He (8).................. to return home (9).................. he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden. He thinks he hears children in his wife's garden. Suddenly a tall boy runs out. His father is (10).................. surprised. It is Colin. They are all happy now. It is the magic of the garden.

The sentences A-J of the summary of Chapters 6-7 are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order and number them 1-10.

A ☐ Mr Craven is in Italy in this period. One night he dreams about his wife.
B ☐ He thinks he hears children in his wife's garden.
C ☐ The next day Dickon comes with his animals.
D ☐ Colin thinks it is magic. 'You can grow strong here,' say Mary and Dickon. They start to work in the garden.
E ☐ Colin becomes strong. He is happy with his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her.
F ☐ When he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden.
G ☐ He decides to return home.
H ☐ She is in the secret garden.

Rub out

On the board / the interactive whiteboard, copy a short paragraph from the summary.
Gradually, rub out individual words and even two- and three-word phrases. Begin by rubbing out some of the important content words. After each time you rub out some words get the whole class to read out the text, supplying the missing words from their memory.
Eventually, when all the words on the board have been rubbed out, the class will — amazingly! — remember all the text.
Dictogloss

Sit the students in groups of two to five. Tell them that you are going to read out a summary of Chapters 6-7 of The Secret Garden twice, and that they may note down key words or short phrases. Read the text once at normal speed, pause for a minute, then read it again. Tell the students to work together in their groups and use their notes to write a text which is grammatically and lexically correct but which doesn’t have to be the same as the original: the aim of their writing is to produce a correct text, not to show they have perfect memories!

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Rewrite it

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SUMMARY

The next day Dickon comes with his animals. Colin likes them and Dickon. Dickon pushes him to the secret garden in his wheelchair. Colin thinks it is magic. ‘You can grow strong here,’ say Mary and Dickon. They start to work in the garden. Colin becomes strong. He is happy with his friends. Mary also becomes happy. Now she likes people and people like her. Mr Craven is in Italy in this period. One night he dreams about his wife. She is in the secret garden. He decides to return home. When he returns home, he goes out to the secret garden. He thinks he hears children in his wife’s garden. Suddenly a tall boy runs out. His father is very surprised. It is Colin. They are all happy now. It is the magic of the garden.

KEY

1, 2, 3, 5: 1 them; 2 pushes; 3 start; 4 becomes; 5 with; 6 in; 7 one
8 decides; 9 when; 10 very
4: 1 C; 2 A; 3 B; 4 A; 5 C; 6 C; 7 B; 8 A; 9 B; 10 B
6: 1 C; 2 I; 3 D; 4 E; 5 A; 6 H; 7 G; 8 F; 9 B; 10 J