

Chapter 7

Mr Crumb landed the broom, rather badly, in Grandad's small yard. Grandad, who had been waiting up for them, greeted them at the back door. They described, in great detail, everything that had occurred that evening. Grandad was very upset when he heard what had happened to Mr Broom, a good friend to the family. He agreed with Amber that it was worth going to Spellcaster Academy and trying to persuade Miss Canning to help them, even though Mr Crumb was not convinced she would believe them.

They got up early on Monday morning, at the crack of dawn, and headed straight for Spellcaster Academy. Amber knew, from bitter experience, that the formidable Miss Canning would always ensure she was the first to arrive on the school premises. Today, however, it was Amber who was waiting for Miss Canning outside the school gates.

"Early for once I see, Dripping!" Miss Canning snorted when she saw Amber. "What a pity you're no longer a member of our school!"

Amber decided to get straight to the point; there was no time to waste. "I have information about Miss Wand," she told her ex-headmistress straightaway. "I think you need to hear it. She has joined forces with Esmerelda Evil!"

"Indeed! Well you had better follow me, Dripping. I'll give you five minutes – no more! And you had better not be wasting my time," she added.

She led them both into her office and closed the door, which Amber noted had been mended since the last time she was there. Amber sat on a chair while Mr Crumb, who had not said a word so far in Miss Canning's presence, stood sheepishly behind her. Miss Canning remained stony-faced as Amber explained everything that had happened since the day Miss Vile had arrived at St Augustine's. She finished her account by saying, "Mr Crumb was once a great wizard. He'll vouch for me. Won't you, Mr Crumb?"

Mr Crumb looked embarrassed and muttered, "It's all true."

Miss Canning remained silent for several seconds before answering. "Amber Dripping, do you really expect me to believe this far-fetched story? You're telling me that a young lady, who couldn't even make a pencil vanish, can now make herself disappear into thin air! And the chance of Esmerelda Evil returning to our shores is highly unlikely. I understand your need to avenge your mother's death, but this woman you describe – Miss Vile I believe you called her – is, without doubt, another person altogether. And as for bringing this man with you!" She looked across to where Mr Crumb was awkwardly standing. "He is an extremely unsavoury character and under no circumstances is he to be trusted!"





Name: _____

I can use commas to indicate parenthesis.



Commas can be used to separate information (extra information that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence) from the rest of the sentence.

Sometimes the **parenthesis** (the part between the commas) comes in the middle of the sentence, and sometimes it can come at the end.

This has been set out like a play script

Miss Canning and Amber then began a rather heated exchange.

Underline all the words in parenthesis which are not essential to the sentence.

- 1 **Miss C:** That man, Mr Crumb, did not abide by the witches' code of conduct.
- 2 **Amber:** That man, as you call him, is a very good friend of mine.
- 3 **Miss C:** He performed magic, strictly against our rules, for his own personal gain.
- 4 **Amber:** His magic, I'll let you know, saved our lives on a couple of occasions.
- 5 **Miss C:** He performed magic on a television show, a talent contest no less!
- 6 **Amber:** His crime, if you can call it that, is nothing compared to the crime Esmeralda Evil is about to commit.
- 7 **Miss C:** That is highly improbable, in my opinion, and I will hear no more about it!
- 8 **Amber:** Mr Broom, the best teacher at Spellcaster, would tell you it was true.
- 9 **Miss C:** I shall ask him when he comes into school which, I'm sure, shall not be long!
- 10 **Amber:** He won't be able to because he has been eaten by Lucifer, Esmeralda's cat.
- 11 **Miss C:** Mr Broom, a highly experienced wizard, would not allow that to happen.
- 12 **Amber:** He died, completely selflessly, trying to save the lives of innocent children.
- 13 **Miss C:** He will be teaching the history of wizardry in Y4 this morning, as always.
- 14 **Amber:** Then I will have to save the school, St Augustine's, on my own!

And with that Amber swept out the office with Mr Crumb following closely behind.

Extension Write a dialogue between Amber and Mr Crumb using the comma for parenthesis.





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The commas for parenthesis have not been placed in the sentences below. Place the commas in the correct position.

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Make up some non-essential detail of your own to go between the commas for parenthesis.

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