

We blinked our eyes in the bright beam of the policeman's torch. He looked us up and down. We must have looked a sorry sight in our muddy shoes and torn pyjamas. Mrs McKenna came to the door in her dressing gown.

"What on earth have you two been up to?" she exclaimed.

"Looks like they've been dragged through a hedge backwards!" joked Dr McKenna which would have been funny if I hadn't been so certain that I was about to be arrested. "Now, nothing to be afraid of lads, but this policeman needs a quick word with you both," he said more seriously.

"The police force from Manchester have been in contact, and I have reason to believe that one of you boys is not who you say you are," the policeman began. "I want you to be honest and tell me which one of you is actually a boy called Andrew Hargreaves."

That's it, I thought. I'm finished! Kenneth gave me a good hard look as if to say admit it, but then he took me completely by surprise by saying, "It's me, officer." The policeman looked in his notebook and then back at Kenneth.

"He matches the description," he said to Dr McKenna. "Particularly the bit about the unusual Superman top. That is his usual attire, is it?" he asked. Dr McKenna just nodded. Kenneth, of course, had been wearing my Superman pyjamas since he arrived at the McKenna's.

"Right. Come along with me, young man," he said to Kenneth. Mrs McKenna was asked to pack his suitcase while the policeman explained to Kenneth what was going to happen to him. I just stood there dumbfounded: Kenneth had saved me yet again. After a few minutes Mrs McKenna came back with his case which the policeman placed in the boot of the car. He helped Kenneth onto the back seat and closed the car door. Kenneth stared straight ahead, not looking at me. The policeman thanked the McKennas for their co-operation, and jumped in the driver's seat. As they drove off, I saw Kenneth turn and give me a wink. We watched the car drive away until the rear lights disappeared into the darkness.



"What had he done?" I asked Dr McKenna as I took off my muddy shoes in the doorway. I was curious to find out what they knew about me.

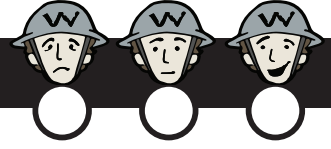
"Nothing as far as I am aware," said Dr McKenna. "I believe they just need to return him."

"Return him where?" I asked.

"To the life he knows best, I assume," he replied. This seemed an unusual answer, but I decided not to ask any more questions. I knew that it wouldn't take them long to discover their mistake and they would be back before long looking for me. I decided that I would have to leave as soon as it was first light. "Come on, young man. I'll make you a cup of cocoa. And then you must try to get some sleep," said Dr McKenna as he led me into the kitchen.



I can use synonyms to improve my writing.



A **synonym** is a word that means the same thing or similar thing to another word.

We use synonyms to liven up our writing. It would be very boring if we used the same word again and again. But sometimes synonyms have very subtle differences, so you have to be careful you use the right word in the right context.

We blinked our eyes in the bright beam of the policeman's torch.

Synonyms for blink include **squinted** and **flickered**, but only one makes sense in this sentence.

Synonyms for bright include **dazzling** and **glittering**, but which one makes most sense?

Synonyms for torch include **beacon** and **flashlight**, but again only one of these makes sense in the context of the sentence.

The best synonyms to replace the original words are:

We squinted our eyes in the dazzling beam of the policeman's flashlight.

Underline the synonym which is the best fit for the sentence.

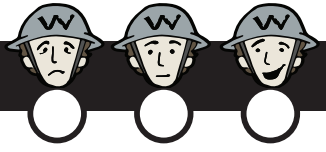
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(searched/appeared) (ripped/split)
- 2 "Looks like they've been dragged through a hedge backwards!"
(hailed/heaved) (back to front/in reverse)
- 3 "I want you to be honest and tell me which one of you is actually Andrew Hargreaves."
(fair/truthful) (in truth/really)
- 4 Kenneth gave me a good hard look as if to say admit it.
(glance/stare) (accept/confess)
- 5 The policeman explained to Kenneth what was going to happen.
(described/demonstrated) (come about/take place)
- 6 The policeman was thankful to the McKennas for their co-operation.
(grateful/appreciative/indebted) (collaboration/participation/assistance)
- 7 We watched the car drive away until the rear lights disappeared in the darkness.
(viewed/noticed/looked at) (dissolved/departed/vanished)
- 8 I was curious to find out what they knew about me.
(nosy/inquiring/interested) (had learnt/understood/realised)
- 9 It wouldn't take them long to discover their mistake.
(come across/find out/dig up) (gaffe/miscalculation/error)



Extension Look through the passage and find other words you could replace with synonyms from a thesaurus.



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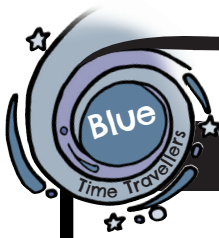


Use a thesaurus to replace the underlined words with a suitable synonym.

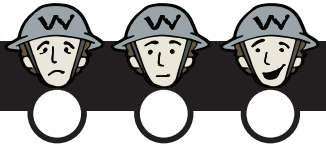
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