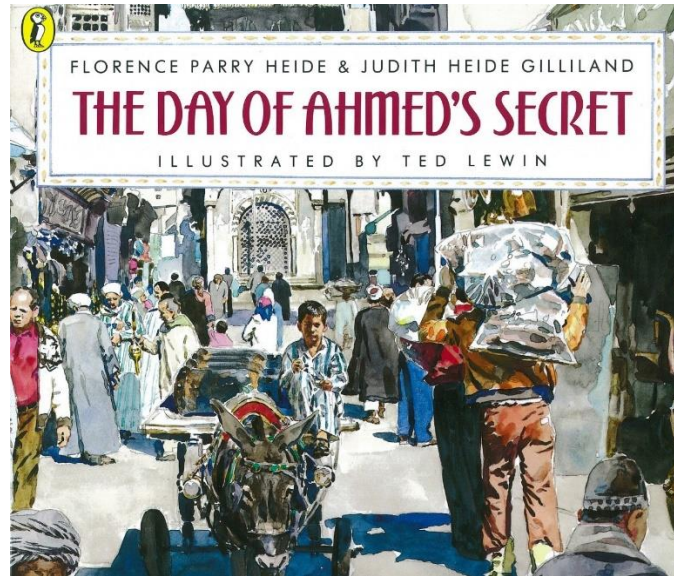


Reading Comprehension Homework Task

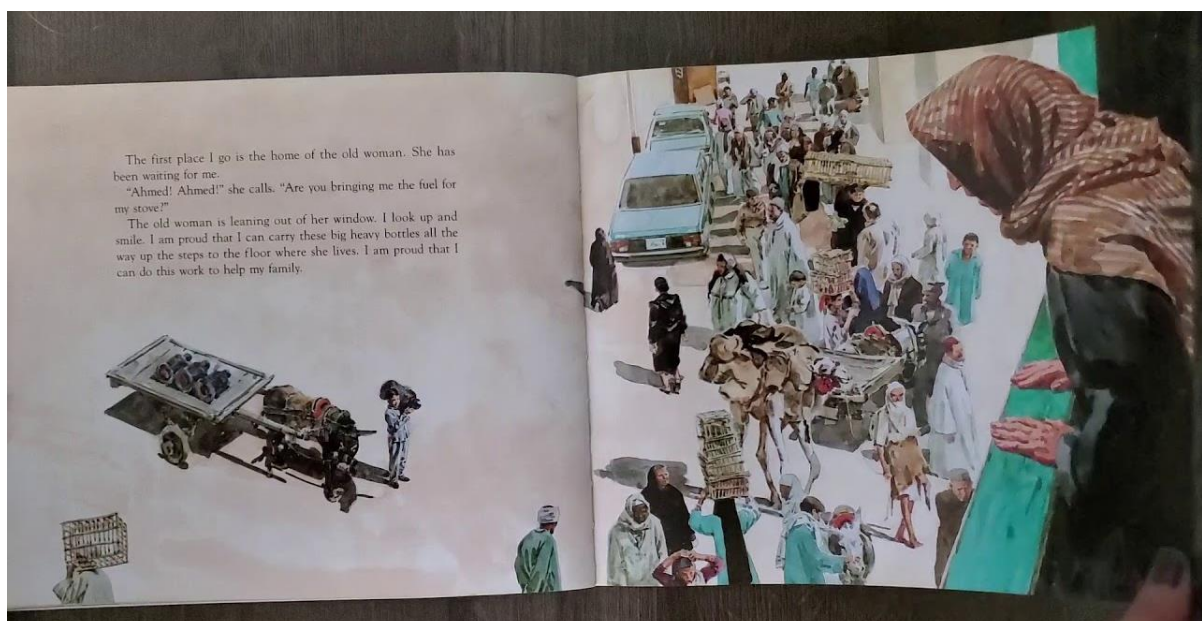
Read this following extract from a book written by Florence Parry Heide called 'The Day of Ahmed's Secret'.



If you want to listen to someone read this story to you then click on this YouTube link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwMA53ckUVY>

You can look at some of the lovely pictures!



Ahmed is a 'butagaz boy'. 'Butagaz' is a word given to large bottles of butane gas.

The first place I go is the home of the old woman. She has been waiting for me.

"Ahmed! Ahmed!" she calls. "Are you bringing me the fuel for my stove?"

The old woman is leaning out of her window. I look up and smile. I am proud that I can carry these big heavy bottles all the way up the steps to the floor where she lives. I am proud that I can do this work to help my family.

I make more stops, and now I am hungry again. I look for the bright red and yellow cart where I can buy my lunch, and I find it in its usual place near the old building.

I buy my beans and rice, and sit in the shade of the old wall.

My father has told me the wall is a thousand years old, and even our great-great-grandfathers were not yet born when it was built. There are many old buildings, many old walls like the one I lean against, in this city.

I close my eyes and have my quiet time, the time my father says I must have each day. "If there are no quiet spaces in your head, it fills with noise," he has told me.

He has shown me how to find my way in the city, and he has taken me to each place where I now have to bring the heavy bottles.

In those days before I was strong enough to do this work alone, I would sit in the cart and watch my father lift and carry the bottles. One day I told him that now I could do it by myself. He watched me try to take a heavy bottle from the cart. I could not do it, and I was ashamed.

"Hurry to grow strong, Ahmed," my father said on that day. For the first time I saw that his face had a tired look, like the faces of the old men in the city.

"Hurry to grow strong," he said again. "But do not hurry to grow old."

Now as I lean against the old building, I think of the sea of sand that lies along our city. I have seen it, stretching as far as the wind.

My father says the wind carries the sand all through the city to remind us that the desert is there, is there beside us, and is a part of us.

By Florence Parry Heide

There are three challenges to complete this week. How many marks will you get out of a possible 18?

Just writing the answers neatly in your homework books is fine - you don't need to print these sheets out.

Challenge 1

- (1) What does Ahmed carry up the steps? (1 mark)
- (2) Is the old woman pleased to see Ahmed? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)
- (3) Why is Ahmed proud of himself? Give two reasons. (2 marks)
- (4) Who delivered the bottles before Ahmed? (1 mark)

Challenge 2

- 1 '...I find it in its usual place near the old building.' Which word is closest in meaning to 'usual'? Tick one.

Ordinary

☐

Normal

☐

Everyday

☐☐

1 mark

- 2 Why does Ahmed close his eyes?

☐

1 mark

- 3 What impression do you get of the city where Ahmed lives? Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Impression	Evidence

☐

4 marks

Challenge 3

- 1 How did Ahmed feel when he could not carry the bottles? Find and copy one word that shows how he felt.

☐
1 mark

- 2 "Hurry to grow strong," he said again. "But do not hurry to grow old." Why does Ahmed's father say he should hurry to grow strong but not to grow old?

.....

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☐
2 marks

- 3 What helpful things has his father taught Ahmed? Give two things.

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☐
2 marks

- 4 Ahmed's father says that 'the desert is there, is there beside us, and is a part of us'. What does this tell us about the connection between the people and the desert?

.....

.....

☐
1 mark

Total: _____ / 18 marks