



Reading 141

You are going to read a book review written by a British teenager. Complete the tasks following the text.

The scene is set; it is the year 1816 and Mary Godwin, her soon-to-be husband Percy Shelley, her sister Claire and a servant boy, Felix, are gathered in the parlour of Lord Byron's Villa Diodati on Lake Geneva. He has requested their company to see who can tell the most blood-chilling ghost story. As a storm brews outside and the evening begins there is the sound of desperate pounding at the front door!

This is how you are drawn into the chilling tale of emerging scientific discovery clashing with superstition and tradition in the nineteenth century. The main part of the story is told as a first-hand account by a village girl in the Somerset Hills, Lizzie Appleby, and once again Emma Carroll has brilliantly captured an authentic and believable voice for her heroine. She recounts a story of traditional village life disrupted by the mysterious events at Eden Court; weird deliveries, ghastly howling noises and the disappearance of animals from the local farms! These events eventually rip Lizzie from her familiar surroundings and send her on a journey to the Villa Diodati to search for something precious that she has lost.

I absolutely loved this book because it combines so many things that interest me; science, the story behind Frankenstein, Somerset (where I live) and epic story-telling. There is a rich contrast between the scientific experiments with electricity which were taking place at that time and the folklore and superstition in the village. Emma Carroll also makes you realise that women scientists were not appreciated and had to hide behind men to be taken seriously, without giving you the impression that she is lecturing you about it. I like the way she just wove interesting ideas and historical facts into an entertaining and gripping storyline.

I think that that this book deserves 5 stars out of 5 and I would recommend it to anyone over 9 years old. Also, if you are interested in the story of Frankenstein, this is a perfect way of finding out more but at the same time a completely original story. My advice is get reading but be prepared — it is a tale to freeze the blood!

At the end of the book, Lizzie, her sister Peg and Felix journey to Finsbury Square in the City of London to pick up a first edition of Frankenstein. I was lucky enough to almost recreate this journey as Emma Carroll invited me to the launch of Strange Star which was held at Daunt Bookshop on Cheapside, very close to Finsbury Square. It was really exciting to find myself in a bookshop, surrounded by writers and editors and agents and other people from the publishing world, pretty much BookieCookie heaven! Anyway, go and buy Strange Star - you will not be disappointed!

A. Find the words in the text which match the following definitions/explanations.

1. a particular statement, report or narrative of an event
2. true, real, genuine
3. a belief that some objects or actions are lucky or unlucky, or that they cause events to happen, based on old ideas of magic

B. Read the following statements and decide whether they are true or false and explain your answer (in 30–35 words).

Example: 6. It is true that the sacrifice the bird made was not appreciated by the student because he forgot about the object of his love in an instant, showing that love meant little to him.

1. The reviewer believes that the book is a horror story or a thriller.
2. The reviewer believes that the plot of the book is far-fetched, boring and shallow.

Reading 141 — Keys

KEY

A. По 1 БАЛЛУ (если правописание неправильное, балл не засчитывается)

1. **account (с натяжкой tale)**
2. **authentic**
3. **superstition**

B. В ПО 3 БАЛЛА (содержание, грамматика, лексика)

1. **True**

the chilling tale, mysterious events, gripping storyline

2. **False**

brilliantly captured, I absolutely loved this book, without giving you the impression that she is lecturing you, deserves 5 stars out of 5, a completely original story

Вычет 1 балл, если не уложились в рамки 30–35 слов

0 балла, если ошибка в установлении истинности (True/False)

0 балла, если ответ дан без разъяснения

*Источник задания: финал олимпиады «Ломоносов» 2018/19, 10–11 классы,
вариант 1*