

Orla stood in the playground, waiting. It was weird: she knew she was always early, but time was getting on and nobody else had arrived yet. At ten to nine, she listened for the bell. It didn't sound. She decided to make her way into school, concluding that everyone else had been delayed; maybe their bus had broken down or maybe they were stuck in a traffic jam. Perhaps they had overslept.

She pushed open the heavy door, its hinges creaking ominously as she glanced behind her to check the empty playground again. Once inside, the door slammed behind her and she was plunged into darkness. Bewildered, her eyes darted around her. What was going on? The corridor was always a bit dark, but today the lights weren't on yet and she couldn't even spot a chink of light from the classrooms.

She held a hand out in front of her and felt for the wall. Using it as a guide, she took precise steps in the gloom, taking care not to trip over the PE kits and coats that had tumbled from their pegs. She reached the corner and her fingers grazed the light switch. Click. Click. Click. Nothing happened.

What was that? A breathy sound, like the echo of a whisper, was coming from the hall entrance. She turned away in the darkness to head for the exit, her heart beating faster now. In her panic she became disorientated, tripping over something large and hard and SPLAT! She landed on the floor. She got to her feet and felt again for the wall. It wasn't where she thought it would be so she turned and waved her hands around, searching frantically for something – anything – to hold on to. Nothing.

She could hear the whispering noise again now, only it was louder than before and seemed to be coming from behind her. She couldn't run; she didn't know what was in front of her. Crouching down, Orla placed her clammy hands onto the cold tiles and began to crawl, desperately searching for a clue to where she was. The sound followed her and there was a new noise too: a murmuring. It seemed to be beckoning her, calling her like a beast enticing its prey. She was the quarry in this hunt.

Number the events in the order they happen in the text.

Orla found the light switch.

She crawled along the floor.

Orla saw the playground  
was empty.

There was a murmuring noise.

The door slammed behind her.

How does Orla feel in the darkness of the corridor? Give evidence to prove your answer.

What reasons did Orla suggest for there being nobody in the school playground?

Look at the first and last paragraphs.  
Give details of how she is feeling at both stages and how her feelings have changed.

Find an example of a simile from the text.

Find an example of onomatopoeia from the text.

Find another word from the text that means the same as each word.

darkness

prey

desperately

bewildered

Number the events in the order they happen in the text.

Orla found the light switch.	3
She crawled along the floor.	4
Orla saw the playground was empty.	1
There was a murmuring noise.	5
The door slammed behind her.	2

How does Orla feel in the darkness of the corridor? Give evidence to prove your answer.

**She feels scared. We know she is scared because we are given clues such as her eyes darting around, her heart beating faster, her hand being clammy and the fact that she becomes disorientated. It also says she was 'searching frantically' so we know she is panicking.**

What reasons did Orla suggest for there being nobody in the school playground?

- **their bus might have broken down**
- **they might have been stuck in a traffic jam**
- **they might have overslept**

Look at the first and last paragraphs. Give details of how she is feeling at both stages and how her feelings have changed.

**In the first paragraph, Orla knows something is not quite right but at this point she is just confused. She doesn't think anything bad has happened because she goes into school as normal. She also thinks that there could be reasons for nobody being at school yet, so she's not worried.**

Find an example of a simile from the text.

**A breathy sound, like the echo of a whisper...**

Find an example of onomatopoeia from the text.

- **Click. Click. Click.**
- **SPLAT!**

Find another word from the text that means the same as each word.

darkness	<b>gloom</b>
prey	<b>quarry</b>
desperately	<b>frantically</b>
bewildered	<b>disorientated</b>

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