

Improving Your Reading with Vocabulary Victor: The Midnight Miller



There once was a weary, old miller who lived in Anglesey. Each morning, upon arriving at the mill, he noticed that some of his sacks had been disturbed during the night and eventually began to conclude that someone had been working in his mill during his absence.

He confided his suspicions to a friend and they determined to go the next night and guard the mill. The following night, as the ghostly moon ruled the sky, they approached the mill, which stood atop a bare stony hill. Much to their surprise, the mill was illuminated and at work – the great sails turning in the black night. Creeping up softly to a small window, the miller peered inside and saw a swarm of tiny figures carrying small bags and emptying them into the millstones. As his eyes adjusted to the light, the miller was astounded for, instead of flour, the bags were filled to the brim with golden coins.



1. **Find and copy** two words from the text which the author uses to describe the hill on which the mill sits.

- _____
- _____

2. *during his absence*

How else could the author have written this phrase?

3. *as the ghostly moon ruled the sky*

What effect does this phrase have on the atmosphere of the story?

4. *...the miller peered inside and saw a swarm of tiny figures*

Why do you think the author describes the group of figures as a swarm?

Answers

1. Find and copy two words from the text which the author uses to describe the hill on which the mill sits.

bare, stony

2. *during his absence*

How else could the author have written this phrase?

Pupils' own responses, such as: 'while he was not there'

3. *as the ghostly moon ruled the sky*

What effect does this phrase have on the atmosphere of the story?

Pupils' own responses, such as: This phrase gives a spooky atmosphere to the story because it describes the moon as like a ghost.

4. *...the miller peered inside and saw a swarm of tiny figures*

Why do you think the author describes the group of figures as a swarm?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The author describes them as a swarm because they are working busily like bees and a group of bees can be called a swarm.