

# Charlotte's Web Marking Guide

1. Children can choose a quotation from any point in the text that gives a clear description of Charlotte, in terms of appearance or behaviour, e.g. Charlotte was 'a true friend and a good writer' (Ch. 22), or Charlotte was 'a large grey spider ... about the size of a gum-drop' (Ch. 5).
2. Children should summarise the detailed way in which Charlotte saves Wilbur, e.g. Charlotte saves Wilbur by tricking the Zuckermans into believing Wilbur is a special pig, or Charlotte saves Wilbur by writing special words in her web to trick everyone.
3. Charlotte decides to save Wilbur because she cares about him as a friend and doesn't think it's fair that he is to be killed. Children should summarise this information, and include the key word 'friend' or 'friendship'. Answers may go on to suggest that Charlotte decides to save him because she is clever and enjoys the challenge.
4. Wilbur shows his true friendship to Charlotte by protecting her egg sac and promising to keep her children safe after she dies. Answers should explain that Wilbur takes great care over this and may mention the promise he makes to Templeton in order to secure his help (Ch. 21-22)
5. Children should find evidence that links the ending back to the beginning, e.g. We find out what happens to all the characters we met in the beginning, e.g. Fern grows up, Wilbur stays on the farm and three of Charlotte's children stay to be his friend. Any evidence linking the beginning and the ending is acceptable.
6. EB White uses Charlotte's language and behaviour to show us she is dying, e.g. she becomes much quieter, she leaves her web for the first time, she finds it difficult to speak or move, she puts all her energy into creating her egg sac, she stops looking after herself and just worries about Wilbur. Answers should mention at least one of these pieces of evidence.
7. Fern begins the story as an enthusiastic little girl who loves animals and talks to them, and then later on becomes more interested in other things, like boys. This shows us that Fern is growing up, and leaving some childish things behind her. Wilbur is the most important thing to her at the beginning, but later on this changes. Answers should explain that Fern is growing up and her interests have changed.
8. Answers must give a clear opinion supported by a reason, e.g. I was surprised Charlotte died, and would have liked to find out more about what happened to her in the future, or I was expecting Fern to continue to look after Wilbur and was sad when she was no longer interested in spending time with him.

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1. Charlotte promises Wilbur that she will save his life because she is his friend and she doesn't think it is fair that he should have to die. Secure LS answers may include a quotation, e.g. Charlotte says to Wilbur, 'You shall not die!' (Ch. 7).
2. The only thing that matters to Wilbur at the end of the story is protecting Charlotte's egg sac and keeping her children safe. This is especially important to him because his friend has died and this is the last thing he can do to help her, and thank her for all the help she gave him. Answers should summarise the details above, in children's own words, and may include quotations.
3. Answers will vary depending on interpretation, but should include some reference to the text and the children's own ideas /experiences, e.g. I think Dr Dorian isn't worried about not understanding everything because he is clever enough to know that nobody can understand everything, or I think the Doctor means that some things are not meant to be understood by adults, but only by children (Ch. 14).
4. Answers should show an understanding of the changes that take place as children grow up, e.g. Fern was much younger at the beginning of the story and the animals were her whole world, but as she starts to grow up she develops other interests, like boys!
5. Answers will vary depending on personal opinion, but should refer to the content and themes of the story, e.g. I think Charlotte's Web is a good name for the story because the webs that Charlotte spins are central to the trick that is to save Wilbur's life, or I think a better title would be Wilbur's Adventure because the story is really about Wilbur, with Charlotte as a less important character. There is no right answer, but reference must be made to the text.
6. Any examples of techniques for building up tension are acceptable. Examples might include: short sentences, questions and exclamation marks add tension when Wilbur finds out he is going to be killed, or repetition of key words like 'hurry' and 'please' as Wilbur desperately tries to persuade Templeton to help him save Charlotte's egg sac.
7. Answers will vary, but most should suggest that Wilbur is a true friend to Charlotte because he acts selflessly to protect her children after her death. He even prioritises this duty over his own happiness (by promising Templeton he can always eat first when his slops arrive, if he helps to save the egg sac) Some answers may suggest that Wilbur takes Charlotte for granted while she is alive and is quite demanding, but should accept that in the end he acts kindly and out of friendship towards her.
8. Answers will vary widely, but should focus on why this story is interesting or worth telling, e.g. I think EB White chose to write this story because tricking the humans into saving Wilbur is an exciting plot, and Charlotte is a really interesting character, or I think EB White chose to write this story because he wanted to show that animals and people can live together happily, and even help each other, or I think EB White believes, like Dr Dorian, that nature is a miracle worth saving.

# Charlotte's Web Comprehension Questions

To be completed after reading the whole book:

1. Can you find a quotation that describes Charlotte well?

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2. How does Charlotte save Wilbur?

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3. Why do you think Charlotte tries to save Wilbur?

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4. How does Wilbur show his true friendship to Charlotte?

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5. How does the ending link back to the beginning of the story?

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6. How does EB White show us that Charlotte is dying?

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7. How does Fern's viewpoint change over the course of the story?

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8. Is the ending what you expected? How would you change it?

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# Charlotte's Web Comprehension Questions

To be completed after reading the whole book:

1. What promise does Charlotte make to Wilbur and why?

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2. To Wilbur, 'nothing else matters', but what? Explain your answer.

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3. Dr Dorian says, 'I don't understand everything, and I don't intend to let it worry me.' What do you think he means by this?

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4. Why do you think Fern starts to lose interest in the animals?

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5. Is 'Charlotte's Web' a good title? Explain your answer.

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6. How does EB White build tension in the story?

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7. Do you think Wilbur is a true friend to Charlotte? Explain why.

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8. Why do you think EB White chose to write this story?

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