



Dr Doodoo and the Dinosaur Poo

Nigel wasn't enjoying Dinosaur Day at all. The fossils were lame, the talks were dull, the experiments were boring and the plastic toys were childish. He wanted some real action; something he hadn't seen before. The strange thing was that Nigel loved dinosaurs. He loved them so much that when he grew up he wanted to be a dinosaur expert (a palaeontologist) but that was something Mrs Fairfax said would never happen because Nigel never listened to a word she said.



"Children, please welcome Dr Doodoo," Mrs Fairfax announced from the front of the class.

Nigel lifted his head briefly, struggling to keep his eyes open. He felt weak with boredom. Not another talk, he thought to himself and he slumped his head back on the table.

"Hallo children! Ja, meine name is Dr Doodoo and I love poo."

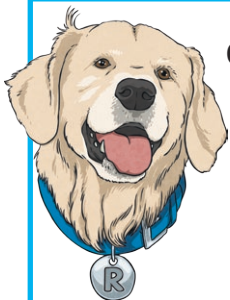
Nigel opened one eye. Did he hear the man correctly? He loved poo? He sat up to get a proper look. The man was wheeling in a large trolley with a huge plastic sheet covering something underneath. The class watched as the man carefully positioned it in front of the white board. Then he whipped the sheet away to reveal what looked like an enormous mound of mud. "Who knows vot this iz?" he asked the class in an excited, foreign accent.

Judy Jennings held her hand up.

The man pointed at Judy. "Girl wiz funny, big hair."

Judy instantly went red. "Um, is it dinosaur poo?" she asked, timidly.

"Ja!" the man yelled, bouncing up and down on the balls of his feet. "Vell done! Zis is dino-poop! I love it."



Q1: Match the following adjectives to the things that Nigel thinks they describe.

- | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|----------|
| talks | ○ | ○ | childish |
| fossils | ○ | ○ | boring |
| plastic toys | ○ | ○ | lame |
| experiments | ○ | ○ | dull |

Q2: According to the text, what does the word palaeontologist mean?



Q3: 'Not another talk, he thought to himself..'

Why do you think Nigel thought this?



The man looked like a mad scientist from a cartoon: he had wacky white hair, circular glasses and he was wearing a white lab coat. "You know vot vee call it?" he asked.

Suddenly, Nigel looked interested and threw his hand into the air.

"Ja? Boy viz sleepy eyes?" the man said, nodding towards him.

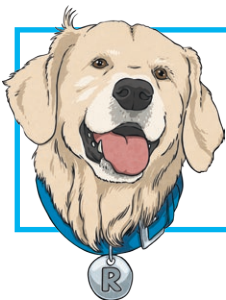
"Fossilised dinosaur dung is called coprolite, Sir," Nigel said in a loud voice.

The mad-looking scientist looked stunned. "Ja," he said after a short pause, "zat is correct, young man. I am very impressed. Please, come to ze front."

Nigel pushed his chair out and joined the strange man at the front of the class. Mrs Fairfax looked gobsmacked. Nigel had never shown any interest in her lessons before.

"Tell me young man," the man said, peering at the large brown mound with wild eyes, "Vich dinosaur do you sink pooped this little beauty?"

Nigel knew a lot about dinosaurs. In fact, his whole world was about the prehistoric age. He had dinosaur books, dinosaur computer games, dinosaur wallpaper; he even had dinosaur bed sheets... that's why Dinosaur Day had been such a let-down; he knew most of the stuff already. But this was a first. He had never seen a genuine coprolite before. Fossilised bones were one thing but fossilised poo from a real-life dinosaur was something else! There was so much they could learn about what the animal ate, how much it ate, and loads of things about other dinosaurs and plants living in the same period. Plus, this was no ordinary coprolite. It was truly humungous.



Q4: What is the scientific name for fossilised dinosaur dung?

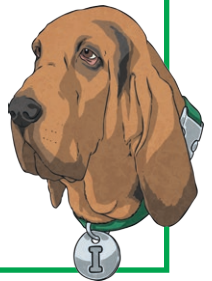


Q5: Find and copy a phrase which shows that Nigel had been disappointed by Dinosaur Day.

Q6: 'Ja," he said after a short pause...'

Why do you think that Dr Doodoo paused for a short time?

Q7: Why do you think that Mrs Fairfax was gobsmacked?



Q8: 'Ja? Boy viz sleepy eyes?'

Why has the author written Dr Doodoo's speech in this way?

"Well," Nigel said, rubbing his chin. "By the size of it, I'm guessing we're looking at one of the large, plant-eating dinosaurs, like a diplodocus or a brachiosaurus..."

"Close!" the man declared, "Very close! Zis is poop from a titanosaur!"

Nigel couldn't believe it. Titanosaurs were the largest dinosaurs to have ever lived! "What?" he gasped. "Wow! They were massive! About the same weight as six double decker buses!"

"That's right, young man!" The scientist beamed. "They vere huge! And its poo vood vay more zan one tonne! Ze same as a small car!"

"They lived 100 million years ago," Nigel explained.

"Ja!" the man chuckled, amazed.

"And they grew up to 120 feet long!" Nigel added.

“Ja! the man agreed. “As long as four buses!”

Nigel didn't feel bored after that. The man had lots more coprolites to show him and Nigel had great fun guessing which dinosaur pooped them out! In fact, he had so much fun Mrs Fairfax allowed him to stay after school to find out more about what the man did and how he came to have the coprolites in the first place. It turns out that he was a dinosaur expert who worked for a museum in London. He was so impressed with Nigel's knowledge and passion for dinosaurs that he invited him on his next dino-expedition to South America.

This was Nigel's first step to becoming a real-life palaeontologist. It was the best Dinosaur Day ever!

Q9: 'Well,' Nigel said, rubbing his chin.'

Why did Nigel rub his chin?

Q10: How does Nigel feel when he realises the coprolite was from a Titanosaur?

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.



Q11: Explain how Nigel's feelings change over the course of the story.



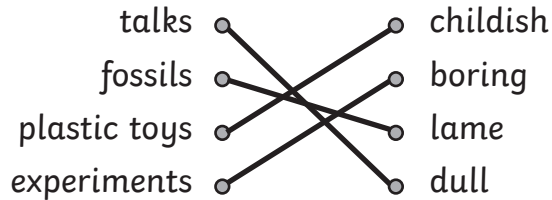
Q12: Summarise the plot of this story in 20 words or less.





Dr Doodoo and the Dinosaur Poo Answers

Q1: Match the following adjectives to the things that Nigel thinks they describe.



Q2: According to the text, what does the word palaeontologist mean?

Accept the answer A palaeontologist is a 'dinosaur expert'.

Q3: 'Not another talk, he thought to himself..'

Why do you think Nigel thought this?

Accept answers which infer that Nigel thought this because he had sat through many boring talks that day and did not appreciate another one, e.g.

- Nigel thought this because he had already sat through lots of boring talks on Dinosaur Day.**

Q4: What is the scientific name for fossilised dinosaur dung?

Accept the answer 'coprolite' only.

Q5: Find and copy a phrase which shows that Nigel had been disappointed by Dinosaur Day.

Accept the phrase '(that's why Dinosaur Day had been) such a let-down'.

Q6: 'Ja," he said after a short pause...'

Why do you think that Dr Doodoo paused for a short time?

Accept answers which discuss the fact that Dr Doodoo was shocked/stunned by Nigel's knowledge. He did not expect a student to know the answer and so it caught him off guard.

Q7: Why do you think that Mrs Fairfax was gobsmacked?

Accept answers which state that Mrs Fairfax was gobsmacked because Nigel hadn't shown any previous interest in Dinosaur Day or any of her lessons and he was suddenly enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

Q8: "Ja? Boy viz sleepy eyes?"

Why has the author written Dr Doodoo's speech in this way?

Accept answers which state that the author has chosen to write in this way to emphasise Dr Doodoo's 'foreign accent' and its difference to regular English pronunciation, e.g.

- **The author writes in this way to emphasise Dr Doodoo's accent.**

Q9: 'Well," Nigel said, rubbing his chin.'

Why did Nigel rub his chin?

Accept answers which state that Nigel rubbed his chin as it is something that some people do when they are thinking and a stereotypical gesture associated with thinking, e.g.

- **Nigel rubbed his chin because he was thinking of an answer and some people rub their chin when they are thinking.**

Q10: How does Nigel feel when he realises the coprolite was from a Titanosaur?

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Accept answers which discuss that Nigel was shocked, surprised, excited or impressed and are supported by one of the following pieces of evidence from the text:

- **Nigel couldn't believe it.**
- **"What?" he gasped.**
- **Wow!**
- **Nigel didn't feel bored after that.**

Q11: Explain how Nigel's feelings change over the course of the story.

Accept answers which discuss that Nigel was initially bored by Dinosaur Day and did not find anything interesting. However, upon the revelation of a coprolite by Dr Doodoo, Nigel became interested in Dinosaur Day and was no longer bored.

Q12: Summarise the plot of this story in 20 words or less.

Accept any reasonable summary of the story, which includes Nigel being bored of Dinosaur Day but becoming interested upon being shown a coprolite by Dr Doodoo, in twenty words or less, such as:

'Nigel was bored of Dinosaur Day at school until Dr Doodoo brought in a coprolite.'

'A strange scientist brought a coprolite into school on Dinosaur Day and stopped Nigel being bored.'