

## **The Hodgeheg** by **Dick King Smith**

Age 7-9

### **Reasons for selection and synopsis**

*Max, the hedgehog  
who becomes a hodgeheg,  
who becomes a hero!*

*Max's family dreams of reaching the Park. But no one has ever found a safe way of crossing the very busy road. Young Max, who is brighter than the average hedgehog, is determined to solve the problem.*

Filled with gentle humour and comfort, this is a classic of children's literature.

### **Before reading...**

Ask the children to look at the front cover. What do you think the book will be about? What things can you see on the front cover?

What sort of story will it be? Who might enjoy it?

Now read the blurb – were any of your predictions correct?

Why do you think the author called the book The Hodgeheg?

### **Reading Vipers**

**V**ocabulary  
**I**nfer  
**P**redict  
**E**xplain  
**R**etrieve  
**S**equence or Summarise



*The following questions are designed as prompts only – allow the children to come up with their own questions and ideas. They will be much more engaged this way!*

## Chapter 1

Vocabulary	What does 'copped it' mean? Define 'dreadful'. What does 'dwelt' mean? What is a sow? Define 'hastily'.
Infer	Find and copy a word on the first page that shows Ma is upset. What can you infer if everywhere is a bad place to cross nowadays? Why doesn't Ma want to discuss it in front of the children? Why do you think they call the youngest 'Max' for short?
Predict	Predict how Max will find out how humans cross roads safely.
Explain	How do the pictures add to meaning?
Retrieve	Who has copped it? Where do they live? Why is the park popular with hedgehogs?
Summarise	Summarise the events of this chapter in less than thirty words.

## Chapter 2

Vocabulary	What is 'dusk'? What does nocturnal mean? Define 'stock-still'.
Infer	What was the sea of noise? Why do you think Max chose to go downhill?
Predict	Predict what will happen if/when Max tries to cross.
Explain	Why doesn't Max know what he's reached? How does the author show the reader this?
Retrieve	What did Max creep under? What could Max see across the road? Where does Max see people crossing? What does Max believe is the secret to crossing?
Summarise	Sum up the character of Max so far in one word and explain your choice of word.

### Chapter 3

Vocabulary	What is rush hour? What is a lorry? How is it different from other vehicles? Define 'feverishly'? Define 'wearily'.
Infer	Why does Max want to cross in front of something? Why didn't the lorry slow down? Why was the cyclist sad? Why does Max have a headache?
Predict	Predict if Max will try to cross the road again.
Explain	What do the pictures add to this chapter? Where does the book's title come from?
Retrieve	When did the lorry driver swerve and why? Where does Max get hit by the bike? How did Max find his way home? What happens to Max's speech?
Summarise	Summarise the events of this chapter in less than thirty words.

## Chapter 4

Vocabulary	Define anxiously. What is hibernation? What are 'intervals'?
Infer	Why does Pa think Max's brain is scrambled? Why doesn't Pa want Max to go for a walk? Why might people not notice hedgehogs when they stay still?
Predict	Predict what will happen when the green man comes on.
Explain	How does the cliffhanger here affect the reader?
Retrieve	Where were the children sleeping? What does Ma offer to bring to Max? What is Max's favourite game? What do the people in 5B leave out?
Summarise	Summarise Max's thoughts in this chapter in less than forty words.

## Chapter 5

Vocabulary	Define 'confronted'. What does it mean if something is ornamental? What is a conclusion? Define inquisitive.
Infer	Why does Max panic? What time is it and how do you know? Why do you think Max was excited to be in the park? How does Max get lost?
Predict	Predict how the bang on the head will affect Max.
Explain	Why do you think the author chose the phrase 'a forest of legs'?
Retrieve	What did Max not plan for? Where does Max recover for a while? What does Max do after this? What was the red box and what was the man holding to his mouth?
Summarise	Summarise this chapter in less than twenty-five words.

## Chapter 6

Vocabulary	<p>What is a 'bonanza'?</p> <p>What does 'scoffed' tell you about the way Pa ate?</p> <p>Define 'bloated'.</p> <p>Define 'a trifle embarrassed'. What might trifle mean in this context?</p>
Infer	<p>Why did Pa fall asleep?</p> <p>Why did everyone have worried faces?</p> <p>Why were the neighbour's eyes twinkling?</p>
Predict	<p>Predict if Max is ok.</p>
Explain	<p>How does the author use the idiom 'there's no point crying over spilt milk'?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Why did they wake Pa up?</p> <p>Why does the neighbour interrupt the conversation?</p> <p>How has the knock on the head affected Max?</p> <p>Why does the milkman crash?</p>
Summarise	<p>Summarise the events of this chapter in less than thirty words.</p>

## Chapter 7

Vocabulary	What is 'enquire' a synonym for? What is a hindfoot? What is ambition? Define 'pondered'.
Infer	Why were the family celebrating? How can you tell that Max won't be staying in the garden? Who is the human Uncle B refers to?
Predict	Predict if Max will find the human and if he will cross the road safely.
Explain	Why does the author use the term gentlehog?
Retrieve	What did the family eat at the celebration? What does the neighbour tell the children to call him? Why doesn't Max want any Munchimeat? Why does Uncle B think Max keeps getting injured?
Summarise	Summarise the character of Uncle B in three words and explain your choice of words.



## Chapter 8

Vocabulary	Define 'unaccustomed'. How many is a dozen? What's a procession? Define 'stoutly'.
Infer	Why are Max's spines tingling? Why does Max follow the humans? Who was the human that Max saw? Why doesn't Pa want to go out in the daytime? Why do they all decide to go?
Predict	Predict if they will cross the road.
Explain	True or false: Uncle B is a noble hedgehog. Explain your answer.
Retrieve	How many spines does Max have? How could Max tell how old people were? Where did the small humans go?
Summarise	Summarise the plan in less than forty words.

## Chapter 9

Vocabulary	Define 'henceforth'. What does 'concealed' mean? What might a crisp morning be like? Define 'meekly'.
Infer	Why did the hedgehogs conceal themselves? Why did the noise the lollipop lady make mean nothing to Max? Why do you think the lollipop lady stopped the traffic?
Predict	Predict what would happen in a sequel to this book?
Explain	Did you like this book? Why?
Retrieve	How many hedgehogs were going? What time was it?
Summarise	Summarise the story in less than 100 words.