

4 The Hero of Haarlem



Look closely at the two pictures, and spot four differences and circle them.



Haarlem is a city in the Netherlands¹. *Netherlands* means *low countries*. The ground there is lower than the level of the sea. The people build dykes² all around the country to prevent the sea water from rushing in. These walls are very important for the safety of the people. Now let us read a story about a boy from Haarlem who spotted something that did not look right ...



Many long years ago, in the city of Haarlem, there lived a very kind boy named Hans. Hans' father was in charge of taking care of the dykes, or the stone walls that kept the sea water from rushing into Haarlem and washing it away.

One day, Hans' father went on a trip. Since he usually

What was the work that Hans' father did? Why was it important?

¹Netherlands: a country in Western Europe ²dykes: great, thick walls as wide as roads

spent his holidays watching his father care for the dykes, Hans had nothing to do.

‘I’m going to bake some bread and a few cakes,’ said Hans’ mother. ‘Why don’t you take some to old Mr Jansen this afternoon?’

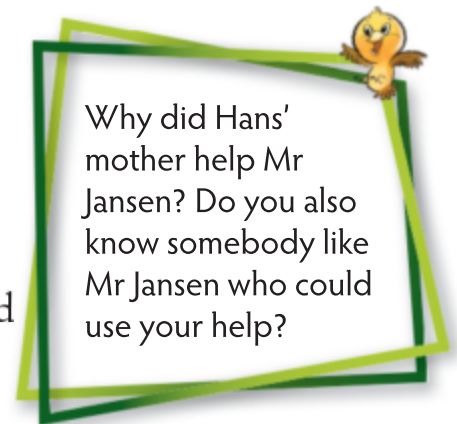
Hans happily agreed even though it was a rainy day. Mr Jansen was an elderly man whose eyesight was failing. He had no family to care for him and he lived alone with his pet dog, Alfons. Hans’ mother often helped him with his household chores³.

In the afternoon, Hans’ mother packed a basket of cake and bread for Mr Jansen. ‘We will have dinner at six o’ clock so come back before that,’ she said as she gave Hans the basket. ‘I won’t⁴ be late,’ replied Hans.

It was a long walk to Mr Jansen’s house. He lived at the edge of the town, close to the dykes. The spring rain had been much heavier than usual, pouring down hard, each day and night. While the wind turned the windmills, and the rain watered the tulips, the strained and swollen dykes kept filling, worrying Hans as he passed. The hard rain pelted⁵ him and the piercing⁶ cold wind stung⁷ his cheeks, but he pressed on⁸, keeping his head down, hunching⁹ his shoulders and pulling his coat tight about him.

‘Who will take care of the dykes if something goes wrong while Father is away?’ wondered Hans.

Hans reached Mr Jansen’s house with the basket of goodies. Mr Jansen was delighted that Hans had come to visit him. ‘Sit down, my lad,’ the old man said.



³**chores:** tasks that you do regularly ⁴**won't:** will + not ⁵**pelted:** fell very heavily ⁶**piercing:** (of the wind or cold) very strong wind that feels as if it can pass through your clothes and skin ⁷**stung:** caused sharp pain
⁸**pressed on:** (here) continued to walk ⁹**hunching:** bending the top part of the body forward while raising the shoulders and head

Mr Jansen enjoyed telling Hans stories about how things were long ago and the boy loved to listen to him. The old man and the boy talked and talked. They shared the cake and bread. Minutes turned into hours. Suddenly Hans looked at the clock.

‘It’s past six o’ clock!’ he exclaimed. ‘I won’t reach in time for dinner! Mother will be waiting for me!’

Hans quickly said good night to Mr Jansen and began the long walk home. His wooden shoes clicked and clacked against the wet and muddy brick road. The rain had not let up¹⁰. The street was empty. Everyone had gone home, taking shelter from the cold rain.

Hans was thinking about a warm dinner and a cosy bed when he passed one of the many dykes. Something did not look right. Hans crept¹¹ closer to the dyke to see. There, in the middle of the high stone wall, in between the stone blocks, was a small hole. From the hole seeped¹² a thin trickle of water.

While Hans knew that the dripping water looked harmless, he also knew that the water building up behind the great wall would push at the tiny hole until it became bigger and bigger. Soon it would let the water come rushing through, washing away the town.



‘Help!’ Hans called out. ‘Someone help me! The dyke is going to burst!’ But the wind drowned out¹³ Hans’ cries. He was sure nobody had heard him. There would be no help.

Hans knew he had to think fast and do something quickly. ‘I will plug the hole with my hand,’ he decided and he pushed his fist in the hole. The water stopped trickling¹⁴.

The rain kept pelting and the wind continued to swirl¹⁵. But still Hans kept his fist plugged in the hole. He knew that in order to save his town, he could not let the water break through the dyke.

¹⁰**let up:** reduced in strength ¹¹**crept:** moved slowly and carefully ¹²**seeped:** flowed slowly and in a small quantity ¹³**drowned out:** made a sound so loud that other sounds couldn’t be heard over it ¹⁴**trickling:** water flowing slowly in a thin line ¹⁵**swirl:** move around quickly in a circle

Then suddenly, standing before him was Mr Jansen who had come out to walk Alfons. 'Hans!' he cried. 'What are you doing here?'

'There is a leak in the dyke!' cried Hans. 'Please hurry and get help!'

Mr Jansen immediately got help. Soon, a group of people came and repaired the dyke.

'My lad,' said Mr Jansen, 'first I'll take you home and then I'll tell everyone of the boy who saved the town!'

(adapted)

Mary Mapes Dodge (1831–1953) was the author of many stories for children. Her best known novel is *Hans Brinker; or, the Silver Skates: A Story of Life in Holland* from which this excerpt has been taken.



Making connections

Quick answers

1. Fill in the story map given below.

Setting

Where does the story take place?

Time

When does the story take place?

Characters

Who are the people in the story?

Title

Problem or Conflict

What happened to the character?

Solution or Resolution

How was the problem solved?

2. Complete the following sentences.

a. Dykes were built so that

b. Hans' mother sent cake and bread to Mr Jansen because



- c. Hans enjoyed Mr Jansen's company because
- d. As he walked home, Hans was very cold and wet. This is why he was thinking about

Reference to context

- 3. *While the wind turned the windmills, and the rain watered the tulips, the strained and swollen dykes kept filling.*
 - a. Apart from the dykes, which two other things mentioned in these lines tell us where the story is set?
 - b. What does the author mean by saying the dykes were swollen?
 - c. What did Hans wonder when he saw the dykes?
- 4. *'My lad', said Mr Jansen, 'first I'll take you home and then I'll tell everyone of the boy who saved the town!'*
 - a. Where was Mr Jansen when he said these lines?
 - b. Who did Mr Jansen call *my lad*? Why did he want to get him home?
 - c. This line shows that Mr Jansen was
 - i. angry with the boy.
 - ii. proud of the boy.
 - iii. scared of the boy.
 - d. What do you think Mr Jansen would tell the people of Haarlem?

Read, reflect and write

- 5. List the words and phrases from the story that describe the weather.
- 6. Why do you think Mr Jansen was always very happy when Hans came to visit?
- 7. Do you think *The Hero of Haarlem* is a good title for this story? Give a reason to support your answer. Suggest another suitable title for the story.
- 8. List two qualities of Hans' that you admire. How do Hans' actions in the story show us that he has these qualities?

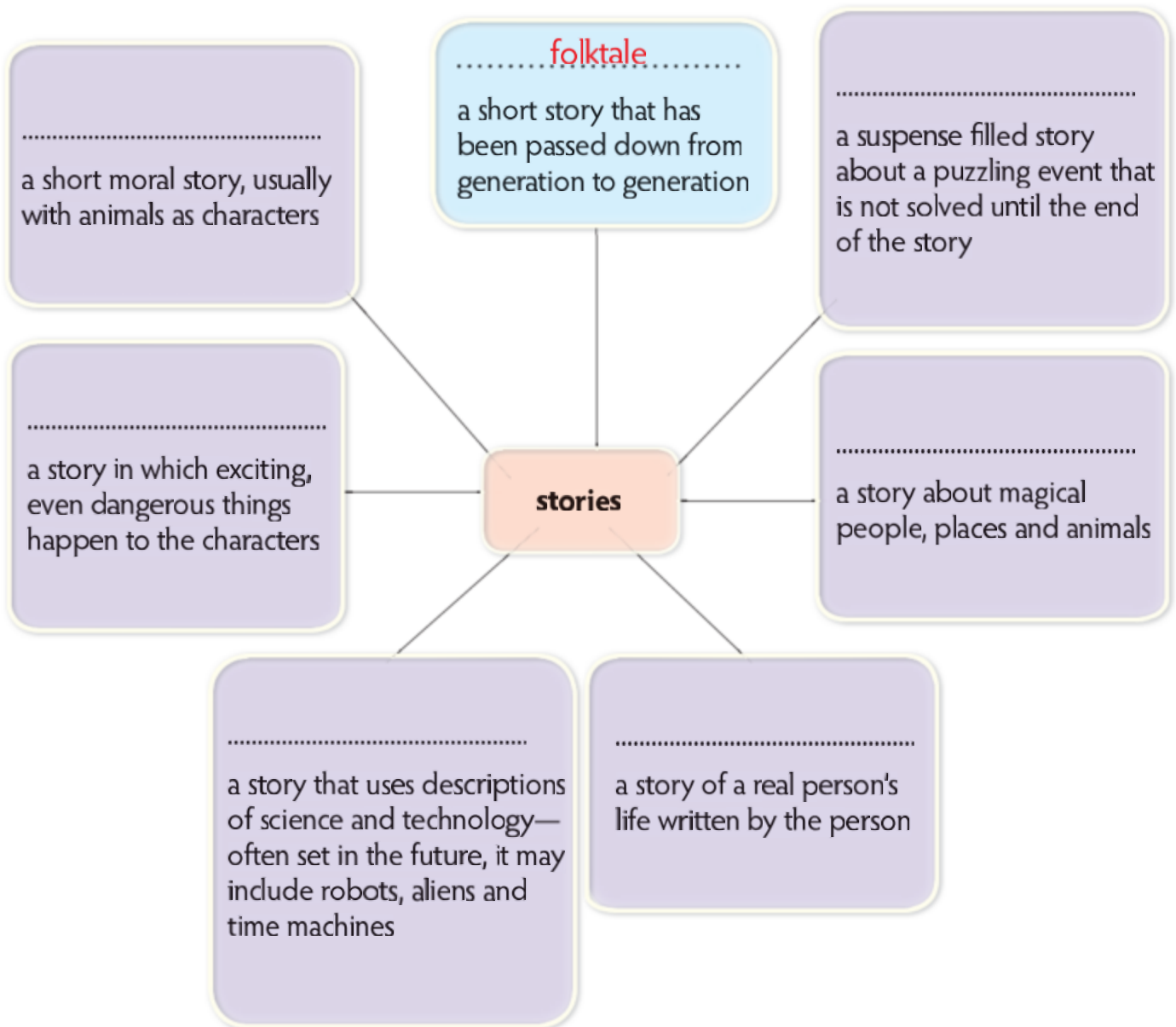
Quality	Action that shows the quality

Word wall

Mr Jansen loved telling stories. Stories can be classified into different genres or categories. A genre is a style or category of art, music, or literature.

1. Here is an exercise that describes different types of stories. Choose the correct genre label from the box to complete the flow chart. One has been done for you.

mystery ✦ fable ✦ folktale ✦ autobiography
fairy tale ✦ science fiction ✦ adventure



Antonyms

Antonyms are the opposites of a word.

2. Find words from the story that are the antonyms of the following words.

- a. unkind (page 50) b. young (page 51) c. rarely (page 51)
d. saddened (page 51) e. no one (page 52) f. destroyed (page 52)

Grammar time

Future tense

Read these sentences.

I *am going to* bake some bread and cake.

I *won't* be late.

I *will plug* the hole with my hand.

I'll *take* you home.

I'll *tell* everyone of the boy who saved the town.

These sentences are about actions that have not yet happened.

They tell us what will happen at a time in the future



The future tense is a tense expressing an action that has *not yet happened*.

There are two ways in which we talk about the future.

<i>am/is/are going to + verb</i>	<i>will + verb</i>
We bought flour and eggs yesterday. We are going to bake a cake this afternoon. I am going to Amsterdam next year.	It's raining. I'll wear my raincoat. I promise I will come early. I won't be late.

We use *be + going to* for an action that we decide to do before talking about it.

We use *will* when we decide to do something at the time of speaking.

We also use *will* in promises.



1. Look at the pictures and answer the questions.



- a. What are the children going to do tomorrow?
b. What is Tom going to do tomorrow?

The children are going to plant a tree.

Tom



- c. What are the children going to do on Saturday?
d. What is Jenny going to do next week?

The children

Jenny

- e. What are you going to do on Sunday?

I

2. Fill in the blanks using *will* + verb.

- a. I'm feeling hot. I the fan.
b. Are you going to the library? We with you.
c. He is late. We not for him.

I will = I'll

you will = you'll

she will = she'll

he will = he'll

we will = we'll

they will = they'll

will + not = won't

3. Write three classroom promises using *will* + verb.

We will keep our classroom tidy.

We will not speak out of turn.

.....

.....

.....



Future continuous tense

Read these sentences.

We will have dinner at six o'clock.

We will be having dinner at six o'clock.



Future tense



Future continuous tense



We will begin eating
at 6 o'clock.



We will begin eating
before 6 o'clock.

We will still be
eating at 6 o'clock.



The future continuous tense is a tense expressing an *ongoing* action—
an action that *will be happening* in the future.

4. Can you spot the sentences that show ongoing action in the future?

Put a tick against them.

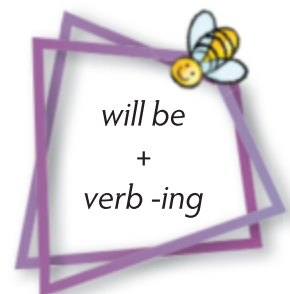
- a. We will drive to school tomorrow.
We will be driving to school at 8 o'clock.
- b. We will play when the recess bell rings.
We will be playing during recess.

☐

☐

☐

☐



5. Complete these sentences to show what you will be doing at these times.

- a. I will be at 5 o'clock this evening.
- b. I will be at 9 o'clock tonight.
- c. I will be at midnight.

Pronunciation

Syllable pyramid

You have learnt that words are made of one or more syllables.
Some words are short. They have only one syllable.

Example: cat

Some are longer. They have two syllables.

Example: ti/ger

Some others are still longer and have three or more syllables.

Example: chim/pan/zee

So here we have an animal word pyramid.

CAT
TIGER
CHIMPANZEE



Now build syllable pyramids on any one of the following topics.

animals

clothing

classroom

food

You may also choose a topic of your own.

Write well

Imagine that you are Hans and that your grandparents live in Amsterdam. Write a letter to them describing the adventure you had on the evening that you saved the town.



Your Address:
Date:
Salutation: Dear
Greeting:
Body: Last evening On my way home..... So I Luckily Now
Closing:
Your first name:

Listen and speak well

1. Hans' cousins will visit him in May. Listen to Hans' plans for the things that they will do together. Then match the columns.

A	B
Teyler's museum	to Adriann windmill
Grote market	to watch boats and steamers
Flower parade	to see Dutch paintings
Canal walk	to watch the floats
Bridge over the Spaarne river	to buy wooden clogs

2. Now imagine that your cousins live in another city and are coming to visit you. Take turns in sharing what you would do if they came to your village, town or city. You could talk about: monuments to see, places to visit, arts and crafts, festivals, music and dance, and the food you can eat.