## Reading - Unit 3 - Tuesday

History Hackers: Roman Rescue





# Chapter 1 A Very Difficult Door

Small fingers gripped Tilda Hacker's elbow from behind, squeezing until painful shivers shot up to her shoulder. The eleven-year-old stopped climbing the bare staircase with a sigh, glancing down at the nervous face behind her.

Beneath the scruffy blonde haircut that might look more at home on a terrier, Charlie Hacker's blue eyes threw worried glances toward the narrow door looming at the top of the stairs. "What if the attic is haunted?"

"Don't be such a numpty!" Tilda peeled her younger

brother's slim fingers away from her arm and sent strands of sandy hair flying back across her shoulders with a flick. "Why would Dad send us to the attic if it was haunted?"

"Erm, because he doesn't believe in ghosts?" the tenyear-old reminded her. "And he's too busy to remember that I do!"

Tilda wrinkled her freckled nose as invisible specks of freshly-disturbed dust threatened to make her sneeze. It had been years since anyone had climbed the narrow staircase. She still felt pleased that her mother and father had trusted her to explore the attic and hunt for anything valuable. Perhaps they saw her potential to become a proper antiques dealer, just like them.

The Hackers had lived in the creaking rooms above their antique shop for almost three months now. According to letters that the postman still slipped through their door, the previous resident had been a man called Professor Howe. For reasons nobody knew, he'd left in a hurry over a year earlier, leaving behind all his possessions and stacks of unpaid bills.

Since buying the house at an auction, the family had spent every spare hour decluttering their new home,

room by room. Now, only the attic needed to be cleared.

Tilda leaned her slender frame against an uneven wall. "Don't you think we'd know by now if this house was haunted?"

"Ghosts don't exactly send you a friend request, Tils!" Charlie fired his older sister a look that seemed to challenge her IQ. "Besides, everyone knows York is England's most haunted city." The thought seemed to send a shiver dancing through Charlie's body. "Dad says there's a pub not far from us that once had an entire legion of Roman soldiers walk right through the cellar. They're probably up there right now, plotting how best to scare us both."

"Well, someone should tell them they needn't bother," Tilda said. "You seem to be doing a pretty good job of that all by yourself."

Tiring of Charlie's whimpering, she grabbed his wrist and restarted her ascent. "Come on – I'll go in first and check it out. I mean, how scary can a group of dead men in skirts be anyway?"



The unpolished brass door handle bit like ice against Tilda's palm. It refused to move.

"Good," cheered Charlie. "I'll tell Dad the lock is broken. He'll never fork out for the repair."

Refusing to give up so easily, Tilda grabbed the handle with both hands and heaved against it a second time. Determination drove her to keep trying, until beads of sweat were tickling her nose and her hand felt like it had just caught a champion tennis player's hardest serve.

Tilda nursed her hand and glared at the stubborn metalwork. This felt like stalemate.

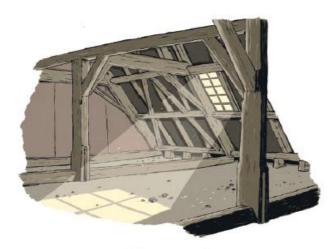
"Told you it was broken," Charlie said triumphantly.
"The only way you'll ever get through is by kicking the door down."

Tilda whirled around and snatched a handful of her brother's T-shirt. "Charlie Hacker, you're a genius!"

"Eh?"

"Gimme one of your trainers."

"What? No! They won't fit you."



# Chapter 2 Disappointed by Dust

Tilda felt robbed – as if one of the spectres Charlie so feared had crept from behind the bare rafters and made off with all of her hopes.

The original floorboards were almost hidden beneath a toe-deep dusty carpet. Freshly-disturbed streams of dust tumbled like flour from the roughly-sawn ceiling beams and the sloping bare walls. Disappointment prized a sigh from Tilda's lips as her shoulders drooped. The prospect of discovering the previous occupant's forgotten possessions and secrets had actually been quite exciting. Now, the thought of returning to her parents emptyhanded seemed to land a large stone in the bottom of

her stomach.

"Any sign of ghosts?" Charlie called from the stairway behind her.

"Not unless they're hiding beneath all this dirt."

"Eh?" Charlie poked his head around the door. "Ah-chooo!" His sneeze sent a mini ash cloud rolling across the walls. "It's empty!" he said.

He bustled past her, striding out into the middle of the room. Thick shafts of bright yellow sunshine flooded through large skylights.

"How can this room be empty?" Unlike Tilda, Charlie had hoped to find piles of junk and bric-a-brac that he could sell online. "The rest of the house was filled with clutter. This doesn't make sense."

Tilda shrugged as she moved to explore an empty space in the farthest corner of the attic. There were no signs that the room had ever been used. "Maybe the stairs were too steep for Professor Howe."

"Are you kidding? Mum said Professor Howe was only in his early forties," Charlie reminded her, "and he was

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a treasure hunter, remember? I doubt he'd let a single set of stairs stand in his way."

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"Well, maybe he just didn't like heights."

Charlie continued to explore the room, slapping ceiling beams, stamping on floorboards and tapping the walls.

"What are you doing?"

"Shhh!" Charlie pressed an ear to the wall, drumming against the painted plaster. "I'm checking for hidden panels."

Groaning at the ten-year-old's stupidity, Tilda clasped her hands to her hips. "Charlie, why would anybo-"

"Hah! Found something!"

Her brother seemed to be locked in a corner of the room, hunched like a beggar. His head was so still that it might have been glued to the wall itself. Only the index finger of his left hand moved, tapping gently.

"There's definitely something here."

"Yeah, it's called the wall!"

"No, no! Really!" With his other hand, Charlie beckoned his sister towards him. "There's something behind this plasterboard."

Slowed by doubt, Tilda moved to join her finger-tapping brother.

"It sounds hollow," Charlie told her, shuffling to his left to make room. "Listen for yourself."

Tilda gave Charlie a weary glance as she pushed her ear against the thinly-painted plaster.

"Listen!"

Charlie tapped a section of wall high above her head. It sounded flat and solid.

When Charlie tapped again, this time slightly lower, Tilda heard an identical sound.

"It's just a normal wall, Charlie."

"Keep listening."

When Charlie tapped just centimetres from his sister's head, the difference was immediate. Tilda jerked away



# Chapter 3 Trapdoor Treasure Trove

The day had just become way more interesting, sending Tilda's emotions on a rollercoaster ride from deep disappointment back to white-knuckle excitement.

Following her brother, Tilda was surprised to find that the underfloor shaft actually contained a second ladder. It was identical in size to the first but angled in the opposite direction, up towards the hidden room.

Even before she began climbing the second set of rungs, Tilda knew that the secret room would be nothing like the attic. She could smell the difference.

The air was thick with the scent of history. The antique shop below them had a similar smell: occasional wafts of slowly-decaying wood and fabrics, ancient fermenting polish and water-damaged paper gradually decomposing. Yet those smells were modern compared with the cocktail of odours that seemed to form a barrier between the secret room and the rest of the world. This was the scent of ancient artefacts, spewing fragrances that didn't belong in the twenty-first century.

<sup>&</sup>quot;You have got to see this." Charlie had already scaled

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the second ladder and was now kneeling on the floor of the secret room. "It's like some kind of vault."

Excitement sent giddy butterflies fluttering in Tilda's stomach. As she scrabbled to join her brother, the sights that greeted her struck like a freeze-ray.

Charlie had been wrong. This wasn't a vault at all. This was more like a treasure chamber.

"Wow!"

"Told you," Charlie giggled. "This lot must be worth a fortune!"

The room itself was larger than Tilda had expected, perhaps even longer and wider than the family's garage. Yet it was so jam-packed with clutter that there was barely enough room for two people.

A small desk and chair had been pushed into one corner, piled high with ledgers and thick scrolls. Wooden trunks and chests, mostly studded with iron bands and rivets, were stacked in the remaining corners. Yet it was the room's walls that entranced Tilda. They were a kaleidoscope of treasures, reaching forward from centuries past to create the most incredible mural.

Her eyes could barely take it all in; beautiful portraits and landscape paintings hung in carved golden frames across one entire surface. Opposite, chainmail shirts, leather jerkins and bronze chest plates watched from the wall like soldiers waiting for battle. Another wall housed heaving shelves piled high with leather-bound books, wax-sealed folders wrapped in ribbon and stacks of what looked like parchment.

"It's incredible." Tilda's heart was racing so hard that she thought it might tear a hole through her chest. Perhaps this was this how Howard Carter felt when he crashed through the wall of Tutankhamun's tomb.

Above her, Charlie plucked a musket from a ceiling hook and peered down its barrel.

"Do you think this thing is loaded?"

Tilda snatched it from him and clambered up into the room. The weapon felt heavy in her hand; the wooden stock had the shape and smoothness that only real fingers could forge.

"We shouldn't touch any of these things," Tilda said, carefully placing the musket back onto its hook. Beside it, a collection of sheathed swords and rifles

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hung like macabre stalactites.

"But they're ours now," Charlie pointed out. "Mum and Dad bought the house and all its contents – and this looks a lot like contents to me."

"But they don't belong here," Tilda warned him. "This kind of stuff should be in a museum. This is real history."

"Do you think it was Professor Howe's personal collection?"

"Dunno. Tilda squeezed past her brother, heading for the desk and chair. For some reason, she couldn't shake the feeling they were trespassing. "Maybe there's something over here that can tell us more."

Seated at the small desk, Tilda carefully began searching the stacks of papers and ledgers for some kind of clue. She tried not to think about the items she was touching. Most were handwritten in ink, scratched across hard paper that must have been made centuries earlier. Some of the ledgers appeared even older, written in languages she couldn't even begin to decode. Yet one item stood out like a rose in a bed of dandelions: a journal so new it almost glowed.

When she opened it up and began to read the neatly-arranged handwriting, her jaw slowly dropped open.

"What is it?" Charlie leaned over his sister's shoulder. "What does it say?"

Tilda shook her head; this certainly wasn't what she had expected to find.

"Either he was writing some kind of fantasy novel, or Professor Howe had gone a bit bonkers."

As she ventured deeper and deeper into the professor's journal, the content became stranger and stranger.

"None of this makes sense... he's talking about hunting for treasure by going back in time. Look," she jabbed at a page of writing. "He mentions the musket you showed me... says he stole it from a soldier during the English civil war."

She turned back a few pages and next pointed to a paragraph of text. "And here, he says one of those duelling swords was given to him as a gift by a fifteenth-century nobleman."

Charlie sniggered. "Maybe he didn't disappear at all.

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Maybe he got a job as a Hollywood script writer... sounds like it would make an awesome sci-fi movie."

Tilda turned through more of the journal's pages, causing a loose sheet to drop onto the floor.

Charlie stooped to pluck it off the ground. "Hey, what's this?"

They both stared at a strip of tightly-folded paper. Two words were written neatly across the front: ACCESS GATES.

"Why would Professor Howe have a leaflet about gates?" Charlie wondered. "This house doesn't even have a garden."

Tilda snatched the leaflet from her brother. "Gate is just another word for a door, silly. Ancient cities like York had doors around the city walls to keep people out. They called them gates."

"Ah, I see. So that's why you get places like Micklegate and Fishergate?"

"Exactly!" Tilda nodded. "Maybe this is just a map of all those ancient gates."

She gently cleared an area of space on the desktop and slowly unfolded the leaflet. Section by section, a map showing the streets of York emerged. Yet this wasn't quite the kind of map Tilda had expected to see. Not one of the city's famous gates was included.

Instead, the detailed sketch showed York's modernday streets and roads, many leading to and from a collection of historic sites: the medieval Minster; Viking encampments; the first Roman settlements; a Norman garrison; even places Tudor kings had once called home.

The map contained a score of different locations, each marked and identified by its own neatly-drawn door. Beside many of these doors sat a series of dates and tiny icons in the shape of a key. One or two even had the universally recognised sign for danger — a skull and crossbones.

"What do you think it means?" Charlie asked.

Tilda kept gazing at the map, looking from one door to the next, hoping to see a pattern. Finally, she spotted something she recognised.

Turning back to the professor's journal, she flicked through



1. How old is Tilda Hacker? Tick one.

History Hackers: Roman Rescue Chapters 1-3

### Questions

This activity is to be completed once Chapters 1-3 of 'History Hackers: Roman Rescue' have been read.

	Seven years old Twelve year	ars old Eleven years old		
2.	Tick the adjective that best describes how (	Charlie is feeling during Chapter 1. Upset		
3.	Tilda leaned her slender Use a dictionary to find the meaning of th	r frame against an uneven wall. ne word 'slender'.		
4.		rds below. to the next, she was shocked to see that every lled with exactly the same thing		
5.	Boxes Nothing Ru Why do you think Tilda snatched the gun o	ubbish away from Charlie?		
6.	Link the items of clothing with their descriptions. Use a ruler.  chainmail chest plates		7.	Yet one item stood out like a rose in a bed of dandelions: a journal  Why is the journal like a rose in a bed of dandelions?
	leather	jerkins	8.	What do you think might happen next? Find and copy a clue from the text.
	bronze	shirts		

## Silver year 3 Challenge / year 4

### Questions

This activity is to be completed once Chapters 1-3 of 'History Hackers: Roman Rescue' have been read.

l.	Who is the eldest child?  Tilda Charlie		
2.	Find and copy some evidence from Chapter 1 that shows that Charlie is feeling <b>nervous</b> .		
3.	The eleven-year-old stopped climbing the bare staircase with a sigh, glancing down at the nervous face behind her.		
	How is Tilda feeling during this sentence? Which words tell you this?		
١.	Why was it strange that the room was empty?		
	Read the paragraph in Chapter 3 that starts with 'The air was thick'.  What is the main purpose of this paragraph?		
	Why does Tilda think the artefacts should be in a museum? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.	8.	Write a question about something you want to find out after reading Chapters 1-3.
		9.	What main event do you predict will happen during Chapter 4?
7.	Underline the fronted adverbial in this sentence.		Write down the clues in the text which make you think this.
	Seated at the small desk, Tilda carefully began searching the stacks of papers and ledgers for some kind of clue.		

## Gold year 4 Challenge

## Questions

This activity is to be completed once Chapters 1-3 of 'History Hackers: Roman Rescue' have been read.

1.	Who is the eldest child? Explain how you know.		
2.	a) Underline the fronted adverbial in this sentence.		
	Tiring of Charlie's whimpering, she grabbed his wrist and restarted her ascent.		
	b) What does 'ascent' mean in this sentence?		
3.	"Come on – I'll go in first and check it out. I mean, how scary can a group of dead men in skirts be anyway?"  Who could Tilda be referring to by 'dead men in skirts'? Explain how you know.	7.	Circle a metaphor and underline a simile in the following sentence.  Excitement sent giddy butterflies fluttering in Tilda's stomach. As she scrabbled to join her brother, the sights that greeted her struck like a freeze-ray.
<b>.</b>	Charlie's smile vanished as he shuffled awkwardly. "Yeah! Of course! I just need a minute to let my erm shoe recover. The stressed foam could give way at any time and snap my ankle!"  Why do you think Charlie's smile vanished? Use evidence from the text.	8.	The weapon felt heavy in her hand; the wooden stock had the shape and smoothness that only real fingers could forge.  What does this description suggest?
		9.	Why do you think Tilda felt like they were trespassing?
5.	In Chapter 1, what simile is used to describe the door opening?		
6.	Read the paragraph in Chapter 3 that starts with 'Her eyes could barely take it all in'. What is the main purpose of this paragraph? What is the overall impact on the reader?		What main event do you predict will happen during Chapter 4? Write down the clues in the text which make you think this.

## Bronze Answers

### **Answers**

		I can
1. Ho	w old is Tilda Hacker? Tick one.  Seven years old  Twelve years old  Eleven years old	check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.
	ck the adjective that best describes how Charlie is feeling ring Chapter 1.  Excited Nervous Upset	check that the     text makes sense     to me, discuss my     understanding and     explain the meaning of     words in context.
	Tilda leaned her slender frame against an uneven wall.  e a dictionary to find the meaning of the word 'slender'.  cndcr' mcans slim in a graceful way.	use dictionaries to check the meaning of words that I have read.
<b>4.</b> co	mplete the sentence using one of the words below.  Tilda's gaze bounced from one corner to the next, she was shocked to see that every centimetre of space was filled with exactly the same thing  Boxes Nothing Rubbish	check that the     text makes sense     to me, discuss my     understanding and     explain the meaning of     words in context.
Ch Po	ny do you think Tilda snatched the gun away from arlie? ssible answers: it could have been dangerous; it wasn't s gun to touch; she wanted to see it.	<ul> <li>draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence.</li> </ul>

		I can
6.	chainmail chest plates  leather jerkins  bronze	check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.
7.	Yet one item stood out like a rose in a bed of dandelions: a journal  Why is the journal like a rose in a bed of dandelions?  The journal looks beautiful and new compared to the things around it; roses are famously more beautiful and precious than dandelions.	check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.  identify how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning.
8.	What do you think might happen next? Find and copy a clue from the text.  Pupils' own responses, justified with evidence from the text.	predict what might happen from details stated and implied.

## Silver Answers

## **Answers**

		I can
1.	Who is the eldest child?  Tilda Charlie	check that the     text makes sense     to me, discuss my     understanding and     explain the meaning of     words in context.
2.	Find and copy some evidence from Chapter 1 that shows that Charlie is feeling nervous. Any appropriate evidence.	<ul> <li>draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence.</li> </ul>
3.	The eleven-year-old stopped climbing the bare staircase with a sigh, glancing down at the nervous face behind her.  How is Tilda feeling during this sentence? Which words tell you this?  Tilda is feeling frustrated and impatient - she stops 'with a sigh', which tells us that this sort of thing has happened before.	draw inferences such     as inferring characters'     feelings, thoughts     and motives from     their actions, and     justify inferences with     evidence.
4.	Why was it strange that the room was empty? The rest of the house had been full of clutter.	check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.
5.	Read the paragraph in Chapter 3 that starts with 'The air was thick'. What is the main purpose of this paragraph?  The purpose of this paragraph is to highlight the difference in smell between the secret room and the rest of the house.	identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise these.

		I can
6.	Why does Tilda think the artefacts should be in a museum? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. Possible answers: the artefacts all appear to be real; the artefacts were all well-kept and displayed to a high standard; "This kind of stuff should be in a museum. This is real history"; "hunting for treasure by going back in time"; "He mentions the musket you showed me says he stole it from a soldier during the English civil war".	identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise these.      draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.
7.	Underline the fronted adverbial in this sentence.  Seated at the small desk, Tilda carefully began searching the stacks of papers and ledgers for some kind of clue.	• learn the grammar for years 3 and 4 in English Appendix 2.
8.	Write a question about something you want to find out afte reading Chapters 1-3.  Answers may vary.	ask questions     to improve my     understanding.
9.	What main event do you predict will happen during Chapte 4? Write down the clues in the text which make you think this.  Pupils' own responses, justified with evidence from the tex	happen from details stated and implied.

	Answers	I can
1.	Who is the eldest child? Explain how you know.  Tilda is the eldest; Charlie is referred to as her 'younger' brother.	check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.
2.	a) Underline the fronted adverbial in this sentence.  Tiring of Charlie's whimpering, she grabbed his wrist and restarted her ascent.	learn the grammar for years 3 and 4 in English Appendix 2.
2.	b) What does 'ascent' mean in this sentence? 'Ascent' means a climb or walk to the top of something.	- check that the text makes sense to me, discuss my understanding and explain the meaning of words in context.  - use dictionaries to check the meaning of words that I have read.
3.	"Come on – I'll go in first and check it out. I mean, how scary can a group of dead men in skirts be anyway?"  Who could Tilda be referring to by 'dead men in skirts'?  Explain how you know.  Roman soldiers – Charlie mentioned a legion of soldiers walking through a cellar.	draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence.
4.	Charlie's smile vanished as he shuffled awkwardly. "Yeah! Of course! I just need a minute to let my erm shoe recover. The stressed foam could give way at any time and snap my ankle!"  Why do you think Charlie's smile vanished?  Use evidence from the text.  Any reference to Charlie feeling nervous/worried/anxious/scared. Evidence from the text must be provided.	draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence.
5.	In Chapter 1, what simile is used to describe the door opening?  The hinges 'shrieked liked startled seagulls'.	discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.

#### History Huckers: Komun Kescue Chapters 1-3

		I can
6.	Read the paragraph in Chapter 3 that starts with 'Her eyes could barely take it all in'. What is the main purpose of this paragraph? What is the overall impact on the reader?  The purpose of this paragraph is to describe the secret room. The reader feels like the room is bursting with objects, so many that Tilda can't look at everything fast enough.	- summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas.  - discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.
7.	Circle a metaphor and underline a simile in the following sentence.  Excitement sent giddy butterflies fluttering in Tilda's stomach.  As she scrabbled to join her brother, the sights that greeted her  struck like a freeze-ray.	discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.
8.	The weapon felt heavy in her hand; the wooden stock had the shape and smoothness that only real fingers could forge.  What does this description suggest?  The description suggests that this was a real weapon that had once been used regularly by someone, rather than a cheap or unimportant replica.	identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.      discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.
9.	Why do you think Tilda felt like they were trespassing? The room had been left full of someone's belongings and Tilda knew they should have told an adult rather than rummaging through what they found.	draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.      participate in discussions about books that are read to me and those I can read for myself, build on my own and others' ideas and challenge views courteously.
10.	What main event do you predict will happen during Chapter 4? Write down the clues in the text which make you think this. Pupils' own responses, justified with evidence from the text.	predict what might happen from details stated and implied.