

Improving Your Reading with Inference Iggy: Raider's Peril



Catanna ran through the darkness of the White Desert night. She rarely ventured to the Silken City, and never alone. Despite its soft-sounding name, it was a cut-throat place.

Katka's thumb ached from pressing the forward button as hard as she could. It wouldn't make Catanna move any faster – Katka knew that – but her thumbs wouldn't listen to reason right now. She had to find Xandon and discover what the Gutvines were up to, before they tricked her into destroying her own guild.

The hazy light of the distant city grew brighter by degrees. Catanna didn't look to the left or right; she just ran – over dunes, through tented encampments, under the shadows of enemy strongholds. She even splashed through an oasis without swerving; her eyes never left that hazy light.

That was how the bandits got her.

Suddenly, flaming arrows rained down from the sky. Her vision flashed red and she staggered as her health bar dropped.

She'd been hit. Unfamiliar voices jumbled on her headset.

"Taste it!"

"One more hit."

"Grab the bag."

Too late, Catanna readied

her spear. But Katka couldn't see who to aim at, and the spear flew, glittering, into the night, landing uselessly in the sand ahead. Catanna tried to follow it, but she was knocked to the ground by another blow. Her health was critical.



"She's out."

"Taste it!"

"Shut up and search the bag."

"Topaz, nice."

"Who uses spears anyway?"

All Katka could see was black. She pressed every button on the controller, but Catanna just lay there, her health bar blinking a warning. She was helpless as her lootbag was snatched away and the unseen assailants emptied its contents and flung it onto the sand. She heard every thud as they ran away across the desert.

Eventually, her health bar climbed above the danger zone and stopped blinking. Katka let out a breath that she didn't know she'd been holding. Catanna stood, picked up her lootbag, and looked at the contents. Just some useless armour, precision gloves, and something called an ice cloak.

Great.

Catanna shouldered the bag. All that Gutvine loot, gone in seconds because of Katka's own stupidity. Fantastic.

Catanna limped in circles, searching for her topaz spear. She remembered the exact spot it had landed in, but it wasn't there. The further that Catanna limped, the deeper her heart sank until it dropped right into her stomach. Her spear was gone.

Katka flopped back on her cool pillows. She stared at the ceiling, at the crack that wriggled across it like a road on a map. She was the leader of the Brittlestar guild; despair was not an option. She had to find Xandon and get back what she had lost. With a sigh, she sat upright.

Catanna joined a crowd of raiders, merchants and warriors as she limped closer to the Silken City gates. Guards stood on either side, their formidable weapons ready in case of trouble. Catanna stayed to the middle of the crowd, who jostled and slowed as they reached the bottleneck.

As the bustling chatter and hanging silks of the city came into focus, Catanna was snatched to the side by a guard. The guard's animated face loomed down at Catanna, grinning. His teeth were black.

1. What evidence is there in the first paragraph of the Silken City being a hostile place to visit?

Give **two** points.

1. _____

2. _____

2. What impression is the reader given about the character of Catanna within the first three paragraphs of the chapter?

Explain two features of her character using evidence from the text to support your answer.

3. *Too late, Catanna readied her spear.*

Why did Catanna do this? Tick **one**.

- ☐ because she was anticipating an attack
- ☐ because she was prepared to defend herself
- ☐ because she was confused by the unfamiliar voices
- ☐ because she was following Katka's instructions

4. *...the spear flew, glittering, into the night*

Why do you think that the spear is described as *glittering*?

5. *Catanna stood, picked up her lootbag and looked at the contents. Just some useless armour, precision gloves, and something called an ice cloak. Great.*

What impression is the reader given about Catanna's mood in this extract?

6. Look at the paragraph beginning *All Katka could see was black*. Explain two ways in which Catanna is portrayed as vulnerable in this paragraph, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

7. *The further Catanna limped, the deeper her heart sank until it dropped right into her stomach.*

How does this tell the reader that Catanna feels? Tick **one**.

- ☐ elated
☐ deranged
☐ devastated
☐ ecstatic

8. Why do you think that Catanna made the decision to join a crowd of raiders as she arrived at the Silken City?

9. Look at the last two paragraphs of the text.

Put a tick in the correct box to show whether each of the following statements is a **fact** or an **opinion**.

Statement	Fact	Opinion
The guard's teeth were unpleasant to look at.		
He snatched Catanna to the side.		
His face was animated.		
The guard was considerably taller than Catanna.		

10. Look at the paragraph beginning Katka flopped back on her cool pillows.

a) How does Katka show her disappointment in this paragraph?

b) How does Katka show her determination in this paragraph?

Answers

1. What evidence is there in the first paragraph of the Silken City being a hostile place to visit? Give **two** points.

Accept both of the following points only: Catanna never ventured there alone; it is said to be a cut-throat place.

2. What impression is the reader given about the character of Catanna within the first three paragraphs of the chapter?

Explain two features of her character using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupils' responses should contain two features of Catanna's character, at least one of which is supported by evidence from the text, such as: The reader is given the impression that Catanna is determined because the text says that she never takes her eyes off the light of the Silken City. You are also given the impression that she is fit because she runs a long way.

3. *Too late, Catanna readied her spear.*

Why did Catanna do this? Tick **one**.

- ☐ because she was anticipating an attack
- ☒ **because she was prepared to defend herself**
- ☐ because she was confused by the unfamiliar voices
- ☐ because she was following Katka's instructions

4. *...the spear flew, glittering, into the night*

Why do you think that the spear is described as *glittering*?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The spear appeared as though it was glittering because it was reflecting light as it moved very quickly.

5. *Catanna stood, picked up her lootbag and looked at the contents. Just some useless armour, precision gloves, and something called an ice cloak. Great.*

What impression is the reader given about Catanna's mood in this extract?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Catanna is unhappy about what is left in her lootbag because she uses 'great' sarcastically and describes the armour as 'useless'.

Answers

6. Look at the paragraph beginning *All Katka could see was black*.
Explain two ways in which Catanna is portrayed as vulnerable in this paragraph, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupils' responses should contain two ways in which Catanna is portrayed as vulnerable, at least one of which is supported by evidence from the text, such as: Catanna is vulnerable because her health is low. I know this because the text says that her health bar was blinking a warning. She is also vulnerable because Katka can only see black and cannot help her.

7. *The further Catanna limped, the deeper her heart sank until it dropped right into her stomach.*

How does this tell the reader that Catanna feels? Tick **one**.

- ☐ elated
☐ deranged
☒ **devastated**
☐ ecstatic

8. Why do you think that Catanna made the decision to join a crowd of raiders as she arrived at the Silken City?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Catanna might have made this decision so that she would be hidden within the group and would be able to enter the Silken City safely.

9. Look at the last two paragraphs of the text.

Put a tick in the correct box to show whether each of the following statements is a **fact** or an **opinion**.

Statement	Fact	Opinion
The guard's teeth were unpleasant to look at.		✓
He snatched Catanna to the side.	✓	
His face was animated.	✓	
The guard was considerably taller than Catanna.	✓	

Answers

10. Look at the paragraph beginning Katka flopped back on her cool pillows.

a) How does Katka show her disappointment in this paragraph?

Katka shows that she is disappointed because she lets out a sigh.

b) How does Katka show her determination in this paragraph?

Katka shows that she is determined because she said that 'despair was not an option' and she was determined to find Xandon.