

Stuart Little

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- 1 *Mr and Mrs Little, and their son George, were very surprised when a second child was born looking like a mouse. They called him Stuart.*
- 3 Stuart was also helpful when it came to Ping-pong. The Littles liked Ping-pong, but the balls had a way of rolling under chairs, sofas, and radiators, and this meant that the players were forever stooping down and reaching under things. Stuart soon learned to chase balls, and it was a great sight to see him come out from under a hot radiator, pushing a Ping-pong ball with all his might, the perspiration rolling down his cheeks. The ball, of course, was almost as high as he was, and he had to throw his whole weight against it in order to keep it rolling.
- 11 The Littles had a grand piano in their living room, which was all right except that one of the keys was a sticky key and didn't work properly. Mrs Little said she thought it must be the damp weather, but I don't see how it could be the damp weather, for the key had been sticking for about four years, during which time there had been many bright clear days. But anyway, the key stuck, and was a great inconvenience to anyone trying to play the piano. It bothered George particularly when he was playing the 'Scarf Dance', which was rather lively. It was George who had the idea of stationing Stuart inside the piano to push the key up the second it was played. This was no easy job for Stuart, as he had to crouch down between the felt hammers so that he wouldn't get hit on the head. But Stuart liked it just the same: it was exciting inside the piano, dodging about, and the noise was quite terrific. Sometimes after a long session he would emerge quite deaf, as though he had just stepped out of an airplane after a long journey; and it would be some little time before he felt really normal again.

Challenge 2

- 1 Look at the second paragraph, beginning "Stuart was also helpful ...".

What does the word "stooping" mean? Tick **one**.

bending looking slouching stretching

- 2 Why did Stuart find it hard to push a Ping-pong ball?

- 3 Look at the paragraph beginning "The Littles had a grand piano ...".

Find and copy **three** words that tell us why a sticky key was a problem.

- 4 The sticky key was probably *not* caused by the weather.

Find **one** piece of evidence for this statement. Use direct quotations from the text.

- 5 Why do you think George suggested that Stuart should be inside the piano when it was being played?

- 6 Give **two** reasons why it was uncomfortable for Stuart to be inside the piano.

2a

1 mark

2b

1 mark

2b

1 mark

2d

1 mark

2d

1 mark

2d

2 marks

Write the question number and then answer the questions:

Answers: