

Mr Majeika by Humphrey Carpenter

Mr Majeika is a supply teacher and has just arrived at a new school. Unfortunately, he is late and Mr Potter, the head teacher is not pleased.

"Now, you're rather late, Mr Majeika. You might have telephoned me."

"I'm so sorry," said Mr Majeika. "You see, my magic carpet took a wrong turning. It's normally quite good at finding the way, but I think the rain must have got into it. I do beg your pardon."

"Never mind," said Mr Potter. "And now ... Wait a minute, did I hear you say *magic carpet*?"

It was Mr Majeika's turn to look bothered. "Oh, did I really say that? How very silly of me. A complete slip of the tongue. I meant – *bicycle*, of course. I came on a bicycle."

"Quite so," said Mr Potter. "Bicycle, of course ..." His voice tailed off. He was staring at the magic carpet.

"What's that?" he said rather faintly.

"That?" said Mr Majeika cheerily. "That's my magic – " He cleared his throat. "Oh dear, my mistake again. That's my bicycle." And as he said these last words, he pointed a finger at the magic carpet.

There was a funny sort of humming noise, and the carpet rolled itself up and turned into a bicycle.

Mr Majeika leant cheerily against the handlebars and rang the bicycle bell. "Nice bike, isn't it?" he said, smiling at Mr Potter.

You could have heard a pin drop.



- 1 "Now, you're rather late, Mr Majeika. You might have telephoned me." (paragraph 1)
Who do you think said those words?

2d

1 mark

- 2 What is Mr Majeika's excuse for being late?

2b

1 mark

- 3 "complete slip of the tongue" What does this phrase mean in this story? Choose **one**.

His tongue slipped inside his mouth and made an odd sound.

Mr Potter had not heard him correctly.

He had said something he did not mean to say.

His tongue got muddled when trying to say lots of similar sounds.

2a

1 mark

- 4 Why do you think Mr Majeika "looked bothered" (paragraph 4) when Mr Potter asked about the magic carpet?

2d

1 mark

- 5 (a) Write a word from the text that describes how someone spoke.

(b) Explain why you think the author chose that word.

2a

2g

2 marks

- 6 Choose the sentence that summarises the most important information about Mr Majeika's arrival at the school.

Mr Majeika was late.

Mr Majeika said he came on a bicycle.

Mr Majeika came on a magic carpet.

Mr Majeika made a mistake when he said "magic carpet".

2c

1 mark