

An Extract From

The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

The Mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a bucket of white paint; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of white paint all over his black fur, and an aching back and tired arms. Spring was in the air above and in the earth below and even in his dark and simple little house. It was a small wonder, then, that he suddenly threw down his brush on the floor, said, "Bother!" and "O blow!" and also "Hand spring-cleaning!" and ran out of the house without even waiting to put on his coat. Something up above was calling him and he made for the steep little tunnel that would take him nearer to the sun and air. So, he scraped and scratched and scrabbled, and then he scrabbled and scratched and scraped, working busily with his little paws and muttering to himself, "Up we go! Up we go!" till at last, pop! His snout came out into the sunlight and he found himself rolling in the warm grass of a great meadow.

"This is fine!" he said to himself. "This is better than painting!" The sunshine felt hot on his fur, soft breezes stroked his heated brow, and after the loneliness of the cellar he had lived in so long, the song of the happy birds fell on his ears almost like a shout. Jumping off all his four legs at once, in the joy of living and the delight of spring without its cleaning, he chased his way across the meadow till he reached the hedge on the other side.

1. Name three things Mole did during his spring-cleaning.

2. 'Something above was calling him...'

What do you think was calling Mole?

3. Why do you think the author repeats 'scraped and scratched and scrabbled'?

4. Why do you think the sound of the birds was 'almost like a shout' to Mole? Explain your answer.

ANSWERS

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1. Name three things Mole did during his spring-cleaning.

2. Accept: sweeping, dusting, painting

3. 'Something above was calling him...'

What do you think was calling Mole?

Accept any answer that refers to Mole being fed up with spring-cleaning and wanting to be out in the fresh air and sunshine.

4. Why do you think that the author repeats 'scraped and scratched and scrabbled'?

5. Accept any answer which refers to it seeming like a lot of work and taking a long time for Mole to be digging and reach the surface. It seemed to Mole to be taking a long time to get to the surface.

6. Why do you think the sound of the birds was 'almost like a shout' to Mole? Explain your answer.

7. Accept any answer which refers to the sound of birds outside being much louder than he was used to underground where it was silent and he lived by himself.