

# The Secret Garden

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### 1.1 What's the book about?

Look at the pictures. Which words go with each person? What do you think? Write the words under the pictures.

happy rich unfriendly kind ill sad



### 1.2 What happens first?

Look at the picture on page 1 and read the words in *italics* at the top of the page. Discuss these questions and write possible answers.

1 Who is the girl in the picture?

.....

2 What kind of person is she?

.....

3 Where is she at the start of the book?

.....

4 Do you think she is going to stay there? Why (not?)

.....

5 Mary is going to change in this story. How will she change, do you think?

.....

## ‘Where is Everybody?’

*At the age of six, Mary was not a nice child.*

*Nobody loved Mary and Mary loved nobody.*

Mary Lennox had a thin little face and always looked **cross**. Nobody liked her and she was often ill. Mary’s parents were English, but they lived in India. Mr Lennox worked there. Mrs Lennox was very beautiful and had many friends. But she did not like children. So when she had a baby, Mary, she was not interested in her. Mr Lennox had a lot of work and was not at home very often. Mrs Lennox gave the baby to an Indian **servant**.

‘You take the child,’ she said to the servant. ‘I don’t want to see it or hear it.’

The thin, ugly baby **grew** into a thin, ugly little girl. When the little girl wanted something, the servants gave it to her. They never said ‘no’ because they didn’t want her to cry. When she cried, Mrs Lennox was angry.

So, at the age of six, Mary was not a nice child. Nobody loved Mary and Mary loved nobody.

One hot morning, when Mary was nine years old, a new servant woke her. ‘Where’s *my* servant?’ Mary shouted.

The woman looked afraid. ‘She can’t come,’ she said.

She left the room, and nobody came into Mary’s room all morning. It was very strange.



**cross** /kros/ (adj) When somebody is **cross**, they are a little angry.

**servant** /'sɜ:vənt/ (n) A **servant** works for other people in their house.

**grow** /graʊ/ (v) After something **grows**, it is bigger than before.

Mary did not know it, but people in the house were very ill. That day, her servant died, and three more servants died the next day. Mary stayed in her room and everybody forgot about her. Sometimes she cried, and sometimes she slept. She went into the dining-room and ate some food. Then she found some wine and drank it. It made her sleepy.

She went to her room again and slept for a long time. When she woke, the house was very quiet. 'Why doesn't anybody come and see me?' thought Mary.

But nobody came. Then she heard **voices** outside. 'It's very sad,' a man said. 'That pretty woman! And the child too!'

A man and a woman came into Mary's room. She was near the window and she looked sad and ugly.

'There's a child here! Who is she?' cried the man.

'I'm Mary Lennox,' the little girl said angrily. 'I was asleep and I woke up. Where is everybody? Where's my servant?'

The man looked at her sadly. 'Little girl,' he said, 'your parents died two days **ago**. And the servants ran away.'

'Everybody forgot me,' thought Mary. 'Everybody.'



**voice** /vɔɪs/ (n) You hear somebody's **voice** when they speak.  
**ago** /ə'gəʊ/ (adv) **Ago** means 'before that time'.

## Mary Goes to England

*'When you're in the house, you'll have to stay in your rooms.  
But you can play in the gardens.'*

For a short time, Mary stayed with friends of her parents, Mr and Mrs Crawford. Their children did not like her.

'You're going to go to England,' the oldest boy said to Mary. 'My parents told me. You're going to live with your uncle. He lives in a house in the country. He's a **hunchback**.'

Mary felt afraid when she heard this. That evening, Mrs Crawford talked to her. 'You're going to go to England, my dear,' she said. 'You're going to live with your uncle, Mr Archibald Craven, in Yorkshire.'

'Where's Yorkshire?' asked Mary.

'In the north-east of England,' answered Mrs Crawford.

She went to Mary and put her arms round her. But the child pulled away from her. 'She's an ugly little thing,' Mrs Crawford thought.

Mary went to England with an English family. In London, one of Mr Craven's servants met her. The servant's name was Mrs Medlock. She was a fat woman with a red face and small black eyes. Mary did not like her and she did not like Mary.

They caught a train to Yorkshire. Mary sat quietly and looked out of the window. She felt very unhappy.

'My mother and father didn't want me,' she thought. 'The Indian servants didn't like me. Nobody likes me.'



**hunchback** /'hʌntfʌk/ (n) *Hunchbacks* have a problem with their back, so they can't walk with their head high.



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Frances Hodgson Burnett

British English

Classic

Mary Lennox goes to live with her uncle in a big, old house in the country. There are many gardens round the house. One day Mary finds a garden that has high walls and no door. What is the secret of the garden?

Number of words (excluding activities): 9,944

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