

Directions: Read this story carefully. When you are completely finished answer the questions on the next page. Make sure to completely fill in the bubbles.

The Mysterious Neighbor

The banging started again that night. Gilbert turned over in bed and looked at the clock on his bedside table. It was after ten. Gilbert listened to the steady beat of sound. The noise had come from the new neighbor's apartment for three nights in a row. What could it be?

Gilbert had seen the new neighbor a few times since he had moved in. The neighbor was an older man who walked with a cane. Gilbert couldn't imagine what he could be doing to make all that noise.

The next night Gilbert was ready. He put a large glass on his bedside table and set his alarm clock for five minutes to ten. After the alarm woke him up, he got dressed and put the mouth of the glass against the wall. Then he put his ear next to the glass to listen. The glass made a natural amplifier. After ten minutes of listening, he hadn't heard anything strange. Then, suddenly, he heard a loud crash and someone shout!

"Oh no," thought Gilbert. He ran out and called for his mom. "Mom, the weird guy next door hurt himself. I heard a big crash through the wall and he was screaming."

"Are you sure?" asked his mom, looking up from the television. Then they heard a knock on the door. Gilbert's mother got up and looked through the peephole. "It looks like our new neighbor," she said and opened the door. "Hi, Mr. Lange. Are you OK? Gilbert here thought he heard some noise in your apartment."

"Sorry to bother you," said the man. "But could you help me for a minute? I've knocked over some lumber, and I need help propping it back up."

At last! thought Gilbert. He would get to see what mystery the man was working on. "I think Gilbert can help you," said his mother. "How's your wife doing?"

"She's much happier since I got the new cabinets installed," said the man cheerfully.

"You have a wife?" asked Gilbert. "How come we never see her?"

"Why don't you come meet her, Gilbert?" asked the man. Gilbert and his mother followed the man to his apartment. Inside, there was an older woman in a wheelchair working in the kitchen. Gilbert noticed that the kitchen counters were very wide and didn't have anything underneath them so the woman could wheel her legs under the counters to reach things she needed.

"So that's what you were doing!" said Gilbert. "I heard you building these counters the last couple of nights."

"That's right," said the woman. "My husband spends his days at work or going with me to the clinic. The only time he could build these was at night. Sorry if we bothered you."

"That's all right," said Gilbert. "Maybe I can help you out during the day, now that we're all friends."



The Mysterious Neighbor (cont.)

- Part of the mystery in this story is the use of suspense. Choose the event that is the best example of mystery.
 - Then, suddenly, he heard a loud crash and someone shout!
 - Gilbert and his mother followed the man to his apartment.
 - Gilbert listened to the steady beat of sound.
 - Then he put his ear next to the glass to listen.
- In the story, Mr. Lange says, “She’s much happier since I got the new cabinets installed.” Which of these definitions of installed is Mr. Lange using?
 - invested in
 - established
 - put in
 - positioned
- Which of these best describes what happened in the story?
 - A mother and her son investigate a mystery.
 - A man teaches a boy how to build cabinets.
 - A boy is interested in what his neighbor is doing.
 - A man tries to scare his young neighbor.
- The answer to which of these questions would help you understand why Mr. Lange is building new cabinets?
 - When did the Langes move into the apartment?
 - What does Mr. Lange do for a living?
 - Where is Mrs. Lange’s clinic?
 - How does Mrs. Lange work in the kitchen?
- According to the story, Gilbert’s glass was a natural amplifier. An *amplifier* is probably a tool that
 - sees through walls.
 - makes sounds louder.
 - quiets loud noises.
 - locates hidden objects.
- How did Gilbert react to meeting Mrs. Lange?
 - He was embarrassed and too shy to talk to her.
 - He was angry that their noise had kept him awake.
 - Gilbert was afraid of the mysterious neighbor.
 - He was glad to know who was living next door.