

Loast

It's thon tree ouside the bedroom windae; overhangin branches fill the sky, big black burds nest in it, swoopin by lik enemy planes. It waves in the wind and muddies the light and things move about. You put them in the drawer an they turn up in the wardrobe, so you blame Agnes; it must be her, there's naebdy else here, but she says *it wisnae me* and gies you wanny her looks that makes you want tae greet. Words, too, keep gettin loast inside yer heid somewhere. You're lookin at sumpn that you know the word for and you're rummlin about inside yer heid, inside aw that cottonwool stuff that seems tae float about inside yer heid nooadays, but you canny fun it. Somebody's moved that too. Your words trail aff then you clear your throat an say, *thingummy* or *ye know*, lik an ordinary person that's jist forgotten a word fur a minute. So they try tae guess the word and you say *that's it*, even if it's no, jist so's you can finish the sentence. And you wish you'd never said anythin in the furst place, and mibbe next time you'll no bother.

Section 1: Focus on Scots

1. What does the word 'thon' mean?

that thoughttall old

2. Choose the word from the excerpt that means 'gives'

lik rummlin gies aw

3. '...gies you wanny her looks that makes you want tae greet.'
What does 'wanny' mean?

one of plenty some grumpy

4. '...mibbe next time you'll no bother'
Choose the English translation of this phrase.

potentially, you won't worry in future

next time, you'll endure the hardship and try your best

perhaps you won't try next time



Section 2: Focus on understanding and analysis

1. Which two quotations tell us that the tree bothers the narrator?

overhangin branches fill the sky

swoopin by lik enemy planes

waves in the wind

muddies the light

2. The narrator says that her sister ‘...gies you wanny her looks that makes you want tae greet.’ Choose two words that describes how the narrator feels about her sister.

comfortable

intimidated

affectionate

nonchalant

furious

resentful

3. What image tells us that the narrator feels confused?

but she says *it wisnae me*

that cottonwool stuff that seems tae float about inside yer heid

jist so’s you can finish the sentence

mibbe next time you’ll no bother



4. How does the narrator feel when they get confused? Choose two words.

cautious

defeated

embarrassed

excited

proud

5. Offline task: By referring to this and at least one other story by Donovan, show how the writer explores family relationships.