

## English Task

We are continuing with our book and now it's time to meet Lob.

1. Read the pages below and have a think about what you are finding out about Lob.

2. What does Lob do? What does he look like? What do you know for certain about him and what are you not sure about? Write at least 3 questions to ask about him.

3. Find where it says:

***“Lucy began to fear they might be right. Was Lob just a game she played with Grandpa?”***

What do you think? Do you think Lob is real? Why? If possible, have a discussion with someone in your house. What do they think?

Now write a paragraph, trying to convince someone of your opinion. You could use phrases like:

**I believe Lob must be real because...**

**Using evidence from the text, ...**

**In my opinion...**

**I have found some evidence that tells me he can't be a real person because...**

When she'd planted them all, she went to the water-butt by the shed to refill her can. It was heavy to carry,

and she sloshed water into her shoes. Concentrating hard, she didn't notice at first, but then she did.

In the gooseberry bushes near the cane wigwams, there was a flicker of movement. A tremor of greeny-brown. The flash of an eye, a bright green eye. It looked at her and seemed amused by what it saw; then blinked, and was gone.

'Lob?' she whispered.

All she saw now was leaves and grass. The gooseberry stems prickled her hands as she pushed them aside. Her ears caught a rustle that could have been laughter; then no more. Whatever it was, it was gone.



Lucy knew from Grandpa Will that Lob was a wild thing, who wouldn't let himself be caught or touched, or even stared at for long. But she'd seen him at last – seen him, all by herself! – and that made her feel special. Lob magic, garden magic – she was part of it now. It was part of her. She danced a little jig of celebration. When Grandpa came back to see how she was getting on, she rushed up to him.

'Grandpa, Grandpa! I've seen Lob!' She pulled at his sleeve, guiding him to-

wards the gooseberries. 'There! He was sort of greeny, and he was looking at me. I think he was laughing.'

Grandpa was delighted. 'Yes! That's him, all right. Excellent! You're learning to see. I thought so. Most people don't. They look straight at Lob and have no idea he's there.'

Lucy soon realized that she wouldn't always see Lob; only sometimes, and only quick glimpses. Once she saw an old face, gnarled and barky; sometimes there was a shiver in the long grass, as if a snake was sliding through.

But even without seeing, Lucy knew he was there, from the way she felt inside. There was a sparking of mischief in her head, a tingle of energy in her arms and legs. She wanted to run, jump, climb, be everywhere at once. And she knew that Lob made Grandpa

feel the same, even though he didn't run, or jump, or climb. He just moved around the grass paths and the tool shed in his usual way, slowly, surely and a little stiffly.

'Oh, you and your Lob!' the others would say to Grandpa – Dad, and Mum, and Granny Annie. They'd exchange grins that said *Let him play his little game.*

Lucy had to feel sorry for them. They had no idea. And she and Grandpa Will exchanged secret smiles of their own.

In the car on the long journey back to London, Mum said, 'You know Lob's not real, don't you, Lucy-Lu? It's just Grandpa's story. He likes making up special stories, just for you. There isn't really a Lob.'

'But there is, there is! I've seen him!'

'No, Lucy, you haven't. Not really. You just think you have.'

Lucy began to fear they might be right. Was Lob just a game she played with Grandpa?

Next time she went to Clunny Cottage, she was afraid that the Lob feeling wouldn't be the same.

But – yes! As soon as she got out of the car, and stretched, and hugged Granny and Grandpa, she felt Lob-magic everywhere. In the quiver of a leaf. In the deep shadows of the ash tree. In the small breeze that stirred the leaves. Here he was. Her heart lifted; she felt it rise and swell in her chest, warming her with happiness. She felt bigger and more alive here than anywhere else.

'Hello, Lob,' she whispered.

Of course he was here. Of course he was real. Now, and for ever and ever and ever.