

STORY SPECULATIONS



Varjak Paw by SF Said

Give out one sentence per child. Using the Voice 21 groupings of 'Onion' or 'Traverse', each child reads their sentence to the child opposite them and spends one minute discussing the clues and what the story could be about. They could also just move around the class choosing other children at random. When they move on, they use the new and previous clues to guess the following aspects of the story, piecing together evidence to back up their theories. You may wish to use our 'Book Knowledge Organisers' to go through the book in more detail at the end if you or the children are unfamiliar with the story.

setting

characters

plot

genre



- 1.) There was a garden, but it was surrounded by a high stone wall.
- 2.) 'Everyone knows the world Outside is full of monsters.'
- 3.) 'There are seven skills in the way of Jalal,' whispered the Elder Paw.
- 4.) His fur prickled at the strange sounds.
- 5.) Now he just had to step into the tree, and he could climb down easily.
- 6.) 'Your whiskers can detect the slightest changes in the air, the smallest movements.'
- 7.) His Awareness led him along the alley and over the wall.
- 8.) 'I will teach you hunting, for it is the Third Skill.'
- 9.) 'Even Ginger fears Sally Bones.'
- 10.) The bristly, barking monster towered above him, its foul breath in his face.
- 11.) With or without a dog, he was going to find his family.
- 12.) There they were - the Mesopotamian Blues, alive and well!



- 13.) The Gentleman hadn't harmed them yet; maybe he never would.
- 14.) The way they moved together so perfectly, their identical eyes ... they were more like machines than anything else.
- 15.) 'The Seventh skill is to Trust Yourself.'
- 16.) The family were gathered round him in a circle, by the Contessa's empty chair.
- 17.) Not quite alive, not quite dead. Not cats anymore, but toys.
- 18.) Varjak could see his family on the edge of the front room, trembling, powerless.
- 19.) The cats from the cage came charging downstairs.
- 20.) The cent reminded Varjak of the Gentleman's caviar - another thing he'd never have to eat.
- 21.) Ginger's gang runs the East. Sally Bones is boss of the West.
- 22.) He could hear more monsters in the distance, coming closer.
- 23.) 'Have a heart, Holly,' said the chocolate-brown cat. 'Look at him, he's obviously not dangerous.'
- 24.) There was sadness in his heart for the Elder Paw, deep sadness, but his grandfather had trusted him with a mission.
- 25.) He raced to the kitchen, fast as he could go, faster still. Who were these cats? Who were the men? What did they want?
- 26.) 'Sweetheart,' said Mother, coming over and straightening his collar, 'the garden is a nasty, dirty place.'
- 27.) He was so thrilled by the statues, he'd hardly noticed that the square was swarming with pigeons.
- 28.) She smiled a crooked smile, but her single eye stayed cold and hard.
- 29.) The silence made it stranger still; there were none of the city sounds here.
- 30.) He dodged the furious attacks that followed, becoming a shimmer that Julius couldn't quite hit.