



The Treehouse

KEEP OUT!

The words were simple enough. Carl couldn't understand why people were refusing to do as they were told. The treehouse wasn't his; it wasn't anybody's, really. It had been around since before his dad's time, or so his dad had said. Instead, Carl was the current custodian. He simply had the job of looking after it. But the other kids in the village couldn't be trusted to leave it alone.

Carl understood their desire to play in the house - it was, after all, a marvellous thing. Over the years, every person who had been left in charge had added their own touches to it, until it was easily the best in the world. There were three main sections, all on a different storey of the towering oak tree that supported it. There were stained glass windows made from scraps of glass thrown out when the church re-did their own windows. The door was a solid ash dining table turned on its side. Carl's older brother Spencer had added a rope ladder to the nearest tree when he'd been in charge.

As far as Carl was aware, none of them had been forced to put up with the neighbourhood children sneaking in to play in it when he wasn't there. He felt like he was letting the team down in some way. Spencer had gone off to university in the summer and so it had fallen to him to choose somebody new to take on the role. Carl had applied along with every other child in a mile radius, it seemed, and it wasn't a guarantee that he'd get it just because Spencer was choosing. Spencer took the decision very seriously; he even held interviews on the top floor. What Spencer hadn't told Carl was that there were bigger problems around the corner than kids messing around.

The first sign that trouble was brewing was the literal sign that was stapled to the tree, one morning. Carl pulled it free and read it with a growing sense of dread in his stomach. It was from the local council and said:

Due to recent high winds and the threat to public safety, this tree has been designated a risk. It will be removed at the council's earliest convenience.

"How could they?" Carl shouted out loud, startling the cows in the field next to him. What was worse was that there wasn't even a date. When would this travesty happen? Carl knew he had to act, but he had no idea how he could show the council that this was a bad idea. Surely they could do something to make the tree safe without hacking it down?

Carl raced home with tears streaming down his face. His dad was sat in the living room, reading the paper and jumped to his feet when Carl burst through the door. He explained quickly what was going on: his dad couldn't believe it either. Over the next few hours, they came up with a plan that would show the council how loved the tree was. It took a few frantic phone calls from Carl's dad, but soon, they were ready to act.

Later that afternoon, Carl made his way back down to the treehouse where hundreds of local children were waiting to meet him. He grabbed an old apple crate and dragged it to the front of the crowd. "We are all here to save the tree," he began. "We need to show the council how much we enjoy it and want it to stay." There was a cheer from the gathered children, and Carl was forced to wait for it to die down before he continued. "Our parents have all spoken and agreed to help us. Starting from now, we will split into groups and take shifts staying in the treehouse. Those who stay overnight will have a parent to keep you company and make sure you don't get up to any trouble!" This got a few laughs from the audience. "I'll take the first shift, along with you lot," Carl pointed at a group of his friends closest to the front. "The rest of you, sign up for your shift on this sheet. Make no mistake, the only way we can save our treehouse is by showing the council how much we care."

Carl passed the sheet of paper down into the crowd and scrambled up the ladder towards the first floor. Whatever happened next, he knew that he'd at least given the tree a chance.



1

What words were written on the treehouse?

1 mark

2

a) Who is currently looking after the treehouse?

1 mark

b) How do they feel about the other children? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

2 marks

3

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Carl only got the position because of his brother.		
The children used windows from the church in the treehouse.		
Carl's brother is called Spencer.		
The tree is being removed because it is a danger to cars.		

2 marks

4

When would this travesty happen?

What does **travesty** mean in this sentence?

1 mark



5

Look at the paragraph beginning: *Later that afternoon...*

What are the children doing while Carl makes his way back to the treehouse?

1 mark

6

Read from the paragraph beginning: *Later that afternoon...* to the end of the text.

Which words best describe the other children's response to Carl's plan?

Tick **two**.

Tepid

Enthusiastic

Eager

Reluctant

2 marks

SATs Practice - Answers

1. Keep out
2. a) Carl
b) **Give one mark each for the following pieces of evidence, up to two marks:**
He doesn't trust the other children not to play in the treehouse because he says that they couldn't be trusted to leave it alone.
He felt like he was letting the team down when other children played in it.
3. **Give 1 mark for two correct answers. Give 2 marks for three or more correct answers.**
False
True
True
False
4. A ridiculous or unbelievable decision
5. Waiting for him
6. Enthusiastic
Eager