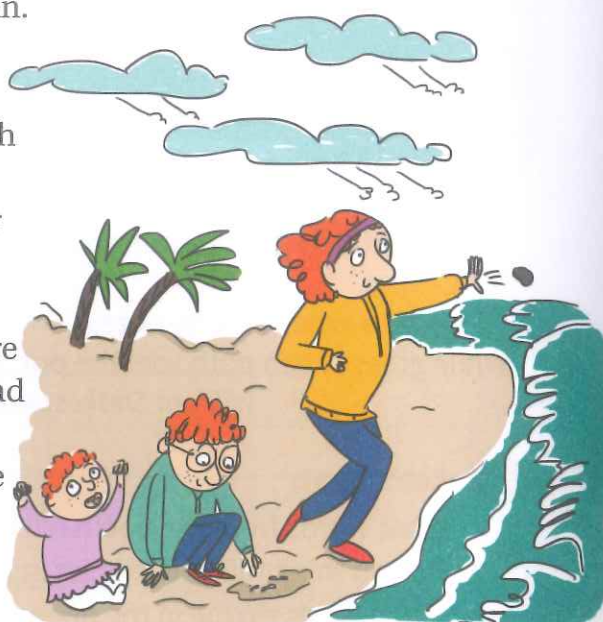


The Bad Beginning

Violet Baudelaire, the eldest, liked to skip rocks. Like most fourteen-year-olds, she was right-handed, so the rocks skipped farther across the murky water when Violet used her right hand than when she used her left. As she skipped rocks, she was looking out at the horizon and thinking about an invention she wanted to build. Anyone who knew Violet well could tell she was thinking hard, because her long hair was tied up in a ribbon to keep it out of her eyes. Violet had a real knack for inventing and building strange devices, so her brain was often filled with images of pulleys, levers and gears, and she never wanted to be distracted by something as trivial as her hair. This morning she was thinking about how to construct a device that could retrieve a rock after you had skipped it into the ocean.

Klaus Baudelaire, the middle child, and the only boy, liked to examine creatures in tide-pools. Klaus was a little older than twelve and wore glasses, which made him look intelligent. He *was* intelligent. The Baudelaire parents had an enormous library in their mansion, a room filled with thousands of books on nearly every subject. Being only twelve, Klaus of course had not read all of the books in the Baudelaire library, but he had read a great many of them and had retained a lot of the information from his readings. He knew how to tell an alligator from a crocodile. He knew who killed Julius Caesar. And he knew much about the tiny, slimy animals found at Briny Beach, which he was examining now.



Sunny Baudelaire, the youngest, liked to bite things. She was an infant, and very small for her age, scarcely larger than a boot. What she lacked in size, however, she made up for with the size and sharpness of her four teeth. Sunny was at an age where one mostly speaks in a series of unintelligible shrieks. Except when she used the few actual words in her vocabulary, like 'bottle', 'mommy' and 'bite', most people had trouble understanding what it was that Sunny was saying. For instance, this morning she was saying 'Gack!' over and over, which probably meant, 'Look at that mysterious figure emerging from the fog!'

Sure enough, in the distance along the misty shore of Briny Beach there could be seen a tall figure striding toward the Baudelaire children. Sunny had already been staring and shrieking at the figure for some time when Klaus looked up from the spiny crab he was examining, and saw it too. He reached over and touched Violet's arm, bringing her out of her inventing thoughts.

'Look at that,' Klaus said, and pointed toward the figure. It was drawing closer, and the children could see a few details. It was about the size of an adult, except its head was tall, and rather square.

'What do you think it is?' Violet asked.

'I don't know,' Klaus said, squinting at it, 'but it seems to be moving right toward us.'

Lemony Snicket

A Answer the questions.

1. What age was Violet?
2. What invention was Violet thinking about?
3. Was Klaus older or younger than the other two children?
4. Name two things Klaus had learned about in his parents' library.
5. What was Klaus doing just before he saw the mysterious figure?
6. How do we know Klaus is intelligent?
7. What sort of book do you think Klaus read to find out about Julius Caesar?
8. Do you think Klaus and Violet were good babysitters? Why?
9. What do you think Sunny was trying to say?
10. Who do you think the mysterious figure is?

B Fill in the blanks with the words from the word box.

crime	famous	serious	Rome	Pompey	July
murdered	powerful	Taxes	support	temples	Empire

Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar was such a _____ and important leader in Ancient _____ that they named a month after him – the month of _____. He wrote new laws and improved how to rule the Roman _____. The Roman Empire was in _____ trouble. Rome was overrun with _____ and people were afraid to leave their houses. _____ were high and the people were demanding that the government do something about it. The Romans trusted Caesar and he gained power through their _____. Caesar defeated _____, the greatest general in the Roman army, and chased him all the way to Egypt. Caesar became leader of Rome and the most _____ man in the world. He built new buildings and _____ in the city of Rome. Julius Caesar was _____ in 44BC by a group of Roman senators.



Prefixes (such as *con-*, *de-*, *re-*, *dis-*, and *in-*) can be used before a root word to make a new word.

Example: replay

C Insert the prefixes from the word box before the root words to solve these clues.

re-	de-	con-	dis-	in-
-----	-----	------	------	-----

1. To keep something is to ____tain it.
2. To make or build something is to ____struct it.
3. To put something on show or exhibit it is to ____play it.
4. To get some knowledge is to get ____formation.
5. To plan or to invent something is to ____vise it.