



THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

Chapter 1: Summer in the Garden

The opening chapter of **The Night of the Living Vines**, a Scaremoor middle grade horror novel, as a 914-word reading passage. It ends on a cliffhanger, so students finish wanting the next page.

WHAT'S INSIDE

1. The passage, with numbered paragraphs for citing evidence
2. 6 multiple-choice questions
3. Words in context and the author's similes
4. Two written responses and a prediction
5. Answer key

HOW TO USE IT

- Students read on their own or with a partner (about 10 minutes), then answer the questions.
- Every question names the paragraph to look back at.
- For grade 3, read it aloud and do the questions together.
- About 40 minutes in all. No prep.

WANT TO KEEP READING?

The Night of the Living Vines is book 2 of the Scaremoor series, for ages 8–12, in paperback and on Kindle. Find it at scaremoor.com or on Amazon (amazon.com/gp/product/B0DPT9X153). Every Scaremoor book is a standalone story, and every one is spooky but safe for school.





THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

Chapter 1: Summer in the Garden

Name: _____

Date: _____

- 1 The sun beat down on Lily's back while she kneeled in the dirt, pulling weeds from the edge of her family's garden. She loved summer. No school, no homework—just long, hot days spent outside. And since her family had the biggest garden on the block, it meant a lot of time digging in the dirt with her best friend, Samantha.
- 2 "You think your mom's trying to grow a jungle this year?" Samantha joked, her voice muffled as she tugged on a stubborn weed.
- 3 Lily glanced around the garden. It did look a little wild. The tomato plants were bigger than usual, their vines twisting and curling out of the wooden stakes her dad had set up. The squash plants sprawled across the ground like leafy green carpets. Even the flowers along the edge seemed taller and brighter than they had been last week.
- 4 "Yeah," Lily said, wiping sweat from her forehead. "Everything's growing like crazy this year. Must be all the rain we've had."
- 5 Samantha stood up and stretched. She was a little taller than Lily, with long brown hair she always kept in a ponytail. "Or maybe it's some kind of plant magic," she said with a grin. "Who knows?"
- 6 Lily laughed. "Yeah, right. If my mom had magic, she'd use it to clean the house, not grow giant tomatoes."
- 7 The two girls worked quietly for a while, pulling more weeds and trying to tame the wild vines that stretched across the garden. But as the afternoon wore on, Samantha started to notice something strange.
- 8 "Lily," she said slowly, pointing to the far corner of the garden. "Didn't we cut those vines back yesterday?"
- 9 Lily followed her friend's gaze and frowned. The vines that should have been trimmed were already creeping out again, stretching across the yard like long, green fingers.
- 10 "That's weird," Lily muttered. "I could've sworn we cut them."
- 11 Samantha shrugged. "Maybe we missed some. Want me to grab the clippers?"
- 12 "Yeah, good idea."

- 13** Samantha ran to the shed and returned with a pair of rusty garden clippers. She kneeled down and snipped at the nearest vine, but as soon as she cut one, another seemed to take its place.
- 14** "These things are growing fast," she said, raising an eyebrow. "Like, really fast."
- 15** Lily waved her off. "It's probably nothing. Plants grow fast when they get enough rain and sun."
- 16** "Yeah, but not this fast," Samantha insisted. She stood up and dusted off her knees, her eyes still on the wriggling vines. "I don't like it."
- 17** Lily stood up, too, and gave her friend a playful shove. "You're such a scaredy-cat. It's just a garden."
- 18** "I'm not scared," Samantha shot back, shoving her right back. "I just think it's...weird."
- 19** Lily rolled her eyes and started gathering their tools. "C'mon, let's go inside. It's getting too hot out here."
- 20** The girls put away the clippers and gloves and then made their way to the back porch. Lily's mom left a pitcher of lemonade on the table, and the girls poured themselves big glasses. They sat in the shade, sipping the cool, tangy drink while the afternoon breeze finally started to pick up.
- 21** Sitting there, something strange caught Samantha's eye. She nudged Lily with her elbow.
- 22** "Look," she whispered.
- 23** Lily turned to see what Samantha was pointing at. The vines—those thick, twisty green vines—were moving again. This time, they weren't just growing. It looked like they were...creeping.
- 24** One of the vines curled slowly across the yard, inching toward the fence like it had a mind of its own.
- 25** "Did you see that?" Samantha asked, her voice low.
- 26** Lily stared at the vine, her heart pounding just a little harder than normal. For a second, she thought she saw it too. The way the vine seemed to slither across the grass—it didn't look natural.
- 27** But then she shook her head. "It's just the wind," she said, trying to sound confident. "Plants can't move by themselves, Sam. You're imagining things."
- 28** Samantha frowned, her eyes still locked on the creeping vine. "Yeah...maybe."
- 29** But she didn't sound convinced.
- 30** The rest of the afternoon passed quickly, and soon, the sun started to dip behind the trees, casting long shadows across the yard. The girls didn't mention the vines again, but the feeling of doubt lingered between them.
- 31** "I better get going," Samantha said as she packed up her bag. "My mom'll freak if I'm late for dinner."
- 32** "Okay, see you tomorrow," Lily replied, but her mind was still on the garden.

- 33** Samantha walked down the driveway and Lily took one last look at the yard. The garden sat there, quiet and still. Nothing out of the ordinary. Just plants.
- 34** Right?
- 35** That night, after dinner, Lily lay in bed, staring at the ceiling. She couldn't shake the feeling that something was off. Samantha had been right—the vines were growing too fast, and the way they moved...it didn't feel like the wind.
- 36** She tossed and turned, trying to push the thoughts out of her mind. But just when she started to drift off to sleep, something startled her.
- 37** A sound. A faint rustling, like dry leaves scraping across the ground.
- 38** Lily's eyes flew open. She listened, her heart thumping in her ears.
- 39** There it was again. A soft *shhh...shhh...* coming from outside her window.
- 40** Slowly, she pushed back the covers and crept to the window. She pulled the curtain aside, just a crack, and peered out into the yard.
- 41** Her breath caught in her throat.
- 42** The vines.
- 43** They were moving!



THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

Look back at the passage. Each question tells you which paragraph to check.

Name: _____

Date: _____

PART A: WHAT HAPPENED?

Circle the best answer.

1. Why does Lily love summer? (paragraph 1)

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. She goes to camp every year. | B. There's no school or homework, just long days outside. |
| C. Her birthday is in July. | D. She gets to visit her grandma. |

2. What does Lily think is making the garden grow so much? (paragraph 4)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. New plant food | B. Her mom's magic |
| C. All the rain they've had | D. Special seeds from the shed |

3. What strange thing does Samantha notice in the far corner of the garden? (paragraph 8)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. The vines they cut back yesterday are already creeping out again. | B. Someone has stepped on the tomato plants. |
| C. The flowers have all turned brown. | D. A new plant is growing out of the fence. |

4. What happens when Samantha cuts a vine with the clippers? (paragraph 13)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. The vine bleeds green juice. | B. The clippers break. |
| C. The vine wraps around her wrist. | D. Another vine seems to take its place. |

5. How does Lily explain the vine moving across the yard? (paragraph 27)

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. She says Samantha pushed it. | B. She says it's just the wind. |
| C. She says a cat is under it. | D. She says her dad is moving the hose. |

6. What wakes Lily up that night? (paragraph 37)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Her mom calling her name | B. Thunder |
| C. A faint rustling, like dry leaves scraping the ground | D. Samantha knocking on the window |





THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

PART B: WORDS IN CONTEXT

Find each word in its paragraph. Use the words around it to figure out what it means.

7. **sprawled** (paragraph 3) means:

8. **insisted** (paragraph 16) means:

9. **lingered** (paragraph 30) means:

PART C: THE AUTHOR'S SIMILES

A simile compares two things using *like* or *as*. Explain what each one means.

10. *"The squash plants sprawled across the ground like leafy green carpets."* (paragraph 3)

11. *"The vines that should have been trimmed were already creeping out again, stretching across the yard like long, green fingers."* (paragraph 9)





THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

PART D: THINK IT THROUGH

Answer in complete sentences. Name the paragraph your evidence comes from.

12. How do Lily and Samantha react differently to the vines? Use evidence from two paragraphs.

13. How do Lily's feelings change from the afternoon to that night? Use evidence.

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The chapter ends with "They were moving!" What do you think the vines will do next? Use two clues from the chapter.





THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

Look back at the passage. Each question tells you which paragraph to check.

PART A: WHAT HAPPENED?

Circle the best answer.

1. Why does Lily love summer? (paragraph 1)

A. She goes to camp every year.

B. There's no school or homework, just long days outside. ✓

C. Her birthday is in July.

D. She gets to visit her grandma.

2. What does Lily think is making the garden grow so much? (paragraph 4)

A. New plant food

B. Her mom's magic

C. All the rain they've had ✓

D. Special seeds from the shed

3. What strange thing does Samantha notice in the far corner of the garden? (paragraph 8)

A. The vines they cut back yesterday are already creeping out again. ✓

B. Someone has stepped on the tomato plants.

C. The flowers have all turned brown.

D. A new plant is growing out of the fence.

4. What happens when Samantha cuts a vine with the clippers? (paragraph 13)

A. The vine bleeds green juice.

B. The clippers break.

C. The vine wraps around her wrist.

D. Another vine seems to take its place. ✓

5. How does Lily explain the vine moving across the yard? (paragraph 27)

A. She says Samantha pushed it.

B. She says it's just the wind. ✓

C. She says a cat is under it.

D. She says her dad is moving the hose.

6. What wakes Lily up that night? (paragraph 37)

A. Her mom calling her name

B. Thunder

C. A faint rustling, like dry leaves scraping the ground ✓

D. Samantha knocking on the window





THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

PART B: WORDS IN CONTEXT

Find each word in its paragraph. Use the words around it to figure out what it means.

7. **sprawled** (paragraph 3) means:

spread out in a loose, untidy way

8. **insisted** (paragraph 16) means:

said firmly that something was true, even when someone disagreed

9. **lingered** (paragraph 30) means:

stayed around and didn't go away

PART C: THE AUTHOR'S SIMILES

A simile compares two things using *like* or *as*. Explain what each one means.

10. "The squash plants sprawled across the ground like leafy green carpets." (paragraph 3)

The squash plants are spread out so wide they cover the ground.

11. "The vines that should have been trimmed were already creeping out again, stretching across the yard like long, green fingers." (paragraph 9)

The vines reach across the yard in a creepy way, like they're grabbing for something.





THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING VINES

PART D: THINK IT THROUGH

Answer in complete sentences. Name the paragraph your evidence comes from.

12. How do Lily and Samantha react differently to the vines? Use evidence from two paragraphs.

Samantha worries: she notices the vines first (8), says “I don’t like it” (16) and “I just think it’s...weird” (18). Lily brushes it off: “It’s probably nothing” (15), calls Samantha a scaredy-cat (17), and says “It’s just the wind” (27).

13. How do Lily’s feelings change from the afternoon to that night? Use evidence.

In the afternoon she is sure it’s nothing (15, 27). That night she can’t shake the feeling that something is off (35), her heart thumps (38), and her breath catches when she sees the vines (41).

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The chapter ends with “They were moving!” What do you think the vines will do next? Use two clues from the chapter.

Answers will vary. Strong predictions use clues such as how fast the vines grow back (13–14), the vine creeping toward the fence (24), or the shhh sound outside Lily’s window (39).

