

Answers

1. According to the poem, what is Humpty?

- egg
- soldier
- cannonball**
- king
- wall
- castle

2. Why do you think the poem starts with: 'We all know how the story goes'?

Children's own responses, such as: The poem starts this way because it assumes the reader knows the original 'Humpty Dumpty' nursery rhyme. It is the poet's way of introducing the reader to this newer version.

3. Why does Humpty shout "I will blast them to kingdom come!"?

Children's own responses, such as: He wants to reassure his friends that he will protect them. He is also having fun with them here, because he has no intention of fighting. Humpty gets enjoyment from betraying and lying to his friends. Giving them false confidence in this way shows how cruel Humpty is.

4. Why did the Cavaliers think they were the ones to be feared?

The Cavaliers thought they were the ones to be feared because they had 'The biggest cannon; the biggest ball', and Humpty said he would "blast them (the enemy) to kingdom come!"

5. "'Quick! Fire now!" his friends were crying'. Describe what you think Humpty's friends were thinking and feeling at this point in the poem.

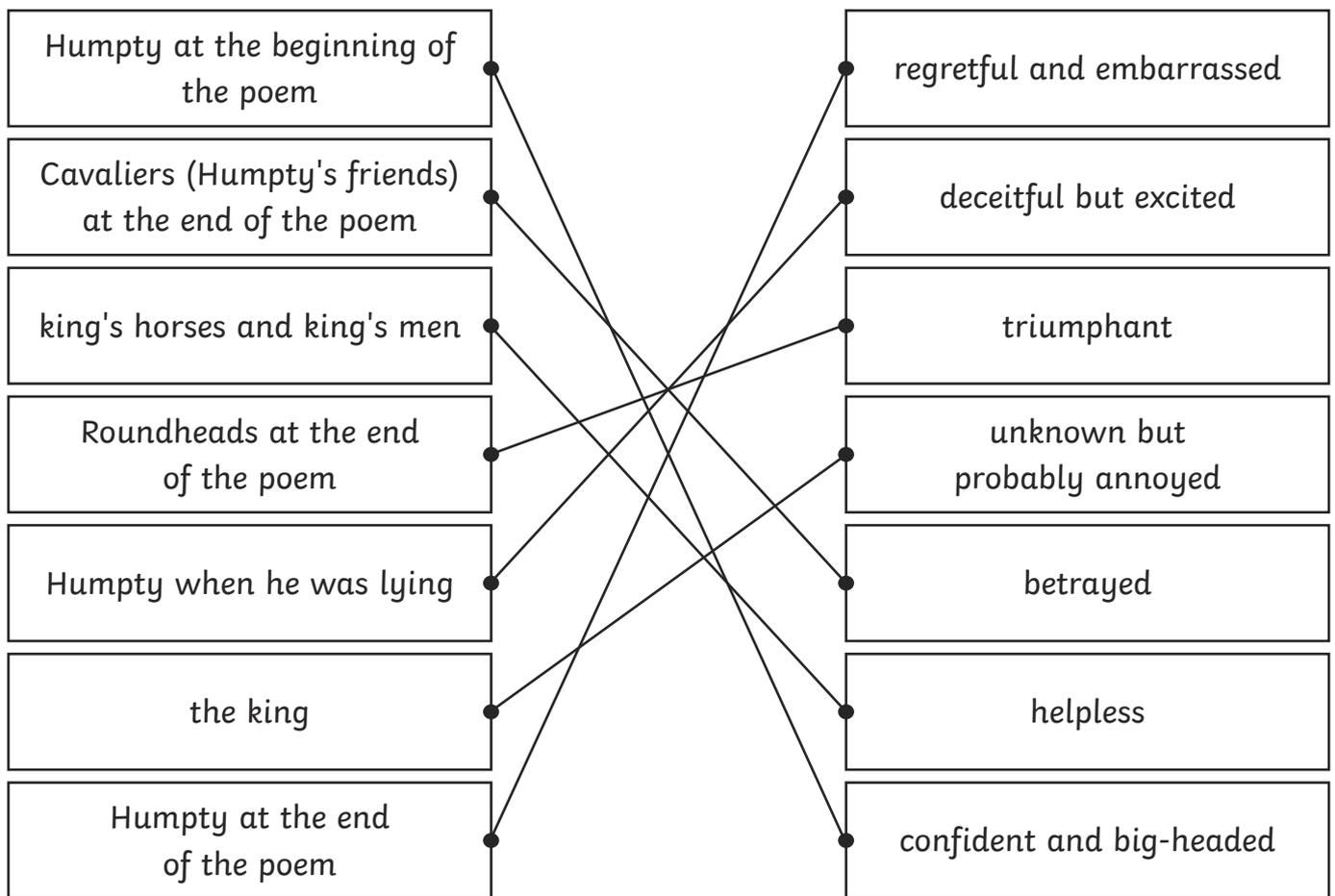
Children's own responses, such as: They were getting worried (or similar emotions) because Humpty was taking so long to fire. They were scared (or similar feelings) they might lose the battle and die. Some of them may have begun to feel betrayed.

6. 'from a simple Roundhead's point of view
smashing him was quite the **coup!**'

What do you think the word 'coup' means?

An unexpected triumph or victory.

7. Link the characters to how they may be feeling in the poem.



8. Sum up the final fifteen lines in no more than three sentences.

Humpty falls off the crumbling wall, cracks his head and lies in pieces with his friends dead all around him. The king's men and horses try to put him together again but they can't.

9. In the end, Humpty is described as a 'rotten egg'. Why is that an apt description?

In the original nursery rhyme, Humpty Dumpty is an egg that falls and cracks open. A 'bad egg' is a bad person who does awful things and is rotten inside, so calling him a 'rotten egg' can have more than one meaning. Humpty is also shaped a bit like an egg.

10. What does the poem show us about Humpty's character? Use evidence from the text in your answer.

Children's own responses, such as: He is quite a mean and selfish character (or similar characteristics), because he thought of himself and betrayed his friends; He is untrustworthy and lies a lot, because he lied to his friends about shooting at the enemy while pretending to be on their side. He isn't very clever (and doesn't think things through very well), because he hadn't taken into consideration that the Roundheads would still think he was their enemy.