

The Secret Garden

Frances Hodgson Burnett

Why does Burnett make Mary's discovery feel like both an accident and an invitation?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	The robin, the wind, and the hidden door
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Chapter VIII · The Robin Who Showed the Way
START	“You showed me where the key was yesterday,” she said. “You ought to show me the door today; but I don’t believe you know!”
END	She was standing inside the secret garden.
PASSAGE ID	sec-sg-02

THE MOVE

Read coincidence as purposeful narrative design

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Mary’s discovery of the secret garden depends on several accidental-seeming events—the robin, the key, the wind—but Burnett arranges them so they feel as though the garden is actively drawing Mary toward it. Coincidence begins to resemble invitation.

MARK

Number the apparently accidental events that lead Mary toward the door. Beside each, write what it contributes—direction, key, opening, or timing. Star the event that feels least accidental by the time Mary enters.

NOTICE

- Which parts of the discovery could plausibly happen by chance?
- How does Burnett repeat the robin’s role so that coincidence begins to feel purposeful?
- What changes when Mary starts treating the garden as something that might want to be found?

THINK

Answer provisionally: Why does Burnett make Mary’s discovery feel like both an accident and an invitation? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: Why does Burnett make Mary’s discovery feel like both an accident and an invitation? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	The discovery feels accidental because the robin, key, and wind could each be chance events, but their sequence is arranged so that the garden seems to guide Mary toward itself. Repetition makes coincidence feel purposeful.
EVIDENCE	Number the events that lead to the door and explain what each contributes—direction, key, exposure, or timing.
WATCH FOR	Do not claim the garden literally has agency unless the text says so. Explain how narrative design makes chance feel like invitation.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

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Why does Burnett make Mary's discovery feel like both an accident and an invitation?

START ANCHOR	"You showed me where the key was yesterday," she said. "You ought to show me the door today; but I don't believe you know!"
END ANCHOR	She was standing inside the secret garden.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Number the apparently accidental events that lead Mary toward the door. Beside each, write what it contributes—direction, key, opening, or timing. Star the event that feels least accidental by the time Mary enters.
2. NOTICE - Which parts of the discovery could plausibly happen by chance? How does Burnett repeat the robin's role so that coincidence begins to feel purposeful? What changes when Mary starts treating the garden as something that might want to be found?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: Why does Burnett make Mary's discovery feel like both an accident and an invitation?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.