

‘Stand clear,’ Mr Kranky said.

George was quite alarmed. He stood up and ran back a few paces. The jets of white steam kept squirting out of the skinny old hag’s head, and the whistling was so high and shrill it hurt the ears.

‘Call the fire-brigade!’ cried Mrs Kranky. ‘Call the police! Man the hose-pipes!’

‘Too late,’ said Mr Kranky, looking pleased.

‘Grandma!’ shrieked Mrs Kranky. ‘Mother! Run to the drinking-trough and put your head under the water!’

But even as she spoke, the whistling suddenly stopped and the steam disappeared. That was when Grandma began to get smaller. She had started off with her head as high as the roof of the house, but now she was coming down fast.

‘Watch this, George!’ Mr Kranky shouted, hopping around the yard and flapping his arms.

‘Watch what happens when someone’s had fifty

spoonfuls instead of one!’

Very soon, Grandma was back to normal height.

‘Stop!’ cried Mrs Kranky. ‘That’s just right.’



But she didn’t stop. Smaller and smaller she got ... down and down she went. In another half minute she was no bigger than a bottle of lemonade.



‘How d’you feel, Mother?’ asked Mrs Kranky anxiously.

Grandma’s tiny face still bore the same foul and furious expression it had always had. Her eyes, no bigger now than little keyholes, were blazing with anger. ‘How do I *feel*?’ she yelled. ‘How d’you *think*

I feel? How would *you* feel if you’d been a glorious giant a minute ago and suddenly you’re a miserable midget?’

‘She’s still going!’ shouted Mr Kranky gleefully.

‘She’s still getting smaller!’

And by golly, she was.



When she was no bigger than a cigarette, Mrs Kranky made a grab for her. She held her in her hands and she cried, 'How do I stop her getting

smaller still?'

'You can't,' said Mr Kranky. 'She's had fifty times the right amount.'

'I *must* stop her!' Mrs Kranky wailed. 'I can hardly see her as it is!'

'Catch hold of each end and pull,' Mr Kranky said.

By then, Grandma was the size of a matchstick and still shrinking fast.



A moment later, she was no bigger than a pin ...



Then a pumpkin seed ...



Then ...



Then ...



'Where is she?' cried Mrs Kranky. 'I've lost her!'

'Hooray,' said Mr Kranky.

'She's gone! She's disappeared completely!' cried Mrs Kranky.

'That's what happens to you if you're grumpy and bad-tempered,' said Mr Kranky. 'Great medicine of yours, George.'

George didn't know what to think.

For a few minutes, Mrs Kranky kept wandering round with a puzzled look on her face, saying, 'Mother, where are you? Where've you gone? Where've you got to? How can I find you?' But she calmed down quite quickly. And by lunchtime, she was saying, 'Ah well, I suppose it's all for the best,

really. She was a bit of a nuisance around the house, wasn't she?'



'Yes,' Mr Kranky said. 'She most certainly was.'



‘Yes,’ Mr Kranky said. ‘She most certainly was.’
George didn’t say a word. He felt quite trembly.
He knew something tremendous had taken place
that morning. For a few brief moments he had

touched with the very tips of his fingers the edge of
a magic world.



Task 1 – answer the questions below:

1.) “the whistling was so high and shrill it hurt his ears.”

What do you think the word ‘shrill’ means? Have a guess from the context of the sentence and then look it up to see if you are right.

2.) As the grandmother was getting smaller, how did these characters feel about it?

Mrs Kranky	The grandmother	Mr Kranky

3.) How did Mrs Kranky feel about what happened to the grandmother in the end?

4.) What did you think about the story? Which was your favourite part and why?