



The Cook-up

In the kitchen, George put the saucepan on the stove and turned up the gas flame underneath it as high as it would go.

‘George!’ came the awful voice from the next room. ‘It’s time for my medicine!’

‘Not yet, Grandma,’ George called back. ‘There’s still twenty minutes before eleven o’clock.’

‘What mischief are you up to in there now?’ Granny screeched. ‘I hear noises.’

George thought it best not to answer this one. He found a long wooden spoon in a kitchen drawer and began stirring hard. The stuff in the pot got hotter

and hotter.



Soon the marvellous mixture began to froth and foam. A rich blue smoke, the colour of peacocks, rose from the surface of the liquid, and a fiery fearsome smell filled the kitchen. It made George choke and splutter. It was a smell unlike any he had smelled before. It was a brutal and bewitching smell, spicy and staggering, fierce and frenzied, full of wizardry and magic. Whenever he got a whiff of it up his nose, firecrackers went off in his skull and electric prickles ran along the backs of his legs. It was wonderful to stand there stirring this amazing mixture and to watch it smoking blue and bubbling and frothing and foaming as though it were alive. At

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one point, he could have sworn he saw bright sparks flashing in the swirling foam.



And suddenly, George found himself dancing around the steaming pot, chanting strange words that came into his head out of nowhere:

'Fiery broth and witch's brew
Foamy froth and riches blue
Fume and spume and spoondrift spray

Fizzle swizzle shout hooray
Watch it sloshing, swashing, splashing
Hear it hissing, squishing, spissing
Grandma better start to pray.'



Brown Paint

George turned off the heat under the saucepan. He must leave plenty of time for it to cool down.

When all the steam and froth had gone away, he peered into the giant pan to see what colour the great medicine now was. It was a deep and brilliant blue.

'It needs more brown in it,' George said. 'It simply must be brown or she'll get suspicious.'

George ran outside and dashed into his father's toolshed where all the paints were kept. There was a row of cans on the shelf, all colours, black, green, red, pink, white and brown. He reached for the can

of brown. The label said simply DARK BROWN GLOSS PAINT ONE QUART. He took a screwdriver and prised off the lid. The can was three-quarters full. He rushed it back to the kitchen. He poured the whole lot into the saucepan. The saucepan was now full to the brim. Very gently, George stirred the paint into the mixture with the long wooden spoon. Ah-ha! It was all turning brown! A lovely rich creamy brown!

‘Where’s that medicine of mine, boy?!’ came the voice from the living-room. ‘You’re forgetting me! You’re doing it on purpose! I shall tell your mother!’

‘I’m not forgetting you, Grandma,’ George called back. ‘I’m thinking of you all the time. But there are still ten minutes to go.’

‘You’re a nasty little maggot!’ the voice screeched back. ‘You’re a lazy and disobedient little worm, and you’re growing too fast.’

George fetched the bottle of Grandma’s real medicine from the sideboard. He took out the cork and tipped it all down the sink. He then filled the bottle with his own magic mixture by dipping a small jug into the saucepan and using it as a pourer. He replaced the cork.



Had it cooled down enough yet? Not quite. He held the bottle under the cold tap for a couple of minutes. The label came off in the wet but that didn’t matter. He dried the bottle with a dish-cloth.

All was now ready!

This was it!

The great moment had arrived!

‘Medicine time, Grandma!’ he called out.

‘I should hope so, too,’ came the grumpy reply. The silver tablespoon in which the medicine was always given lay ready on the kitchen side-board. George picked it up.

Holding the spoon in one hand and the bottle in the other, he advanced into the living-room.

Task – please answer the following questions.

1. In the chapter called 'Cook-up', what adjectives (describing words) does Roald Dahl use to describe what the mixture **smells** like? Write down as many as you can.
2. **Find and copy** pairs of words, in George's song, that rhyme. Find as many as you can.
3. Why do you think George starts dancing?
4. In the chapter, 'Brown Paint', why would Grandma be suspicious if the medicine was blue?
5. How do you think George is feeling as he enters the living room? Give a reason for your answer.