Gadget Girl

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Illustrations by Wayne Bryant



PM

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Gadget Girl

Level 28

Running Words 4404 **Text Type** Narrative (Imaginative)

Curriculum Area Literacy

Retelling to encourage critical thinking about the content

Ask each student to retell the story in his or her own words.

Record the retelling for further discussion and reflection.

Questions to reinforce meaning and stimulate discussion

Literal

1 Why had Alex never seen inside her family's laboratory before?

2 What do the letters in the word *NICE* represent?

3 Why was Director Jones seeking assistance from Alex's dad?

Inferential

4 Why did Mum sound tense during the phone call early in the morning?

5 Why wasn't Alex aware of her parents' previous jobs?

6 Why did Dad throw his watch into the bin in Room 333?

7 Why were the children in the hotel lobby wearing clothes that were too big?

8 Why did Alex tell the two small boys she was *"checking the fence"*?

9 Why did Dr Slime want Alex's dad to make a batch of the antidote for him?

10 Why did Dad tell Alex that the laser was perfect for destroying the formula?

Applied Knowledge

11 What characteristics does Alex have that would help her work successfully with Director Jones?

12 What type of inventions might Alex develop in the future?

13 What could happen in the future if scientists developed formulas to change people's ages?

Vocabulary

Replace the adjective 'sophisticated' in this sentence:
She turned around, looking in amazement at the sophisticated laboratory.

Links with other PM Guided Reading Books and Cards

Levels 29/30 Book Play *The Red Diamond* and *Alex's Secret Mission*

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Chapter 1

The Phone Call

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The day began like most days. Alexandra James – known as Alex to her family and friends – woke up early. She had a shower, got dressed and sat down to breakfast. The only unusual thing about the day was that her class was going on a field trip to the botanical gardens.

"Now, Alex," said Mum, "make sure you wear your shoes with the auto-adjusting heels. You could be walking up and down hills. And take a self-drying jacket. According to the weather forecast, there might be some showers."

The special clothes came from Gumshoe Gadgets. That was the shop that Alex's family owned. Alex ran up to her room to get the clothes as soon as she finished breakfast.

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When Alex came back down, Mum was making sandwiches at the kitchen bench.

Alex looked on in surprise. Making her school lunch was usually Dad's job. Because he was an inventor, he always put interesting fillings in her sandwiches.

Speaking of Dad, why hadn't he been at breakfast this morning? It was oddly quiet without him.

Just then, the phone rang. The call was for Alex's dad. Alex heard her mother say that Dad had gone in early to Gumshoe Gadgets. Alex's mother was quiet for a long time while the other person spoke. Then she said "Yes" and "No" a few times. She sounded tense.

After the phone call, Mum seemed a little distracted. She stared out the window as she pushed the leftover cheese into the bread bin. Then, she slid the bread into the dishwasher and loaded Alex's lunch into her own handbag.

"Mum!" said Alex. "Are you all right?!"

"Goodness me," said Mum, moving everything to the right places. "I was just thinking about what I have to do at work today."

Mum glanced at the kitchen clock. "Oh, look at the time. We'd better hurry or you will be late for school."

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Mum worked at Gumshoe Gadgets, too, and it wasn't far from school. She usually took Alex to school on her way to work.

Alex pulled on her shoes, picked up her jacket and backpack and ran out the door after Mum, the heels of her special shoes auto-adjusting with each step.

It wasn't until Mum dropped her off at the school gate that Alex realised she was over half an hour early.



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After school, Alex walked to Gumshoe Gadgets to meet Mum and Dad. She couldn't wait to tell them about the trip to the botanical gardens.

She had seen so many amazing plants. Alex had always loved science, and she had learned a lot on the field trip. She was full of suggestions for Dad's next inventions. What about a formula that could turn a seedling into a tree overnight? Or a gadget that could turn any smell into the scent of roses?

"Mum! Dad!" called Alex, as she opened the shop door.

She looked past the shop's display cabinets to the front counter, but no one was there. The door behind, marked "STAFF ONLY", was slightly ajar.

Alex walked through and looked around. There was no sign of Mum or Dad. She was just about to call out again when the door to the cleaning cupboard opened and Mum emerged. She looked surprised to see Alex, as though she had forgotten what time it was. Mum was obviously having trouble reading clocks today.

"What's that terrible smell?" asked Mum, wrinkling her nose and looking around.

Alex checked the bottom of her shoes, in case she'd stepped in something.

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"No, no! It's something in there," said Mum, pointing back towards the cleaning cupboard. "I must have left the burner on."

"A burner in a cupboard?" asked Alex, puzzled.

Mum pushed the door open, and Alex leaned around her to peer inside. This cupboard was usually locked, and Alex had never wondered what was inside. She expected it would be boring brooms, buckets and bottles of cleaning liquid. Instead, the door seemed to lead to another room.

Wide-eyed, she followed Mum inside.



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Alex thinks that her family is totally normal – other than the hi-tech gadgets they sell in their shop, like X-ray binoculars and self-drying jackets. But when her dad goes missing, Alex learns an amazing secret about her parents. Now, Alex is going to have to use all of her best gadgets to help rescue her dad, and stop the evil Dr Slime from achieving world domination.



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