

Burglar and real estate agent

The two boys ran until they came to the driveway.

“See, I told you today was good for skipping school,” said Mark. “Mum is never home on Thursday,” he added.

Tall hedges hid the house from the road so the pair strolled across the finely landscaped yard. “I never knew your place was so big,” said Pete. “Yeah, but it’s much nicer now than it used to be since we put the new family room on the back and put in an air conditioner”.

There were front and back doors, and a side door which led to the garage. The garage was empty except for three parked mountain bikes.

They went in the side door, Mark explaining that it was always open in case his younger sisters got home earlier than their mother.

Pete wanted to see the house, so Mark started with the formal living room. It, like the rest of downstairs, was newly painted. Mark turned on the stereo, but the noise worried Pete.

“Don’t worry, the nearest house is half a kilometre away,” Mark shouted.

Pete felt more comfortable observing that no houses could be seen in any direction beyond the large yard.

The dining room, with all the china, silver and cut glass, was no place to play, so the boys moved to the kitchen where they made sandwiches. Mark said they couldn’t go into the cellar because it had been damp and musty ever since the new plumbing had been installed.

“This is where my Dad keeps his famous paintings and coin collection”, Mark said as they peered into the study. Mark bragged that he could get spending money whenever he wanted, ever since he had discovered a wad of notes in the desk drawer.

There were three upstairs bedrooms. Mark showed Peter his mother’s closet and the locked box which held her jewellery. His sister’s room was uninteresting, except for a laptop computer, which Mark carried to his room. Mark bragged that the bathroom in the hall was his, because his sisters’ room had an ensuite bathroom. The big highlight in Mark’s room, however, was a leak in the ceiling where the old roof had finally rotted.

(Adapted from Anderson, 1979)

Group 1: Pretend you are a burglar. Read the story and underline the five most important points.

Group 2: Pretend you are a real estate agent. Read the story and underline the five most important points.