

The Midnight Orchestra

A Fleydo English School Story

A2 Level | Kids (6-10) | Reading | Story | 14 Pages

Ellie can never sleep. One night at midnight, she creeps downstairs and discovers that every object in her house plays music — the clock drums, the kettle whistles melodies, and the coat stand conducts. The orchestra is missing one thing: a singer. When Ellie joins in, the music becomes complete. But staying up every night has consequences, and Ellie must learn that music lives everywhere — not just at midnight.

Learning Objectives

- Read and understand an A2-level adventure story (14 pages)
- Learn 15 new vocabulary words in context
- Practise vocabulary with matching and fill-in-the-blank exercises
- Test reading comprehension with 10 multiple-choice questions
- Discuss themes: music, self-expression, and finding where you belong

1 Read the Story

Chapter 1: The Girl Who Couldn't Sleep

Ellie had never been a good sleeper. While her brother fell asleep in thirty seconds and her parents began snoring immediately, Ellie lay awake for hours. She counted sheep. She counted stars. She counted the ticks of the old grandfather clock.

But lately, something strange had been happening. Every night, just before midnight, the sounds in the house changed. The ticking got louder and faster. The pipes hummed. The stairs creaked even though nobody was walking on them.

And then, exactly at midnight, Ellie heard music. Not from a radio. The music was coming from inside the house.

Chapter 2: The Discovery

On Friday night, Ellie decided to find out the truth. She waited until the clock struck twelve, then tiptoed downstairs.

What she saw made her stop breathing. The grandfather clock was playing drums — its pendulum swinging like a drumstick. The kettle was whistling a beautiful melody like a silver flute. The broom was sweeping the floor in rhythm. The curtains swayed like dancers, and the bookshelf hummed a deep bass line.

Standing in the middle, waving his hooks like a conductor, was the coat stand.

“Oh dear,” said the clock in a deep voice. “She’s awake.”

The coat stand bowed politely. “Welcome to the Midnight Orchestra.”

Chapter 3: The Missing Singer

The coat stand explained: “Every night at midnight, we play. We have been playing for a hundred years. Music is how objects feel alive.”

But the orchestra had a problem. “We have drums, melody, rhythm, and bass. But we have never had a voice. Without a singer, our music is incomplete.”

Ellie protested. “But I’m not a good singer. I always stand in the back row of the choir.”

“That is because you sing someone else’s songs,” the kettle said. “Tonight, sing YOUR song. Close your eyes and sing what you feel.”

Ellie closed her eyes. The music surrounded her, warm and beautiful. She opened her mouth and sang. She didn’t know the words or the tune. But the music told her what to sing. Her voice rose and fell with the melody, weaving between the instruments like a golden thread.

When the song ended, the clock applauded by swinging its pendulum fast. The kettle whistled with joy. The broom danced in circles.

“That was the most beautiful sound this house has ever heard,” the coat stand said.

Chapter 4: The Concert

From that night on, Ellie crept downstairs every night at midnight. They played for exactly one hour, and every night the music got better. Her voice became stronger and clearer.

The orchestra grew too. The kitchen taps played tinkling percussion. The shutters clapped along. Even the old piano opened its lid and began playing itself.

Every night, Ellie’s ordinary house became the most extraordinary concert hall in the world.

Chapter 5: The Problem

But Ellie was exhausted. Staying up until one o’clock and waking at seven for school was destroying her. She fell asleep in maths. She fell asleep during lunch. She missed her bus stop three times.

Her mother noticed. Her teacher was worried. Ellie was lying to everyone she loved.

One night she told the orchestra she had to stop. The clock nodded sadly. “We would never want to hurt you. But we will miss your voice.”

Ellie cried herself to sleep.

Chapter 6: Music Lives Everywhere

The next morning, walking to school feeling sad, Ellie heard something. A bird singing — the same melody the kettle played. The wind made the broom’s rhythm through the leaves. A man tapped his foot. Traffic lights clicked. A child hummed.

The whole world was an orchestra. She had just never noticed it before. The Midnight Orchestra hadn’t given her music. It had given her the ability to HEAR music everywhere.

That afternoon in choir, Ellie walked to the front row. She closed her eyes, listened to the piano, and sang the solo. When she finished, Mrs. Davies said, “Ellie, where has that voice been hiding?”

She didn’t need the Midnight Orchestra. The music had been inside her all along.

That night, just before she fell asleep, the grandfather clock played a soft lullaby just for her. “Goodnight, Ellie.” “Goodnight,” she whispered back.

The End

The whole world is an orchestra. You just have to listen.

Music is everywhere — in the rain, in footsteps, in laughter. And your voice is the instrument the world is waiting for.

2 Key Vocabulary

These words from the story will help you improve your English.

Word	Type	Definition	Example
orchestra	<i>noun</i>	a large group of musicians playing together	<i>The house objects formed a Midnight Orchestra.</i>
melody	<i>noun</i>	musical notes that make a tune	<i>The kettle played a beautiful melody.</i>
rhythm	<i>noun</i>	a regular pattern of beats	<i>The broom swept a perfect rhythm.</i>
instrument	<i>noun</i>	an object used to make music	<i>Every object was a musical instrument.</i>
conductor	<i>noun</i>	a person who leads an orchestra	<i>The coat stand was the conductor.</i>
harmony	<i>noun</i>	different notes sounding beautiful together	<i>All the objects played in perfect harmony.</i>
creaked	<i>verb</i>	made a low sound when moving	<i>The old stairs creaked at night.</i>
tiptoed	<i>verb</i>	walked quietly on the tips of toes	<i>Ellie tiptoed down the stairs.</i>
whispered	<i>verb</i>	spoke very quietly	<i>The clock whispered goodnight to Ellie.</i>
swayed	<i>verb</i>	moved gently side to side	<i>The curtains swayed like dancers.</i>
amazed	<i>adj</i>	very surprised and wondering	<i>Ellie was amazed by the music.</i>
audience	<i>noun</i>	people watching a performance	<i>The audience was just Ellie.</i>
applauded	<i>verb</i>	clapped to show enjoyment	<i>The clock applauded by swinging fast.</i>
exhausted	<i>adj</i>	extremely tired with no energy	<i>Ellie was exhausted from late nights.</i>
ordinary	<i>adj</i>	normal; not special at first glance	<i>Her ordinary house became a concert hall.</i>

3 Fill in the Blanks

Choose the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. Ellie _____ down the stairs quietly so nobody would hear.
2. The grandfather clock kept a perfect _____ like a drummer.
3. The kettle played a beautiful _____ like a flute.
4. The coat stand was the _____ of the Midnight Orchestra.
5. All the objects played in perfect _____.
6. Ellie was _____ when she saw the objects making music.
7. The old wooden stairs _____ even though nobody walked on them.
8. The curtains _____ gently from side to side like dancers.
9. After weeks of staying up late, Ellie was completely _____.
10. Ellie discovered music lives in _____ everyday things.

Answer Key:

1. tiptoed

2. rhythm

3. melody

4. conductor

5. harmony

6. amazed

7. creaked

8. swayed

9. exhausted

10. ordinary

4 Comprehension Quiz

Choose the correct answer for each question.

Question 1. Why couldn't Ellie sleep?

- A. She was scared
- B. She heard strange music in the house
- C. Uncomfortable bed
- D. Noisy brother

Question 2. What happened at midnight?

- A. Lights turned on
- B. House objects played music
- C. Parents woke up
- D. TV turned on

Question 3. What instrument did the clock play?

- A. Piano
- B. Guitar
- C. Drums
- D. Violin

Question 4. Who was the conductor?

- A. Rocking chair
- B. Kettle
- C. Coat stand
- D. Broom

Question 5. What was missing from the orchestra?

- A. A piano
- B. A singer
- C. A guitar
- D. A drummer

Question 6. What happened when Ellie first sang?

- A. Objects stopped
- B. Everyone loved it
- C. Music got worse
- D. She forgot words

Question 7. Why did Ellie stop visiting the orchestra?

- A. Objects asked her to leave
- B. Too exhausted from late nights
- C. Didn't like music anymore
- D. Parents found out

Question 8. What did Ellie discover about music?

- A. Only exists at midnight
- B. Is everywhere all the time
- C. Only objects make it
- D. Only in concert halls

Question 9. What did Ellie do at choir?

- A. Sat in back
- B. Left choir
- C. Sang the solo at the front
- D. Played piano

Question 10. What is the main lesson?

- A. Houses are magical
- B. Music is everywhere and your voice matters
- C. Never stay up late
- D. Clocks can talk

5 Quiz Answer Key

Q	Correct Answer
1	B. She heard strange music in the house
2	B. House objects played music
3	C. Drums
4	C. Coat stand
5	B. A singer
6	B. Everyone loved it
7	B. Too exhausted from late nights
8	B. Is everywhere all the time
9	C. Sang the solo at the front
10	B. Music is everywhere and your voice matters