

Talk a Lot

Politics

Multi-Purpose Text

Tough at the Top (Original Text)

Line

1 After school on Monday, Maggie had another meeting of the “Magic Holidays
2 Committee”, which she chairs. The aim of the committee is to raise money for school
3 trips for less-privileged pupils. Malcolm, the main fundraiser, made some astonishing
4 allegations about Tim, the treasurer, announcing that Tim had stolen forty pounds
5 from committee funds. Tim denied it, but by Tuesday afternoon Malcolm had given
6 Maggie an ultimatum: “Either he goes or I quit!” Maggie was under intense pressure
7 because Malcolm was a very good fundraiser. What’s more, she couldn’t believe that
8 Tim would steal from them. Besides, she knew that Malcolm had been trying to get
9 the treasurer’s job for a few months. Malcolm continued to threaten, but Maggie kept
10 a cool head, and demanded evidence of misconduct. On Thursday Tim unexpectedly
11 resigned from his post and Maggie’s heart sank. She heard from Kim, a trusted
12 colleague on the committee, that Malcolm had discovered documents proving that
13 Tim *had* unlawfully taken committee money for his own use. By close of play on
14 Friday Maggie had heard a full confession from Tim, who claimed that he had only
15 *borrowed* the cash “...to help my sister pay back her student loan debt.” Tim was
16 sacked from the committee and Kim was voted into the role. Malcolm said for the
17 record that he had only acted in the interests of the committee and he stayed on as
18 main fundraiser. Maggie felt a weight lifting when the weekend finally got underway.
19 “It’s true what they say, mum,” she told Kathleen on Friday evening after a long bath,
20 “A week really *is* a long time in politics!”
(271 words)



Tough at the Top (Text with 20 Differences)

After school on **1. Sunday (Monday)**, Maggie had another meeting of the “Magic Holidays Committee”, which she chairs. The aim of the committee is to raise **2. funds (money)** for school trips for less-privileged pupils. Malcolm, the **3. name (main)** fundraiser, made some astonishing allegations about Tim, the treasurer, announcing that Tim **4. has (had)** stolen forty pounds from committee funds. Tim denied it, but by Tuesday **5. morning (afternoon)** Malcolm had given Maggie an ultimatum: “Either he goes or I quit!” Maggie was under intense pressure because Malcolm was a **6. berry (very)** good fundraiser. What’s more, she couldn’t believe that Tim would steal from them. Besides, she knew that Malcolm had been trying to **7. net (get)** the treasurer’s job for a few **8. mums (months)**. Malcolm continued to threaten, but Maggie kept a **9. full (cool)** head, and demanded **10. elegance (evidence)** of misconduct. On Thursday Tim unexpectedly **11. replied (resigned)** from his post and Maggie’s heart sank. She heard from Kim, a trusted **12. friend (colleague)** on the committee, that Malcolm had discovered documents proving that Tim *had* unlawfully taken committee money for his own **13. shoes (use)**. By close of play on Friday Maggie had heard a full confession from **14. Kim (Tim)**, who claimed that he had only *borrowed* the cash “...to help my sister pay **15. black (back)** her student loan debt.” Tim was sacked from the committee and Kim was voted into the role. Malcolm said for the **16. second (record)** that he had only acted in the interests of the committee and **17. she (he)** stayed on as main fundraiser. **18. Kathleen (Maggie)** felt a weight lifting when the weekend finally got **19. on the way (underway)**. “It’s true what they say, mum,” she told Kathleen on Friday evening after a long bath, “A week really *is* a long **20. dime (time)** in politics!”

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Multi-Purpose Text

Tough at the Top (Gap-Fill – Nouns)

After school on Monday, Maggie had another meeting of the “Magic Holidays 1. _____”, which she chairs. The aim of the committee is to raise 2. _____ for school trips for less-privileged 3. _____. Malcolm, the main fundraiser, made some astonishing allegations about Tim, the treasurer, announcing that Tim had stolen forty pounds from committee 4. _____. Tim denied it, but by Tuesday afternoon Malcolm had given Maggie an 5. _____: “Either he goes or I quit!” Maggie was under intense 6. _____ because Malcolm was a very good fundraiser. What’s more, she couldn’t believe that Tim would steal from them. Besides, she knew that Malcolm had been trying to get the treasurer’s 7. _____ for a few months. Malcolm continued to threaten, but Maggie kept a cool 8. _____, and demanded evidence of misconduct. On Thursday Tim unexpectedly resigned from his post and Maggie’s 9. _____ sank. She heard from Kim, a trusted colleague on the committee, that Malcolm had discovered 10. _____ proving that Tim *had* unlawfully taken committee money for his own use. By close of play on Friday Maggie had heard a full 11. _____ from Tim, who claimed that he had only *borrowed* the cash “...to help my sister pay back her student loan 12. _____.” Tim was sacked from the committee and Kim was voted into the role. Malcolm said for the record that he had only acted in the 13. _____ of the committee and he stayed on as main fundraiser. Maggie felt a weight lifting when the weekend finally got underway. “It’s true what they say, mum,” she told Kathleen on Friday evening after a long 14. _____, “A week really *is* a long time in 15. _____!”



Tough at the Top (Multiple Choice – Use of English)

After school on Monday, Maggie had 1. **a) first, b) another, c) the** meeting of the “Magic Holidays Committee”, which she chairs. The aim 2. **a) for, b) to, c) of** the committee is to raise money for school trips 3. **a) for, b) and, c) the** less-privileged pupils. Malcolm, the main fundraiser, made 4. **a) a, b) an, c) some** astonishing allegations about Tim, the treasurer, announcing that Tim had stolen forty pounds from 5. **a) committee, b) its, c) those** funds. Tim denied it, but by Tuesday afternoon Malcolm had given Maggie 6. **a) a, b) an, c) her** ultimatum: “Either he goes or I quit!” Maggie was under intense pressure 7. **a) while, b) because, c) ’cos** Malcolm was a very good fundraiser. What’s more, 8. **a) I, b) She, c) she** couldn’t believe that Tim would steal from them. Besides, she knew that Malcolm had been trying to get the treasurer’s job for a 9. **a) few, b) little, c) several** months. Malcolm continued to threaten, but Maggie kept a cool head, and 10. **a) demand, b) demanded, c) demanding** evidence of misconduct. On Thursday Tim unexpectedly resigned from his post and Maggie’s heart sank. She heard 11. **a) that, b) from, c) with** Kim, a trusted colleague on the committee, that Malcolm had discovered documents proving that Tim *had* unlawfully taken committee money for his own use. By close of play 12. **a) on, b) at, c) in** Friday Maggie had heard a full confession from Tim, who claimed that he had only *borrowed* the cash “...to help my sister pay 13. **a) out, b) up, c) back** her student loan debt.” Tim was sacked from the committee and Kim was voted into the role. Malcolm said for the record that he had only 14. **a) helped, b) acted, c) begun** in the interests of the committee and he stayed on as main fundraiser. Maggie felt a weight lifting when the weekend finally got underway. “It’s true what they say, mum,” she told Kathleen on Friday evening after a 15. **a) full, b) cold, c) long** bath, “A week really *is* a long time in politics!”

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Multi-Purpose Text

Tough at the Top (Comprehension Questions)

1. When was the committee meeting?
2. What was the name of the committee?
3. Who became treasurer after Tim resigned?
4. What did Maggie do on Friday evening?
5. How did Maggie feel when the weekend arrived?
6. What did Malcolm threaten to do?
7. What was Maggie's job on the committee?
8. Why did Tim take the money from the committee?
9. What was the purpose of the committee?
10. Was Tim planning to pay back the money?
11. What job did Malcolm want to do?
12. What did Malcolm say that Tim had done?
13. Who gave Maggie an ultimatum?
14. How much money did Malcolm say that Tim had stolen?
15. Who is Kathleen?
16. Did Malcolm keep his job as main fundraiser?
17. What did Maggie demand?
18. Was Malcolm a good fundraiser?
19. Who chaired the committee meeting?
20. Who was the original treasurer of the committee?
21. Who was the main fundraiser?
22. Who denied stealing forty pounds?
23. How did Maggie feel when she heard about Tim's resignation?
24. Who had student loan debt?
25. What role did Tim have on the committee?
26. What did Malcolm's documents prove?
27. Name four members of the committee.
28. How did Maggie respond to Malcolm's threats?
29. Who made claims about Tim?
30. When did Tim resign as treasurer?

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Tough at the Top (True, False, or Unknown?)

1. Maggie is chair of the "Magic Holidays Committee".
2. Tim resigned as treasurer on Friday.
3. Malcolm wanted to get Tim's job.
4. Maggie gave Kim an ultimatum.
5. Tim wanted to help his sister.
6. Kim became the new treasurer.
7. Malcolm wanted to be the main fundraiser.
8. Tim was the treasurer of the committee.
9. Maggie has chaired the committee for the past six months.
10. Maggie had a bath at 8.30 pm on Friday evening.
11. Kim will be a really poor treasurer.
12. Maggie is good at making difficult decisions.
13. Malcolm put pressure on Maggie.
14. Tim stole forty pounds from the committee.
15. Tim has stolen from the committee a few times.
16. Malcolm resigned from the committee.
17. Tim borrowed the money to pay back his loan.
18. Tim enjoyed being treasurer.
19. Malcolm and Tim used to be friends.
20. Tim was going to remain on the committee.
21. Maggie is chair of the "Student Holidays Committee".
22. Tim is a thief.
23. Tim confessed that he had taken the money.
24. The problem was sorted out by the weekend.
25. Maggie felt stressed on Friday evening.
26. This was the toughest week in Maggie's life so far.
27. Malcolm acted without self-interest.
28. Maggie couldn't trust Kim.
29. Malcolm will be treasurer after Kim.
30. Tim's sister owes more than fourteen thousand pounds.

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Multi-Purpose Text

Glossary of New Words

Here are some words and phrases from the text that may be new to students. You could either pre-teach them, or encourage your students to find translations in a bilingual dictionary and write them in the gaps below. Stressed syllables are underlined.

1. **to chair** (a **committee**) (*verb*: lead a group) _____
2. **allegation** (*noun*: accusation, claim) _____
3. **ultimatum** (*noun*: a difficult choice, e.g. "It's him or me!") _____
4. **to quit** (*verb*: to resign) _____
5. **intense** (*adjective*: strong, very great) _____
6. **to keep a cool head** (*verb, idiom*: stay calm and focused) _____
7. **misconduct** (*noun*: bad behaviour) _____
8. **"Maggie's heart sank"** (*idiom*: she felt disappointed) _____
9. **unlawfully** (*adverb*: illegally) _____
10. **by close of play** (*adverbial*: by the end of a set period of time, e.g. by the end of the school day) _____
11. **confession** (*noun*: admission of guilt) _____
12. **student loan debt** (*noun*: money that somebody owes for their university course) _____
13. **to be sacked** (*verb, passive*: to lose your job) _____
14. **to feel a weight lifting** (*verb, idiom*: to feel relief) _____
15. **to get underway** (*verb*: to begin) _____

Answers

Tough at the Top (Gap-Fill – Nouns)

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Committee | 6. pressure | 11. confession |
| 2. money | 7. job | 12. debt |
| 3. pupils | 8. head | 13. interests |
| 4. funds | 9. heart | 14. bath |
| 5. ultimatum | 10. documents | 15. politics |

Tough at the Top (Multiple Choice – Use of English)

- | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|
| 1. b) | 6. b) | 11. b) |
| 2. c) | 7. b) | 12. a) |
| 3. a) | 8. c) | 13. c) |
| 4. c) | 9. a) | 14. b) |
| 5. a) | 10. b) | 15. c) |

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Tough at the Top (Comprehension Questions)

1. After school on Monday.
2. "Magic Holidays Committee".
3. Kim.
4. She had a long bath.
5. Relaxed – she felt a weight lifting.
6. Resign from the committee.
7. Chair (leader of the committee).
8. To help his sister pay back her student loan debt.
9. To raise money for school trips for less-privileged pupils.
10. Yes.
11. Treasurer.
12. That Tim had stolen forty pounds from the committee.
13. Malcolm.
14. Forty pounds.
15. Maggie's mum.
16. Yes.
17. Evidence of misconduct – proof that Tim had done something wrong.
18. Yes, he was a very good fundraiser.
19. Maggie.
20. Tim.
21. Malcolm.
22. Tim.
23. She felt very disappointed – her heart sank.
24. Tim's sister.
25. Treasurer.
26. That Tim had taken money from the committee for his own use, without permission.
27. Maggie, Malcolm, Tim, and Kim.
28. She kept calm (she kept a cool head) and asked for evidence of misconduct.
29. Malcolm.
30. On Thursday.

Tough at the Top (True, False, or Unknown?)

(T = True, F = False, U = Unknown)

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. T | 11. U | 21. F |
| 2. F | 12. T | 22. T |
| 3. T | 13. T | 23. T |
| 4. F | 14. T | 24. T |
| 5. T | 15. U | 25. F |
| 6. T | 16. F | 26. U |
| 7. F | 17. F | 27. F |
| 8. T | 18. U | 28. F |
| 9. U | 19. U | 29. U |
| 10. U | 20. F | 30. U |