

# WHEN DO I START A NEW PARAGRAPH?

## *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl

### as a Mentor Text

#### 1. At the ***beginning*** of the story.

Until he was four years old, James Henry Trotter had a happy life. He lived peacefully with his mother and father in a beautiful house beside the sea. There were always plenty of other children for him to play with, and there was the sandy beach for him to run about on, and the ocean to paddle in. It was the perfect life for a small boy.

#### 2. A change in ***time*** in the story.

After James Henry Trotter had been living with his aunts for three whole years there came a morning when something rather peculiar happened to him. And this thing, which I say was only rather peculiar, soon caused a second thing to happen which was very peculiar. And then the very peculiar thing, in its own turn, caused a really fantastically peculiar thing to occur.

It all started on a blazing hot day in the middle of the summer. Aunt Sponge, Aunt Spiker, and James were all out in the garden.

#### 3. A change in ***place*** in the story.

But James was never allowed to go down off the top of that hill. Neither Aunt Sponge nor Aunt Spiker could ever be bothered to take him out herself, not even for a small walk or a picnic, and he certainly wasn't permitted to go alone. "The nasty little beast will only get into mischief if he goes out of the garden," Aunt Spiker had said. And terrible punishments were promised him, such as being locked up in the cellar with the rats for a week, if he even so much as dared to climb over the fence.

The garden, which covered the whole of the top of the hill, was large and desolate, and the only three in the entire place (apart from a clump of dirty old laurel bushes at the far end) was an ancient peach tree that never gave any peaches. There was no swing, no seesaw, no sand pit, and no other children were ever invited to come up the hill to play with poor James.

#### 4. A change in the ***action***.

James was too frightened to move.

The old man hobbled a step or two nearer, and then he put a hand into the pocket of his jacket and took out a small white paper bag.

## 5. A change of *speaker*.

“What the matter with you?” Aunt Spiker screeched, glaring at him over the top of her steel spectacles.

James began to cry.

“Stop that immediately and get on with your work, you nasty little beast!” Aunt Sponge ordered.

“Oh, Auntie Sponge!” James cried out. “And Auntie Spiker! Couldn’t we all—just for once—go down to the seaside on that bus? It isn’t very far—and I feel so hot and awful and lonely...”

“Why, you lazy good-for-nothing brute!” Aunt Spiker shouted.

## 6. For *effect*. Notice how a one-line paragraph makes you stop and pay attention as a reader?

James knelt down in front of it and poked his head and shoulders inside.

He crawled in.

He kept on crawling.

*This isn’t just a hole, he thought excitedly. It’s a tunnel.*