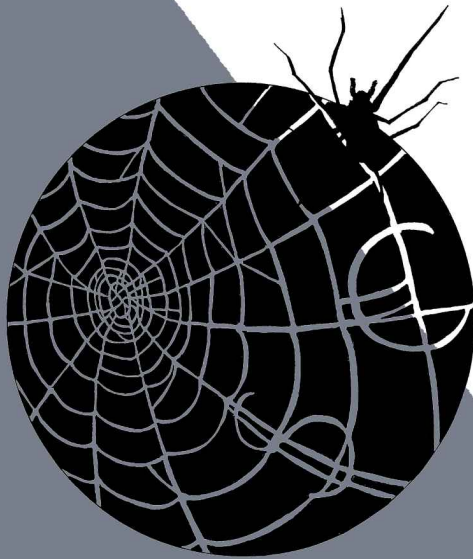


Sabira Stahlberg

Philip and the spider



Sabira Stahlberg

Philip and the spider

Illustrations Maria Viitasalo

Easy to Read



Helsingfors / Helsinki 2022

Language levels

1 Easiest

2 Easier

3 Easy

4 Standard language

4+ Advanced language

Swedish original: *Filip och spindeln*

English

First edition

Bokpil ► bokpil.eu

Helsingfors / Helsinki 2022

© Sabira Stahlberg 2022

© Maria Viitasalo, illustrations 2022

ISBN 978-952-7334-59-1

ISBN 978-952-7334-60-7 (e-book)

1 Dangerous school

Post on social media by

Victor Y

Our school makes us ill!

**There is mould everywhere.
Already five people are in hospital.**

Victor Y is writing again
about the school on social media.
Philip is reading.
Suddenly he stops.

Could Victor be right?

The school is more than
a hundred years old.
Even Philip's mother went
to the same school.

Old things and buildings
can become mouldy.
But can mothers get mildew?

Philip laughs to himself.
He starts searching for
information on the internet.



On the town's website
there is a piece of news.
It says that the air
in the building
is being examined.

Chat

Philip

Hi, did you hear that
there might be mould in the school?

Amir

Yes, many are ill.

Mimi

I feel a smell
in the canteen.

Greg

Who is in hospital?
John broke his leg
yesterday,
but he is at home.

Philip

Lots of people have the flu right now.
Dad is coughing and he has a fever.

Annie

Is it a joke?



Philip

Does anyone know who Victor Y is?

Greg

No, I don't.



Mimi

Neither do I.

Amir

No idea!

Annie

Is Thomas trying to be funny again?

2 The school is fine

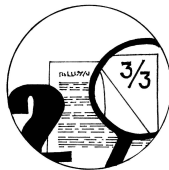
**The headmaster writes
on the school's website:**

The school is a safe place

Dear pupils, parents and teachers,

In the past few days there have been rumours claiming that the air in the school building is poor.

Some persons have fallen ill,
but we are investigating the reasons.
We should not jump to conclusions.
We can all safely work in our school house.



Chat

Philip

Why doesn't the headmaster tell us more?
I heard today that three teachers
and five pupils are ill.
That's quite a lot, isn't it?

Annie

Maybe the headmaster
doesn't know anything more?

Mimi

Is he just trying to calm us down?

Greg

Is it really certain that
there is mould in the school?

Amir

My little sister has asthma.
I wonder if the mould
has made her ill?

Annie

Is there perhaps
too much dust in the school?

Mimi

Could dirt cause infections?
Should they clean
the school house better?

Annie

Absolutely! Sometimes
the classrooms are filthy.
The lamps are horribly dusty.

Philip

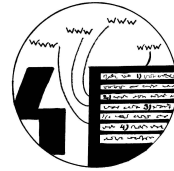
That is true. Does the ventilation
function properly?

Greg

We must air the rooms more often.
Many classrooms smell after a lesson.

Philip

On the school website
an investigation is mentioned.
I wonder what it says.
Why was it ordered?



Mimi

Who would order an investigation
if everything is well?

Philip

I will ask the headmaster tomorrow.

Greg

I'll come with you.



3 Save the school

Article in the local newspaper

Bill Brick promises to save the school

Yesterday politician Bill Brick visited the school. He was met by worried teachers and pupils.

The headmaster denies that the problem is as huge as media have been reporting.

‘The moisture is just in one part of the house. We are discussing with construction companies about pulling down only the damp wall in the canteen. School activities can continue as usual’, the headmaster explains.

But the teachers question
this statement.

They point out that
experts recommend
demolishing the whole building.
It will not be enough
to replace just one wall.

Politician Bill Brick promises
to protect the school at all costs.

- The moisture in the walls should be
measured again, he says.
The previous laboratory tests
revealed only
small amounts of microbes.



Chat

Mimi

Did you see this? The headmaster wrote a moment ago on social media that the school is being cleaned more carefully now.

Annie

Yes, and now the rooms are aired much better and more often.

Philip

That's true, I hadn't noticed.
Victor Y claims that they want to build a shopping centre on the school's site.

Amir

So they will destroy the school? Really?
Where are we going to move?

Greg

Our school will probably be merged with a big school nearby.

Mimi

Are we moving to the town centre? I don't want to go to school there. It's too chaotic.



Annie

I don't want to change schools! I like our school building. Henry has made our classroom so nice with all that information about chemistry and space, too.

Mimi

I would miss the pupils' café, the canteen and our cosy corner.

Greg

They must not destroy
our chemistry room!

Amir

I like the old windows.
They have character,
like our neighbour Mrs Johnson.

Mimi

Yes! But that is
because the curtains
remind of her apron...

Amir

Maybe, but I still like the windows.
This is the most beautiful school
I have ever been to.



Philip

I agree. The windows are large and they let in a lot of light. We can see the whole school yard, too.

Greg

Do we get a bigger sports hall if we move or the school is rebuilt?

Mimi

I hope so! I would not miss the girls' dressing room at all. A new shower wouldn't hurt.

Annie

I do not want to go to another school. I want to keep this one.

Amir

Any good ideas?
What can we do?

Philip

Good question, Amir! I have a few more:
Who is paying for the renovation?
Who decides about demolishing the building?

Mimi

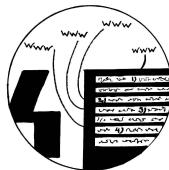
Who profits from destroying the school?

Greg

The politicians decide.
The town pays.

Philip

Should we talk also to other politicians?
Wow! Did you see this comment?



Post on the town's website by

Worried Citizen

Stop the corruption in our town!

The politician Bill Brick
wants to save a school,
which is moulding to pieces.

Do not trust Bill Brick!
His brother Stan Brick owns
the biggest construction company
in our town.
Stan gets all the commissions
the town outsources.



Chat

Mimi

So who can we trust?
The politicians use Mum's and
Dad's taxpayer money for this.

Philip

Bill Brick said yesterday
that the town is discussing
some very small repairs.
He said nothing about calling in
his brother as an expert or
tearing down the school.

Greg

We need to get more real information.
They are all just airing their
own opinions and blaming others.
Who could we talk to?

Philip

I can try to invite Victor Y.

Mimi

Is he in our school?
Who is he?



Annie

Whose interests does he advance?
What does he actually want?

Philip

I don't know. But he seems to have a lot of
opinions. He knows a lot about the school.

Greg

We need to organise a protest.
Could Mimi's mum arrange
for the TV to report about it?

Philip

Great idea!

Then also the politicians will come.

Maybe we'll get some answers.

Finally!



Mimi

I will ask if Mum
can come and make
some interviews for the TV.
Shall we say Tuesday?

4 The school has historical value

TV report from the school



Journalist:

I am standing now in front of the school everybody is talking about.

With me here is the researcher Sanna Leaf from the historical museum.

What does your recent analysis tell about this old and very fine building?

Sanna Leaf:

The building has great cultural and historical value for our region and must be preserved.

It can be renovated only by specialists, because there are many original walls.

The old building must be carefully repaired by experienced conservators.

Journalist:

The pupils are fighting hard to keep their school. With us is also the politician Bill Brick. Can you guarantee that the town does everything in its power to ensure that the building will be a school also in the future?

Bill Brick:

I fully understand the pupils, who want to keep their school. I support their fantastic initiative to arrange this protest. We cannot put up a new building next to the old one, because that would destroy the value of the historical building. We are now looking for additional funding so that we can expertly renovate this incredibly beautiful building.

Journalist (interrupts):

Yes, how expensive will it be? Does the town already know how much the renovation will cost, or is it cheaper to tear down the house? Can't the state help? It's all about the history and traditions of our region. We mustn't forget the pupils' safety, comfort and well-being, either.

Bill Brick:

I agree. The state can certainly supply us with extra money. The Museum Department could also do their part and apply for funding from the European Union, I think.

Journalist:

Now we will move over to the entrance of the school. There are big posters and around a hundred pupils shouting slogans. What do you want to say to the town's politicians?

Thomas:

Don't just sit there staring at your figures and reports and your own interests. This is about our future. We are young! We are the future. It is your duty as decision-makers to give us the best possible education we can get. We'll go on strike if you don't fix the school house!

Journalist:

Thank you very much. You heard the opinions of a pupil from the school, which is under threat of destruction. That is all from me and from here at the school yard.
Back to the studio!

Chat

Mimi

Rotten luck that Mum's colleague picked out Thomas among all people. His stupidity is a disgrace to us all! Mum should have come to the school, but she had to sit in the studio.

Amir

Honestly, I am terribly disappointed. Nobody really wants to listen to us. Where are all the politicians of this town? Only that man Bill Brick came.

Greg

The school is our work place. It's not just a building they can do anything they want with.

Philip

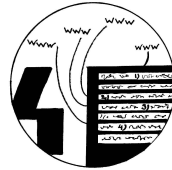
The headmaster spoke earlier about reports.
We have not seen them.
I want to read what the experts wrote.
But the headmaster thinks we won't
understand what is written in the reports.

Mimi

Do you understand the specific
terminology of construction experts?

Philip

No, but we could learn!
We must get hold of the reports
to find out what is true.
We know too little yet
about it all.



Greg

There is something weird in all this.
Reports have been written, but
nobody admits to have ordered them.
So why are they needed?

Philip

That is true.

Why can't we get the reports?

Mimi

I don't trust anybody
right now.



Amir

Neither do I!

Greg

There are some websites,
where we can check if news are true.

Philip

Our school is not international news.
I don't think it appears on websites
checking global news.

Next day

Greg

I just heard from Dad that the school is going to shut down in a few weeks. Have you heard that? He says that we will move to a school in the industrial area.

Amir

How are we going to get there? Who pays for our bus tickets? Is there even a bus?

Philip

Today I tried to speak to the headmaster, but there was a meeting going on. Again! The secretary only told me that the headmaster will be in tomorrow.

Greg

I hope so!

Mimi

I have just come from the doctor.
She says that my cough could be
caused by the mould at school.

Philip

Did you speak to Thomas?

Mimi

Yes. He is not Victor Y
and he doesn't know who it is.

Greg

We must find out
who Victor Y is.
We need his help.

Annie

Could Victor Y be a she?
Should her name be Mord'Or instead?

Greg

Why could Victor Y
not be a she?
Do we know any Victoria?

Amir

Victor Y can be anybody
and live anywhere in the world.
He or she does not need to be
here in order to make trouble.



Philip

Check the town's social media.
Victor Y has just published
a new comment.

4+ Spider in the net

Post on the town's social media by

Victor Y

Get up and fight the mafia!

Renewal or renovation of the school will be too expensive for the town.

But nobody wants to admit that openly!

According to a secret protocol, Stan Brick & Co. has made an offer, which exceeds the town's budget with far more than a hundred thousand euros.

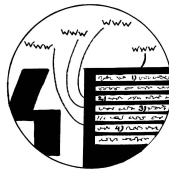
The greatest liar Bill Brick is looking forward, too. He suggests that the budget should be raised with at least one hundred and twenty thousand euros, which would cover also any unexpected expenses.

Does anyone trust the Brick brothers still?

Bill Brick lobbies at the Museum Department to change the status of the building. His goal is that the school house should no longer be classified as a historical building.

Then it can be demolished and a shopping centre the Brick brothers are planning can be built on the site.

Wake up! Fight the builder mafia in our town!



Chat

Greg

Where does Victor Y get all that information from?
Does he know some politician?

Philip

No idea. He never answers any questions.

Greg

Maybe he himself is a politician,
who uses a false profile?
I would not be surprised at all.

Amir

I think he is a pupil or
father of a pupil in our school.

Annie

It could be a mother as well.

Philip

Hey, there is a new comment!

Greg

Where? I see nothing.

Philip

On the town's website.
Victor Y appears to have
a lot of free time
to write on the web.
Does he work at all
or just comments?



Post on the town's website by

Victor Y

Down with the Bricks' monopoly!

Bill Brick voted a moment ago at the town meeting for his brother Stan's company to be commissioned to renovate the school, which is under threat of demolition.

Bill Brick voted at the meeting, despite the fact that he is both partial and has a stake in the outcome!

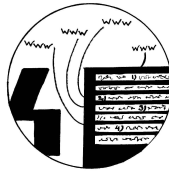
The company of Stan Brick has been fined a lot of times for doing inferior work!
Our beautiful school will be totally destroyed if Stan is let loose upon it.

Stan is the most incompetent entrepreneur and his brother Bill Brick the dirtiest politician in our town.

Down with the dictators!

Down with the Brick brothers!

All stand up against corruption!



Chat

Annie

Victor is lying!

There was no meeting today. The town hall is closed since this morning because of a broken water pipe.

Greg

Do you know if they decided about the school at some other meeting?

Annie

They discussed last week the offers for renovating our school. Bill Brick was absent.

Mimi

Mum says he was ill.

She made a short report about the meeting for the TV news.

Amir

We need to uncover Victor Y's identity.
What does he want?
Why is he so much against the Bricks?
How does he know things
even before they have taken place?



Annie

Who invents such ugly lies?
It's wrong. He is playing
with our feelings.

Amir

Manipulation! At first I believed
in everything he wrote.

Philip

So did I.
I thought he was a whistle-blower.
It looked like Victor Y tried
to expose corruption
and misuse of power.

Greg

Are you sure that he really does it?

Philip

No, not anymore. His attacks appear to be more personal.

Mimi

Hi! I have news.
You will never believe this.
I know who the spider in the web is.

Philip

The spider?



Mimi

The whistle-blower Victor Y.
She sits like a spider in the web.
When something happens,
she feels it in the threads.

Greg

She pulls the threads, too!

Mimi

Mum says that Victor Y is the wife of the owner of a specialised building company. The company is a rival to Brick's firm.



Annie

So why does Victor Y write a lot of rubbish?

Mimi

Their company does not have the necessary skills for renovating the school house either. The Museum Department refused them, too.

Amir

Do we have to continue going to a mouldy school, simply because there is nobody who can or has the right to repair a wall?

Annie

So Victor Y is a woman?

Philip

Now I get it. Of course she knows so much. It's the school secretary!

Greg

Mimi, your Mum is a good journalist. She does not give up until she finds the truth.

Philip

I agree completely. But what happens now with the school?

News in the local newspaper

New round of offers for school renewal

The town has now to start a new round of offers for renovation of the school house.

Recent revelations make it impossible for the town's decision-makers to discuss, and even less to accept any offers made by companies so far.



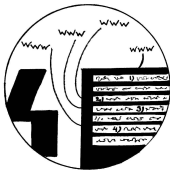
News in the local newspaper

Bill Brick resigns

The politician Bill Brick is now resigning from all his political posts in the town.

Brick categorically denies all claims that the end of his long political career would have anything to do with recent events related to the school.

'It is time to move on to new challenges', he says. 'I am only following my conscience.'



Advertisement in the local newspaper

School secretary wanted for the spring term



Key

Philip and the spider is an Easy to Read and easily understandable book about critical reading and checking different kinds of sources.

Language levels

Each chapter number corresponds to a specific language level. The levels are listed on page 2. The aim of this chapter division is to observe which language level the reader can **handle unhindered**.

Where does the reader encounter challenges in the **mechanical** reading or **understanding** of the text?

After reading this book it will be easier to choose another Easy to Read book with a language level which challenges, but still can be mastered.

Methods for critical reading



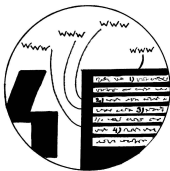
Where was the news published? On whose website or social media is it? What other news usually appear there?



Read the whole text. What does it actually say? Does the heading correspond to the text? Why was the text written?



Who wrote the text? What do you know about the writer? What else has this person written? Is the writer a real person?



What is the information based on? What else exists on the internet or in other sources to support or contradict the text?



Check the date. When was the text published? Is the information still up to date? Does the writer use outdated information?



Real or joke? Could the text be a joke or written with irony? How realistic are the contents presented in the text?



How do you perceive the text? Do your attitudes or prejudices influence how you understand the text? How? How much?



Check the facts and ask. Find more information on the internet. Ask experts, teachers and librarians. What is their opinion?

Bokpil

Easy to Read & Multilingual

Bokpil

bokpil.eu

- Information about Easy to Read
- Blog about reading

Villa Bokpil

villa.bokpil.eu

- Easy to Read books



Edu Bokpil

edu.bokpil.eu

- Free extra materials
- Tasks and activities

**There are rumours about
mould in Philip's school.
Someone writes about it on the web.
But no one knows who Victor Y is.**

**Do they have to pull down
the school? Can't it be renovated?
Politicians in the town promise
to save the school. The more
the school is discussed in media,
the stranger it all gets.**

**Philip follows media
and chats with his friends.
Who can they trust?
What is true and what is false?
How can they check information?**

***Easy to Read and easily understandable
book with several language levels
about critical reading of sources.***



978-952-7334-59-1

ISBN 978-952-7334-59-1

ISBN 978-952-7334-60-7 (e-book)