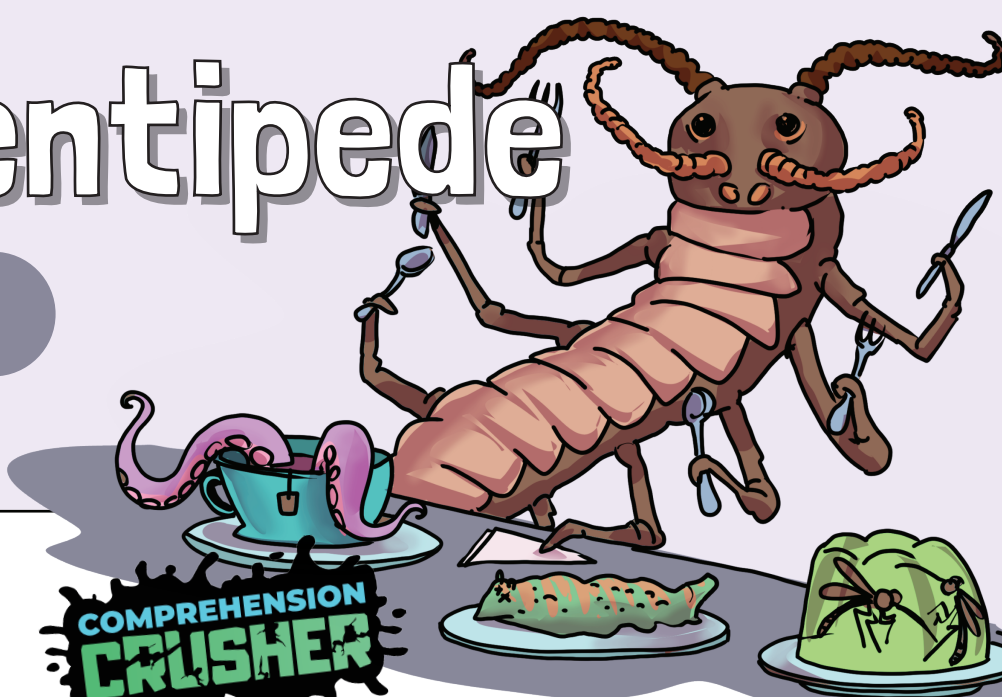


# The Centipede Song

Poetry

by Roald Dahl

COMPREHENSION  
CRUSHER



'I've eaten many strange and scrumptious dishes in my time,  
Like jellied gnats and dandyprats and earwigs cooked in slime,  
And mice with rice – they're really nice  
When roasted in their prime.  
(But don't forget to sprinkle them with just a pinch of grime.)

'I've eaten fresh mudburgers by the greatest cooks there are,  
And scrambled dregs and stinkbugs' eggs and hornets stewed in tar,  
And pails of snails and lizards' tails,  
And beetles by the jar.  
(A beetle is improved by just a splash of vinegar.)

'I often eat boiled slobbages. They're grand when served beside  
Minced doodlebugs and curried slugs. And have you ever tried  
Mosquitoes' toes and wampfish roes  
Most delicately fried?  
(The only trouble is they disagree with my inside.)



'I'm mad for crispy wasp-stings on a piece of buttered toast,  
And pickled spines of porcupines. And then a gorgeous roast  
Of dragon's flesh, well hung, not fresh –  
It costs a pound at most,  
(And comes to you in barrels if you order it by post.)

'I crave the tasty tentacles of octopi for tea  
I like hot-dogs, I LOVE hot-frogs, and surely you'll agree  
A plate of soil with engine oil's  
A super recipe.  
(I hardly need to mention that it's practically free.)

'For dinner on my birthday shall I tell you what I chose:  
Hot noodles made from poodles on a slice of garden hose –  
And a rather smelly jelly  
Made of armadillo's toes.  
(The jelly is delicious, but you have to hold your nose.)

'Now comes,' the Centipede declared, 'the burden of my speech:  
These foods are rare beyond compare – some are right out of reach;  
But there's no doubt I'd go without  
A million plates of each  
For one small mite,  
One tiny bite  
Of this FANTASTIC PEACH!'

