

Before Reading

BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES (PAGE 88)

ACTIVITY 1 BEFORE READING

1 T 2 F 3 T 4 F 5 F 6 T

ACTIVITY 2 BEFORE READING

The 'yes' answers (from information in the introduction) are numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. All the other answers are 'perhaps', except for number 15, which would have been impossible at that date. Encourage students to make guesses about which events might be more likely than others.

ACTIVITY 3 BEFORE READING

Encourage discussion of useful things to take on holiday. The three friends pack: *clothes, toothbrushes, whisky, fruit, umbrellas, eggs, a teapot*, but they forget the *tin-opener*; we are not told if they take *a map*, although they look at maps before they start. They don't take *a tent* because they take a cover for the boat instead. *A radio and a telephone* would have been impossible at the date of the story. Students can add whatever they like to the list and compare ideas.

ACTIVITY 4 BEFORE READING

Open answers.

While Reading

CHAPTERS 1 TO 3 WHILE READING

- 1 T
- 2 F Harris *didn't want* to go to the country.
- 3 F Montmorency *didn't like* the idea of a holiday on the river.
- 4 T
- 5 T
- 6 F The friends decided to sleep in hotels *when it rained*.
- 7 T
- 8 F George said that *a cover over the boat* was easier than *a tent*.

CHAPTERS 4 TO 6 WHILE READING

- 1 J
- 2 Harris
- 3 George
- 4 Montmorency
- 5 Mrs Poppets
- 6 George
- 7 Harris and J
- 8 Harris

CHAPTERS 7 AND 8 WHILE READING

- 1 Harris and J *didn't visit* the church at Hampton.
- 2 Harris thought that George *never worked / didn't work hard*.
- 3 Harris thought that water was *bad* for people.
- 4 Harris fell into the *basket*.
- 5 *Harris's cap* fell into the river.
- 6 They met George at *Weybridge lock*.
- 7 The lock-keeper seemed *annoyed* that no one had fallen in.
- 8 *George* pulled the boat to Penton Hook.

CHAPTERS 9 AND 10 WHILE READING

4, 10, 5, 2, 7, 11, 1, 9, 6, 3, 8

CHAPTERS 11 AND 12 WHILE READING

- 1 Because it didn't have roses around the door.
- 2 Because they had forgotten the tin-opener.
- 3 Because they had knocked them from their seats.
- 4 Because he was frightened.
- 5 Because he fell into a hole.

CHAPTERS 13 TO 15 WHILE READING

- 1 *What . . . ?* They decided to go for a walk in Henley.
- 2 *How many . . . ?* Four.
- 3 *Why . . . ?* Because they would be able to sleep in the police station.
- 4 *How many . . . ?* We can't be sure: two / eighteen / thirty-two / twelve / none!
- 5 *What . . . ?* He drank it!
- 6 *What . . . ?* They were worse than before.
- 7 *How many . . . ?* Five.
- 8 *Why . . . ?* Because he saw the photographer.

BEFORE READING CHAPTER 16

Encourage students to guess but do not tell them if their guesses are right. They will find out as they read that the answers are 1a and 2b.

After Reading

ACTIVITY 1 AFTER READING

7+2 14+4 8+10 1+3 6+12 15+5 9+16 13+11
It was one Saturday in August *and* the friends were looking for somewhere to stay in Datchet. J didn't like the first hotel *because* it didn't have roses round the door. Harris didn't like the second one *because* of the man standing by the front door. Then George decided to ask for a room at the Black Horse, *but* the man said that they didn't have any beds. At the Travellers' Rest, the lady said *that* she had already sent away fourteen people. After that, the friends tried three houses and a shop, *but* they were all full. At last, a little boy told

them *that* his mother could give them a room. The three friends had to sleep in two beds *and* they were never so difficult about hotels again!

ACTIVITY 2 AFTER READING

I didn't want to go *on* holiday on the river because I knew that there was nothing to *do*. I don't *like* peace and quiet, I like to have fights *with* other dogs. But I enjoyed the packing because I *pretended* that the oranges were rats and I *killed* three of them. The holiday wasn't very interesting; I just sat *in* the boat while the others rowed or *towed* (*pulled*) it with a rope. And one day in Marlow I *had* a terrible experience. I *saw* a cat walking across the road. It was big and black, and I *thought* that I could frighten it by running at it. This is what I usually do with cats; I hate them. But this cat just sat down *in* the middle of the road and looked *at* me. There was something about it that *frightened* me. So I moved back with my tail *between* my legs and hid *behind* J. Oxford was all right, because there were a lot of dogs in the town. I had eleven fights *on* the first day and fourteen *on* the second. I really *enjoyed* myself! The food on this holiday wasn't very good. One night I *burnt* myself on the pan when Harris was cooking eggs, and another night they *cooked* (*made*) a strange supper *with* all the bits of food they had left over. I tried to give them a dead rat to put in the pan but they didn't *want* it. I was very happy when we went back *to* London and *had* dinner at a restaurant, I can tell you.

ACTIVITY 3 AFTER READING

Students can complete these descriptions with more or less detail, depending on their level of ability and whether they are asked to do the exercise from memory or with reference to the book. Possible answers:

- 1 Harris likes to tell everybody *what to do*. Once, he was in the maze at Hampton Court and he met some people who *wanted to get out*. He told them that he knew the way, so *they followed him*. But he got lost and the people *were very angry*. He also says that he is good *at cooking eggs*. But when he tried to cook some eggs for breakfast, *he burnt himself and dropped everything*. He likes to drink whisky and one night, he drank a whole bottle. After that, he told the others *that he had fought a lot of swans and killed them all*.
- 2 George works in a bank, but he is always *falling asleep*. He hates *getting up* in the morning, but once, he got up in the middle of the night because *his watch had stopped*. He is very lazy, and he told a story about how he made a young man and a young woman *pull his boat for him*. One night he made an excellent supper *with all the bits of food that they had left over*. Another evening, he was in a pub and he climbed up onto a chair to look at a fish in a

glass case, but *he fell and pulled the glass case down and broke the fish!*

- 3 J thinks that he is good *at packing*. But when he packed the clothes, *he forgot the boots*. On the first morning of the holiday, he woke up early and went down to the edge of the river to *splash some water on himself*, but *he fell in because the branch that he was sitting on broke*. Then, when he tried to put his shirt on, *he dropped it in the water*. He was very angry, until he noticed that *it was George's shirt*.

ACTIVITY 4 AFTER READING

- page 1 A visit to the library
 page 5 The dangers of a sea trip
 page 7 Sleeping in a tent
 page 12 Uncle Podger and the picture
 page 20 Weather reports
 page 22 Lost in the maze
 page 30 Aunt Mary is lost
 page 31 How girls tow a boat
 page 38 Two men in one bed
 page 40 When George got up early
 page 48 No room in Datchet
 page 74 The photograph
 page 78 Hiring a boat

ACTIVITY 5 AFTER READING

Scene 1:

5, 16, 13, 1, 9, 7, 11, 3

You always need three girls to tow a boat. They usually begin by tying themselves up in the rope. When they finally get the rope straight, they always start by running. This means that they pull the boat much too fast. After a few minutes, they get tired of running and stop suddenly. When they do that, the boat goes out into the middle of the river and starts to turn round. So you have to shout at them, 'Keep the boat moving!', and they start pulling again. Soon they stop again, because they want their hats or because they have seen a cow.

Scene 2:

10, 2, 4, 15, 6, 12, 14, 8

It is almost impossible to put up a tent in the rain. Two of you try to put it up, but it is very heavy and falls on top of you. But then you get your side up and begin to tie the ropes to the ground. Just then, the other man pulls from his side and destroys all your hard work. So you pull your side hard, and pull out all the ropes on his side. And then he gives a violent pull and your side comes out too. So you follow each other round and round and shout at each other. Finally, the tent falls down and you have to start again.

ACTIVITY 6 AFTER READING

Open answers. Some possible answers would be:

Example: 'I had this bad heart when I was a boy.' *The truth:* There was nothing wrong with J's heart; he was just lazy.

Example: '. . . every time I read about an illness, I realize that I have it too . . .' *The truth:* J isn't ill, but he imagines that he has an illness every time that he reads about it.

Example: 'I am never seasick.' *The truth:* J was always seasick.

Example: '. . . we can take a bottle of whisky, too – for when we are sick, you know.' *The truth:* They wanted the whisky because they liked drinking it.

Example: 'I think that I am very good at packing.' *The truth:* J is very bad at packing.

Example: 'If the water knows that you are waiting for it, it will never get hot.' *The truth:* Many people believe the old proverb that 'a watched pot never boils' but it is only superstition.

Example: 'He said he was very good at doing eggs.'

The truth: Harris was terrible at cooking eggs.

Example: 'Harris said the swans had tried to pull him and Montmorency from the boat and drown them.'

The truth: It is very unlikely that the swans were this strong.

Example: '. . . the fish come and stand half out of the water, with their mouths open for bread.' *The truth:* The fish aren't really asking for bread.