Fiction

Grandpa's Indian Summer/The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate

Jamila Gavin/Margaret Mahy

Key text features

Both of the texts introduce places that are unfamiliar to the characters.

- The Teaching text is from *Grandpa's Indian Summer* by Jamila Gavin, in which two children from the UK first experience the teeming streets of the vast Indian city of Calcutta (now called Kolkata).

- The Practice text is from *The Man Whose Mother was a Pirate* by Margaret Mahy. In this extract the little man first sees the sea.

Reading the Teaching text: Grandpa's Indian Summer

- Introduce the text. Explain that it tells the story of Neetu and Sanjay, who go to India to stay with Grandpa Chatterji. They take their great-grandmother, to bathe in the holy River Ganges.

- Read the text aloud to the children while they try to sketch the scene being described. If possible, show some internet images of the busy city.

Reading the Practice text: The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate

- Before they read the text, ask which children have seen the sea. Do they remember when they first saw it and what they first thought of it?

- Once they have read the text, remind the children that they are now going to work independently to practise the strategies introduced during the teaching session.

Extending reading

Where the Forest Meets the Sea – Jeannie Baker (9780744513059, Walker 1989)

Meerkat Mail – Emily Gravett (9781405090759, Macmillan 2006)

The Owl Tree – Jenny Nimmo (9781406305180, Walker 2007)

Moving into writing

- Reread the description of the Calcutta street.

- Make a class 'freeze-frame' photo of everything described in the word picture.

- Ask the children to suggest other images in addition to rivers that could be used to describe the busy-ness.

- Challenge the children to write a description of a busy place nearby.

Listening Comprehension:
Questions and Answers

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Q1: Do you think Neeta and Sanjay have spent a lot of time with their great-grandmother before this? Explain your answer.

A1: No. They "studied the old lady" (paragraph 1); they don't know what she likes to do or how important the river has become to her.

Strategy: Consider where in the text the information might be found. Listen carefully to that part. Make a note of words used in the text.

Q2: "it was a torrent of living creatures" (paragraph 4). What does the word "torrent" mean?

A2: Flood, river, stream, fast-flowing queue, flow, rush.

Strategy: Consider where in the text the quotation is from. Listen carefully to that part. Consider the meaning of the word.

Q3: What are the clues in this text that the story is set in a different time and place from where you live?

A3: "Calcutta" (paragraph 1); horses and carriages; bathing in the river; people carrying things on their backs and on their heads; "rickshaws" (paragraph 4), "pigs and horses and cows" (paragraph 4) wandering in the street.

Strategy: Listen again to the whole text, noting words and phrases that answer the question.

Cracking the questions

Teaching text: Grandpa's Indian Summer

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
1. List all the people who were in the carriage at the beginning of this extract.	Neetu, Sanjay, Great-Grandma, Grandpa Chatterji	2b 2 marks	*Question focus: identify key details from fiction.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Think about which part of the text you need reread to look for answers. • Carefully reread that part of the text. • Scan the rest of the text for names or descriptions of people to check you haven't missed anyone out.
2. What does the word *"puzzled"* (paragraph 2) tell you about Neetu and Sanjay's reactions to the idea of great-grandmother bathing in the river?	• They don't understand it. • They think it's an unusual thing to do.	2a 2 marks	*Question focus: explain the meaning of words in context.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Consider where in the text the answer can be found. • Scan the text for the word *"puzzled"* (paragraph 2). • Carefully read the sentence and consider the impact of the word.
3. *"The horses trotted out into the road and joined a human river"* (paragraph 4). Why do you think the author chose to use the underlined word in the sentence?	• The sentence before was talking about a real water river. • She wants you to imagine how busy it is. • People are all moving along together.	2g 1 mark	*Question focus: explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the text for the sentence in context. • Consider why the author might have chosen the word.
4. How do you think Neetu and Sanjay felt looking out of the carriage windows?	• Surprised at some of the unusual things they saw, such as people carrying things on their heads. • Frightened by the birds swooping, flapping and squawking. • Amazed by the dogs, pigs, horses and cows in the street.	2d 2 marks	*Question focus: explain inferences.* Strategies: • Consider where in the text the answer can be found. • Scan the text for references to Neetu and Sanjay. • Carefully read the paragraph. • Use your own experience to think about how the children felt.

Cracking the questions

## Teaching text: Grandpa's Indian Summer

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
5. *"It was a torrent of living creatures among which wandered dogs and pigs and horses and cows"* (paragraph 4). The author chose to link these animals using "and" instead of just commas. Why do you think she did that?	• To make it seem as if they just keep coming. • It sounds as if there are more of them this way. • To emphasise the range of different things.	2g 1 mark	*Question focus: explain how meaning is enhanced by choice of words.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Consider how the meaning would subtly change if there were commas.
6. Number the places to show the order in which Neeta and Sanjay saw them. ☐ a very busy road ☐ a place where people gathered ☐ wide, empty streets ☐ a bridge	In Calcutta, Neeta and Sanjay saw these places in the following order: 1 wide, empty streets 2 a very busy road 3 a bridge 4 a place where people gathered	2c 2 marks	*Question focus: summarise ideas from more than one paragraph.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Reread the text. • Underline each place as it is described. • Compare the order of your underlined places with the places listed in the question.

The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate

Margaret Mahy

1   Suddenly there was the sea.

2   The little man could only stare. He hadn't dreamed of the BIGNESS of the sea. He hadn't dreamed of the blueness of it. He hadn't thought it would roll like kettledrums, and swish itself on to the beach. He opened his mouth, and the drift and the dream of it, the weave and the wave of it, the fume and foam of it never left him again. At his feet the sea stroked the sand with soft little paws. Farther out, the great, graceful breakers moved like kings into court, trailing the peacock-patterned sea behind them.

10 A rosy sea captain stopped to watch them.

11 "Well, here are two likely people," he cried. "Will you be my bo'sun, Madam? And you, little man, you can be my cabin boy."

13 "Thank you!" said the little man.

14 "Say, 'Aye, aye, sir!'" roared the captain.

15 "Aye, aye, sir!" replied the little man just as smartly as if he'd been saying, "Aye, aye, sir!" all his life.
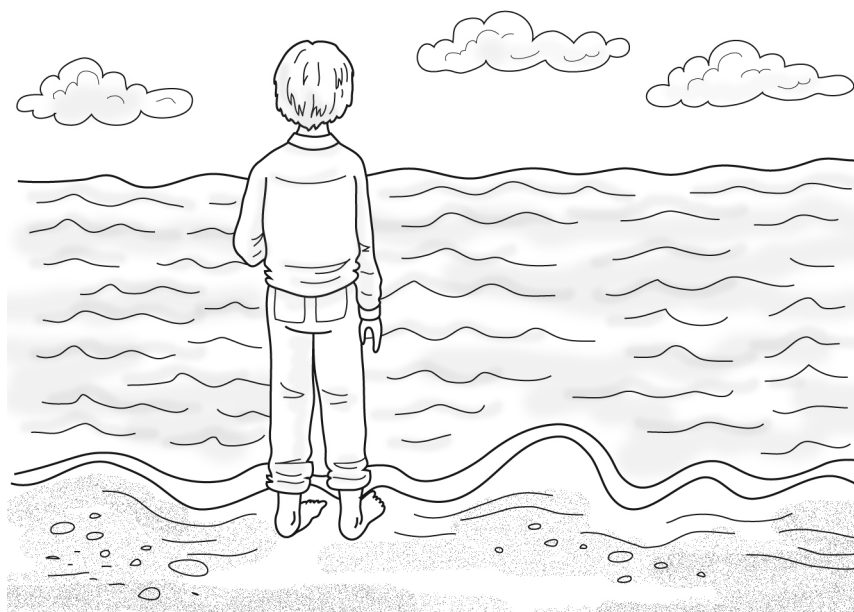
Name: **Class:** **Date:**

1. List all the people who are on the beach at the beginning of this extract.

   _____

2. How do you know that the little man hadn't ever seen the sea before this? Use a word or phrase from the text in your answer.

   _____

3. Reread paragraph 2. Tick the sentence that summarises this paragraph best.

   The little man thought the sea was very loud and very big. ☐

   The little man fell in love with the sea and knew it would never leave him. ☐

   The little man was surprised that the sea was full of people, animals and birds. ☐

4. *"He opened his mouth and the drift and the dream of it, the weave and the wave of it, the fume and the foam of it never left him again"* (paragraph 2).

   Why do you think the author used pairs of words like: drift and dream, weave and wave, fume and foam?

   _____

5. The sea did not really *"[stroke] the sand with soft little paws"* (paragraph 2), so why did the author use those words?

   _____

6. How does the little man's reaction to seeing the sea help you to understand why he agreed to be a cabin boy so quickly?

   _____

7. *"here are two likely people"*. What does the word *"likely"* mean in this sentence? Tick one.

   They look like they will agree to what he wants them to do. ☐

   The sea captain likes the look of them. ☐

   They are strangers. ☐

   They have nothing else to do but stand on the sand and look at the sea. ☐

8. Do you think the sea captain is going to be a kind man?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   Use ideas from the text in your answer.

   _____

   _____

9. Why do you think the captain wants the little man to say *"Aye, aye sir!"* instead of *"Thank you!"*?

   _____

Cracking the questions

Practice text: The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
1. List all the people who are on the beach at the beginning of this extract.	The little man, a rosy sea captain, a woman.	2b 2 marks	*Question focus: retrieve key details from fiction.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Carefully read the beginning of the extract to establish the context. Award 1 mark for one or two people and 2 marks for all three.
2. How do you know that the little man hadn't ever seen the sea before this?	Accept answers such as the following. • He hadn't dreamed of the BIGNESS of it. • He hadn't thought it would roll like kettledrums.	2d 1 mark	*Question focus: make inferences from the text.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Skim the text to gain an overall feeling for the little man's response. • Scan the text for ideas/quotations to use in the answer.
3. Reread paragraph 2. Tick the sentence that summarises this paragraph best: ☐ The little man thought the sea was very loud and very big. ☐ The little man fell in love with the sea and knew it would never leave him. ☐ The little man was surprised that the sea was full of people, animals and birds.	The little man fell in love with the sea and knew it would never leave him.	2c 2 marks	*Question focus: summarise the main idea.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Reread the long paragraph, considering the question. • Select the best option.
4. Why do you think the author used pairs of words like: drift and dream, weave and wave, fume and foam?	• The author wants the reader to understand how amazed the little man is by the sea. • The writing is like poetry because it's the best way to show the little man's feelings. • Rhythm recreates the ebb and flow/sound of the sea. • The pairs of words begin with the same letter.	2g 1 mark	*Question focus: identify how meaning is enhanced by the choice of words and phrases.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the text for the pairs of words the author uses. • Carefully reread the paragraph containing the words while thinking about the question. • Consider the impact of this kind of writing.

Cracking the questions

Practice text: The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate

Question	Answer	CD/Mark	Useful strategies
5. The sea did not really "*stroke the sand with soft little paws*" (paragraph 2) so why did the writer use those words?	• She's trying to show how gentle and playful the sea is at the little man's feet. • She's continuing to use alliteration/write with lots of words beginning with the same sound. • She's using hissing sounds to imitate the sound of the sea.	2f 1 mark	*Question focus: explain how language contributes to the meaning.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Scan the text for the sentence to understand the context. • Think of the image made in the reader's head by that sentence.
6. How does the little man's reaction to seeing the sea help you to understand why he agreed to be a cabin boy so quickly?	Accept an answer that shows awareness that the man has fallen in love with the sea. For example: • He doesn't want to go home again. • He wants to stay near the sea. • He likes the sound and feel of the sea.	2c 1 mark	*Question focus: explain how narrative content is related.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Skim the text, thinking about how the little man feels. • Look for words or ideas that help you to know the answer to the question.
7. "*here are two likely people*". What does the word "likely" mean in this sentence? Tick one. ☐ They look like they will agree to what he wants them to do. ☐ The sea captain likes the look of them. ☐ They are strangers. ☐ They have nothing else to do but stand on the sand and look at the sea.	They look like they will agree to what he wants them to do.	2a 1 mark	*Question focus: explain the meaning of words in context.* Strategies: • Think about which part of the text you need reread to look for answers. • Carefully reread that part of the text. • Scan the rest of the text to check that your answer seems right. • Carefully read the choices again
8. Do you think the sea captain is going to be a kind man? ☐ Yes ☐ No Use ideas from the text in your answer.	**Yes** • Because he's described as "rosy". **No** • Because he roars when the little man says "Thank you!" (lines 11–12).	2e 1 mark	*Question focus: predict what might happen from details stated and implied.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Consider where in the text to find the answer. • Scan that part of the text, looking for information to include in the answer. There is no mark for the first part of the answer.
9. Why do you think the captain wants the little man to say "Aye, aye sir!" (line 13) instead of "*Thank you!*" (line 11)?	'*Aye, aye, sir*' is what sailors say to the ship's captain.	2g 1 mark	*Question focus: identify how meaning is enhanced by the choice of words.* Strategies: • Carefully read the question, marking key words. • Consider why the author might have made that decision.