



Cambridge Primary Checkpoint

ENGLISH

0058/02

Paper 2 Fiction

October 2024

INSERT

1 hour

INFORMATION

- This insert contains the reading text.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Text for Section A, an extract from *Kensuke's Kingdom* by Michael Morpurgo

A young man named Michael is looking back on events earlier in his life.

Until I was nearly 11, until the letter came, life was just normal. There were the four of us in the house: my mother, my father, me and Stella – Stella, my one-ear-up and one-ear-down black and white sheepdog, who always seemed to know what was about to happen before it did. But even she could not have foreseen how that letter was going to change our lives forever.

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Thinking back, there was a regularity, a sameness about my early childhood. After school every day, whatever the weather, I'd be off down to the recreation ground for football with Eddie Dodds, my best friend in all the world, and Matt and Bobby and the others. It was muddy down there. Cross¹ the ball and it would just land and stick. We had our own team, the Mudlarks we called ourselves, and we were good, too. Visiting teams seemed to expect the ball to bounce for some reason, and by the time they realised it didn't, we were often two or three goals up. We weren't so good away from home.

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Every weekend I did a paper round from Mr Patel's shop on the corner. I was saving up for a mountain bike. I wanted to go mountain biking up on the moors with Eddie. The trouble was, I would keep spending what I'd saved. I'm still the same that way.

Sundays were always special, I remember. We'd go dinghy² sailing, all of us, on the reservoir³, Stella barking her head off at the other boats as if they had no right to be there. My father loved it, he said, because the air was clear and clean. No brick dust – he worked down at the brickworks. He was a great do-it-yourself fanatic. There was nothing he couldn't fix, even if it didn't need fixing. So he was in his element on a boat. My mother, who worked part time in the office at the same brickworks, revelled in it, too. I remember her once, throwing back her head in the wind and breathing in deep as she sat at the tiller⁴. 'This is it,' she cried. 'This is how life is supposed to be. Wonderful, just wonderful.' She always wore the blue cap. She was the skipper⁵. If there was a breeze out there, she'd find it and catch it. She had a real nose for it.

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We had some great days on the water. We'd go out when it was rough, when no one else would, and we'd go skimming over the waves, exhilarating in the speed of it, in the sheer joy of it. And if there wasn't a breath of wind, we didn't mind that either. Sometimes we'd be the only boat on the whole reservoir. We'd just sit and fish instead – by the way, I was better at fishing than either of them – and Stella would be curled up behind us in the boat, bored with the whole thing, because there was no one to bark at.

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Then the letter arrived.

Glossary:

¹cross: kick across

²dinghy: a small boat with a sail / sailing boat

³reservoir: a body of water similar to a lake

⁴tiller: the bar used to steer/control (the direction of) a small boat

⁵skipper: captain, person in charge

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