Reading Booklet

Year 6 Reading Assessment - Fiction



The Holiday

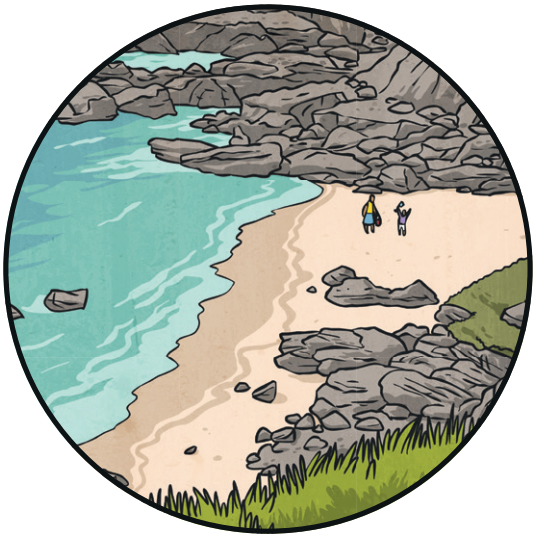
The Holiday

By Steve Johnson

'Another boring holiday in the dullest place on earth,' moaned Maya to her little brother Seb. Much to her disappointment, the two children had already been to stay in the same cottage three years in a row and both were wishing for somewhere different.

'I know!' replied Seb to his sister. 'Why do Mum and Dad want to keep coming back here every single summer? Nothing exciting happens here.' Little did they know that this would not just be any ordinary holiday!

At least one good thing about the small seaside town was a secluded little beach that few people seemed to know about. It had a mixture of soft sand, beautiful round pebbles and jagged rock-pools, all surrounded by tall cliffs. In amongst those cliffs and hidden away down a narrow winding track, the holiday cottage was fairly isolated. Behind it, a path led down to some wooden steps that weaved through the overhanging trees to the beach. Fortunately, the other good thing was that the siblings were now considered old enough by their parents to walk down to the beach themselves. As long as they were not too close to the bottom of the cliffs or too far around the rock-pools towards the edge of the sea, they would always be in plain sight from the huge lounge window of the cottage.



'I suppose it's not all that bad,' said Maya, as they made their way down to the beach again on the second day of their stay. 'At least we know this area so well now and we're allowed to come down to the beach without Mum and Dad'.

Seb agreed and had to admit that he liked the freedom of being able to wander and explore without the adults, as long as he stayed with his older sister.

'It's just that we've seen it all before,' he countered, 'nothing much happens and there's never anyone else around'.

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With the words barely having left his mouth, the pair were suddenly shocked to hear a great whizzing and whirring coming from the other side of the cliff. It was impossible to see around the rocks but the noise grew to a deafening roar, whilst the surface of the sea looked like a giant hairdryer was being blown onto it.

Emerging into sight was a huge helicopter, not flying over or away but hovering just out of full view.

'What's going on, I wonder?' shouted Seb to be heard over the continuing noise.

Eagerly, the siblings headed towards the action, scrambling over the rock-pools for a better view. Shouting could be heard from round the other side of the cliff but neither of them were able to make sense of what they were hearing, as everything was being drowned out by the noise of the great flying beast.

Just as the children were able to catch sight of a large group of people chasing and racing around, waving their arms whilst others looked on, they realised they were entering a forbidden area. Rocks sticking out towards the crashing waves were beginning to put the cottage out of view – and them out of sight of their parents.

'We shouldn't go any further,' warned Maya. 'What will Mum say?'

'We're nearly there! Come on!' replied her brother, caught up in the excitement.

'Wait!' shouted the older sibling, but it was too late. Seb was onto the next rock and jumping a slippery pool to reach a small clearing.

After catching up with her brother and getting closer to the scene of the action, Maya's uneasiness about being too far out of view was doubled with another concerning thought: what if these people were dangerous? Maybe this whole incident with the helicopter and the people chasing around was going to get them into some further trouble - other than going where their parents warned them against.

She scanned the scene as Seb crouched down watching the events unfold. Two men chasing along the cliff-side; a whole group of people either watching or following with some kind of equipment; and then – unbelievably – another man started climbing down a rope out of the helicopter!

All eyes were on the first man heading along the rough ground of the cliff until both Seb and Maya realised he was heading straight towards them. There was no way they were going to be able to get out of his path – their choice was either turning back but they would be seen and the route was tricky or facing straight ahead into their fate. Before they had time to think, they were spotted.

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‘Stop! There are two kids right there. It’s not going to work. STOP!’ came a shout from ahead by a woman who sounded like she was using a megaphone.

‘Maya! Seb!’ came another shout from behind them. The second voice was instantly recognisable as their father’s, following the rather treacherous rocky path that the children now noticed they had trodden.

‘What is going on?’ called Dad, raging at them as he came within closer range. ‘I saw you two disappear out of sight from the window and came after you. You could have both drowned out here. You know you shouldn’t be this far round the cliff – just wait until your mother knows!’

Seb didn’t even mind Dad raising his voice and giving them a stern telling off. He had become quite scared of what he was watching in front of him and was just glad his father was there to help – especially as a small group of people had now marched over to them, behind the first pursuer, and most of them weren’t looking too pleased.

‘You kids shouldn’t be here! We’re filming an action sequence for a new movie that is being made. You were in camera shot.’

Seb, Maya and Dad all looked over to the remaining crowd and could see a number of expensive-looking cameras, huge microphones and wires trailing everywhere. A sense of relief washed over the younger family members as they understood that at least they weren’t in any danger.

‘I’m really sorry,’ Dad stepped up. ‘They weren’t supposed to be beyond that point of the cliff. We’re on holiday down here though, we had no idea any filming was taking place.’

‘Never mind,’ said the lady who had previously been shouting through the megaphone. ‘To be honest, I wasn’t happy with the way that scene was going anyway. I was about to try another take. Do you three want to come and watch from up here where it’s a bit safer and you won’t be on camera?’

Of course they did! Maya was given a jacket to wear by the lady, which said ‘Director’ on the back while Seb was allowed to sit in a special chair and hold onto the megaphone. They watched, with Dad behind them, as the two men from earlier chased down the same part of the cliff. Up above, the helicopter hovered back into view with someone climbing back down the rope again.

‘This is awesome,’ beamed Seb. ‘I can’t wait to tell Mum!’

‘Yeah! I told you it was going to be a great holiday!’ agreed his sister.

The End