

Comprehension Workbook 2

Surfing

First steps to surfing



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

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Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with your normal subject studies. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our textbook.)

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Unit 2: Learning to surf

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First steps to surfing

Surfing may look easy, but you have to know what the waves do and how to ride them safely.



Frankie was going for her first surfing lesson. She had heard the others talk about enjoying the rush of dropping into a glassy wave and flying along the wave face. But she had also seen surfers turn right over as they rode the wave, and she wondered if it would hurt, or if she might drown.

But Frankie was taking a lesson. That is, she was going with an experienced surfer, and they were not going to take any chances. Or perhaps only small chances. After all, chances are what makes it fun.

She thought she should learn the right words to use. She had seen the waves roll over as they came to the beach. But now she knew she should call good surfing places 'breaks'. That was where the big waves came in to shore, slowed down, got taller and the wave crest begins to curl. Cool.

But now there was to be some disappointment. The instructor said. "Forget those big waves you see in the pictures. You need to start with easy waves, just as skiers start on nursery slopes. What we are going to find are easy, spilling, mushy break waves about a metre high. We are also going to find somewhere quiet. We don't want you to be embarrassed in front of lots of people."

So they found their spot. She had a new surfboard under her arm. But first she had to learn new words, such as nose (front) and rails (sides). Then it was time to paddle out. She had to walk her board out until she was in waist-deep water, then she had to lie her body on the deck of her surfboard. There are shortboards for experts, and longboards for everyone else. Frankie had a longboard. She was told to shuffle along until the nose was about an inch out of the water. It was called trimming.

Then she was to learn duck-diving. She was told to grab the rails of the board and as a wave approached she was to push the nose down so that the board and her went under the wave and didn't get knocked over by it. There were all kinds of techniques: The slice and duck, Eskimo roll, push-ups and the shoot and scoot. There was going to be more to surfing than she thought - and she had not even got to stand up on the board yet!

Finally, she was to catch a wave, meaning to surf in with a wave. But, to begin with, rather than paddling straight out into the line up (main waves), she was told it was first best to catch a few broken whitewater waves in shallower water. She was told to point her board directly towards the beach, and as the whitewater approached, to paddle towards shore. When the wave picked her up and pushed her forward it was an unmistakeable feeling. "I'm surfing," she cried out in excitement.



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'duck'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'duck' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'duck'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'duck'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'duck' means.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: rails	sides

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

- 1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.**
- 2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.**
- 3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.**
- 4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?**

**There is
nothing wrong
with rewriting; even
the best authors
rewrite their
work.**

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make



She had to 'walk out' her board until she was waist deep in the surf.

The wave pushed her forward with an unmistakeable feeling.

You do not go out to the main crest line until you are good.

Walking along the beach for her first lesson was exciting.

She had to start with easy broken waves.

She needed to have instruction so that she could learn surfing.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



1 Who was giving the lesson?

2 What is the name for the sides of the surfboard?

3 What is the top of a wave called?

4 What does 'walking a board' mean?

5 How tall a wave should beginners use?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.



1 What does 'walking a board' mean?

2 Who uses a shortboard?

3 What is a 'break'?

4 Why did she not start with big waves?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.

1 What did Frankie feel when she finally began to surf?

2 Should Frankie have been disappointed when told to learn on easy waves?

3 What feeling do you get when you see expert surfers?

4 Would you have gone with an instructor or gone alone?

5 If you were famous and got lots of letters, what would you do?





Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.



Discussion topic: How fast should you learn?

It may seem very boring to sit in a few centimetres of water while you learn. Why do this, and why not simply go out into the surf and 'learn on the job'?



Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



An epic tube!

Expert surfers look for huge waves with great curling crests. If they can get inside the wave, it is called 'riding the tube'. The best tube ride is called an 'epic tube'. Make up a story about riding an epic tube.

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