

LITERATURE – 4A

Fenella and her grandmother are going to travel to Picton by boat. Fenella, her father and her grandmother are at the port.

START THINKING ...

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- Do you think long journeys are boring? Why / why not?
- What's the best way to travel?
- What's the best journey you've ever been on?



Katherine Mansfield
1888–1923

THE VOYAGE (1921) Katherine Mansfield

The Picton boat was due to leave at half-past eleven. It was a beautiful night, mild, **starry** with a light wind. It was dark in the port, very dark. There were lanterns here and there but their light wasn't bright enough in all that **blackness**.

Fenella's father walked quickly. Beside him, her grandma walked along in her long, black overcoat. They walked very fast and Fenella ran to stay near them. As well as her **luggage**, Fenella carried her grandma's umbrella.

'First **whistle**,' said her father, and at that moment they saw the Picton boat. The boat shone in the dark night because it was covered in golden lights: it looked ready to sail among the stars, not in the cold sea. People walked along the **gangway**. First her grandma, then her father, then Fenella. An old sailor stood by a high step to help people down onto the **deck**. There they were. They moved out of the way of the other passengers and stood under a metal **stairway** and began to say good-bye.

'There, Mother, there's your luggage!' said Fenella's father, giving Grandma another bag.

'Thank you, Frank.'

'And have you got your cabin tickets safe?'

'Yes, dear.'

15 'And your other tickets?'

Grandma felt inside her pocket and showed him the tickets.

'That's right.'

He sounded angry, but Fenella saw that he looked tired and sad. They heard the second whistle above their heads, and a voice shouted, 'Any more for the gangway?'

20 'You'll give my love to Father,' Fenella heard him say. Grandma was very agitated and answered, 'Of course I will, dear. Go now. You'll be left on the boat. Go now, Frank. Go now.'

'It's alright, Mother. I've got another three minutes.' To her surprise, Fenella saw her father take off his hat. He **hugged** Grandma in his arms. 'God bless you, Mother,' she heard him say.

And Grandma put her hand on his face and she cried, 'God bless you, my own brave son.'

25 This was so awful that Fenella turned her back on them and looked at the little green star high up on the ship. She turned round again because her father was about to leave.

'Good-bye Fenella. Be a good girl.' Fenella held onto his coat.

'How long am I going to stay?' she **whispered** anxiously. He didn't look at her but he said gently, 'We'll see about that. Here! Where's your hand?' He gave her a **shilling**. 'That's for the journey.'

30 A shilling! That was a lot of money. 'Am I going away forever?' thought Fenella. 'Father!' Fenella cried. But he was gone. He was the last person off the ship.

Glossary

starry lit by stars

luggage bags you take with you when you're travelling

whistle an object you blow through to make a loud, high sound

deck an area outside on a boat to walk on

hug to hold someone close to your body

whisper to speak very quietly

shilling a unit of money used in Britain until 1971

gangway a bridge that people use to get on/off a ship

blackness being very dark

stairway steps from one level to another

2 **4A.1** Read the text and listen.

3 Read the text again. Answer the questions.

- 1 Why couldn't they see the Picton boat clearly?
- 2 Why did they stand under the stairs?
- 3 What did Fenella's father want his mother to check?
- 4 Who does Fenella's father have a message for?
- 5 What did Fenella's father do that surprised Fenella when Grandma told him to get off the boat?
- 6 What did Fenella think when her father gave her the money?

4 **READ BETWEEN THE LINES** Answer the questions.

- 1 What does Fenella think was so awful? Why?
- 2 Why do you think her father doesn't tell her how long she is going to be away?
- 3 Why did Fenella's father leave the boat?

5 **VOCABULARY** Complete the sentences with the correct words from the glossary in the correct form.

- 1 In the 1920s, travelling on holiday by boat wasn't just for the wealthy. The upper _____ though were reserved for the very rich.
 - 2 It cost one _____ to use the swimming pool on the *Titanic*. Swimming costumes were provided.
 - 3 Not all travel in the 1920s was luxurious. For immigrants travelling to new countries, space in the cabins was limited and they took very little _____.
 - 4 The _____ wasn't just used to signal that a ship was about to leave; it was also blown to announce the arrival of an important person.
 - 5 The skyline in major cities has changed a lot over the last century. Light pollution means that there are fewer _____ nights.
 - 6 Journeys took much longer than they do today. Families were often separated for a long time and took the opportunity to _____ each other before they were parted.
- 6 **ROLE PLAY** Work in pairs. Student A is the sailor on the boat, Student B is Fenella. Fenella is very upset because her father is saying goodbye. The sailor is being sympathetic. Read the beginning of the conversation and then continue with your own ideas. Think about how Fenella is feeling and the atmosphere on the boat.

SAILOR Sorry, Miss. I didn't see you there. Is this your luggage?

FENELLA Sorry, what did you say? It's very noisy here.

7 **LISTENING 4A.2** Listen to the next part of the story. Complete the sentences with one or two words.

- 1 The waiter said that the sandwiches cost _____ each.
- 2 Grandma thought the sandwiches were _____.
- 3 Grandma said that her son was _____.
- 4 Grandma and Fenella are going to eat _____ during the journey.
- 5 The cabin was very _____.
- 6 The steward said that _____ was calm.

WRITING Symbolism8 **WRITING** Write 100–150 words about the importance of objects in the text.

- What do the characters' possessions tell us about their lives? Are they rich or poor? What is their background?
- What objects are compared to something else? (For example, the boat 'looked ready to sail among the stars'. What is the boat being compared to?)
- Are everyday objects given a deeper meaning? (For example, what's the importance of Fenella's shilling?)
- When you have finished your essay read it again. Check your spelling, grammar and punctuation.

THINK SHORT STORIES

The Voyage is a short story. Short stories are short works of fiction – they can be just a few sentences long or fifty or more pages. They are usually in a narrative, or story, form and they tend to focus on one incident to create an impression or mood. Writers who are famous for their short stories include: Mark Twain, Henry James, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Katherine Mansfield.

9 What do you think these short stories are about? Match the titles with their descriptions.

- 1 *Kew Gardens* (Virginia Woolf) _____
 - 2 *The curious case of Benjamin Button* (F. Scott Fitzgerald) _____
 - 3 *The one million pound bank note* (Mark Twain) _____
- a A man lives for 30 days without spending any money.
 - b Four sets of people talk about their lives while walking around a flowerbed.
 - c A story about someone who gets younger every day.