

***The Boy Who Biked The World* by Alastair Humphreys**

Age 7-9

Reasons for selection and synopsis

Discover Africa by bicycle in book one of a delightful children's adaptation of Alastair Humphrey's journey around the world. In this charming caricature of Alastair Humphreys' infamous circumnavigation of the world on his bike, children are swept along with the character of Tom, an adventurous boy who feels there must be more to life than school. The first part of *The Boy Who Biked the World* follows Tom leaving England, cycling through Europe and all the way through Africa to the tip of South Africa.

Along the way, young readers are introduced not only to the various fascinating landscapes he passes through, but also to the various people who so happily embrace him as he traveled on his journey. With engaging illustrations and journal entries throughout, this book provides an immersive experience for any young adventurer.

Before reading...

Ask the children to look at the front cover. What do you think the book will be about? What things can you see on the front cover?

What sort of story will it be? Who might enjoy it?

Now read the blurb – were any of your predictions correct?

What impracticalities would present themselves when biking around the world?

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Sequence or Summarise

The following questions are designed as prompts only – allow the children to come up with their own questions and ideas. They will be much more engaged this way!



The Maasai are Massive

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| Vocabulary | What does the word 'steaming' tell you about the bowl? Define 'glinted'. Define 'pleaded'. What is a ceremony? |
| Infer | Why was Tom forcing himself to smile? Why does Tom pretend it's strawberry milkshake? Why do you think Tom should be used to swallowing weird food and drink by now? |
| Predict | Predict how Tom ended up in Africa. |
| Explain | Why do you think the author chose to start after he had ridden his bicycle to Africa? |
| Retrieve | What did the chief hand Tom? How many Masai warriors were there? How did the men react when Tom drank the bowl? Where did the warriors take Tom? |
| Summarise | What is your first impression of Tom? Choose one word to describe him and explain your choice of word. |

Daydreams of Adventure

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| Vocabulary | Why would you 'slurp' noodles? Tom was 'gazing' out of the window. What does this word tell you? Define 'gradually'. |
| Infer | How can you tell the story has moved back in time? Why do you think Tom noticed the quiet in the room? Why had Mr Field turned red as a beetroot? Why do you think everyone laughed at Tom? |
| Predict | How do you think Tom will start his adventures? |
| Explain | Why does the author decide to use some emboldened text in this chapter? |
| Retrieve | What did Tom always want to be? Which lesson is Tom in? What is the name of Tom's teacher? What did Tom shout out? |
| Summarise | Summarise this chapter in less than ten words. |

I Am Going To Cycle Round The World

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| Vocabulary | What does it mean if words just 'pop out'? Define 'dare'. What is a 'special occasion'? Define 'route'. |
| Infer | Why were they laughing at Tom? Do you think Tom was right to defend himself? Why? How can you tell Dad doesn't take Tom seriously? Why does Jo laugh at the list? |
| Predict | Predict whether Tom's parents will actually let him go. |
| Explain | Do you believe that Tom can do it? Why? |
| Retrieve | Who was circled around Tom? Why do the children think it would be hard for Tom to travel around the world? What is Mum's response to Tom asking where they keep the tent? What was number 8 on the list? |
| Summarise | Summarise Tom's mindset in this chapter in less than twenty words. |

Which Way To Africa?

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| Vocabulary | What does it mean if you have butterflies inside you? Find words that show that Tom is going quickly. |
| Infer | Why does Tom jump out of bed? How can you tell Tom hasn't got much of a clue about what he's doing? Why do you think Tom's parents let him go? Why does Tom cry? |
| Predict | Predict whether Tom will turn round and go back. |
| Explain | Explain how the pictures add meaning to this chapter. |
| Retrieve | What gave Tom the final boost he needed? Why does Tom ask for the directions to Africa? What makes Tom pedal a bit faster? |
| Summarise | Summarise the events of this chapter in less than ten words. |

Are You Crazy?

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| Vocabulary | What is an 'expedition'? What synonyms can you think of for this word? What is a 'ferry'? What is a visa stamp? Define 'rummaged'. |
| Infer | Why do you think Tom realised that it wasn't going to be easy? Why do you think Tom wished he received £1 for every time someone called him crazy? Why do you think Tom gets a free ferry ticket? Why did Tom have to concentrate hard? Why do you think the lady is puzzled when Tom asks the way to Africa? |
| Predict | Predict which country Tom will end up in next. |
| Explain | How do Tom's lists and diary scraps add to the story? |
| Retrieve | Where does Tom reach after a few days? How much was Tom's ticket? Where is the ferry headed? Which way does the lady point? |
| Summarise | Summarise Tom's time in France in less than fifteen words. |

How To Make A Banana Sandwich and Other Vital Life Lessons

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| Vocabulary | Which phrase shows that it is taking Tom a long time? Define 'encouraging'? |
| Infer | Why does Tom get fitter each day? What is complicated about Tom's jourey? |
| Predict | Where will Tom's journeys take him next? |
| Explain | How does the author make the reader feel pride for Tom? |
| Retrieve | What food did Tom come up with to eat? Why did Tom always have to eat cheap food? How else did Tom save money? How did Tom wash up his pan? |
| Summarise | Summarise the character of Tom at this point in one word and explain your choice of word. |

Tom Becomes A Caveman

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| Vocabulary | What does the author mean by 'wrap his tongue around it'? What is a continent? |
| Infer | Why did it take Tom so long to be able to pronounce the town's name? Why do you think Tom treats himself? |
| Predict | Before reading, predict how Tom will become a caveman. |
| Explain | Do you think it's good that the author puts so much geographical information into this book? Why? |
| Retrieve | Where is Tom now? Where does Tom sit down? How many banana sandwiches has he eaten that day? |
| Summarise | Sum up this chapter in three words and explain your choice of words. |

Salaam Aleikum!

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| Vocabulary | What is 'salaam aleikum' ? If something is the 'ultimate' of something, what does that mean? What is a quarry? What is a gorge? |
| Infer | Why did Tom have to use his fingers to buy bananas? Why do you think Baalbek was exciting? |
| Predict | Where will Tom go next? |
| Explain | Name three things you learned about the Middle East and say how these affected the story. |
| Retrieve | Which countries of the Middle East did Tom ride into? Which language do they speak? |
| Summarise | Summarise Tom's time in the Middle East in two words and explain your choices. |

Tom and Mummy

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| Vocabulary | What is a mummy? What is 'single file'? |
| Infer | Why was Tom's hair long? Why was Tom so excited to see the pyramids? |
| Predict | Before reading, predict if Tom will see his mum. |
| Explain | How is 'Mummy' used as a play on words here? |
| Retrieve | How long has Tom been pedalling? Which canal did Tom need to cross? Where does Tom find shade? |
| Summarise | Summarise Tom's thoughts on Egypt in less than twenty words. |

The Border Guards

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| Vocabulary | <p>What is a border?</p> <p>What are oxen?</p> <p>The tarmac is 'shimmering'. What does this mean and why is it happening?</p> <p>Define disbelief.</p> <p>What does it mean to ration something?</p> |
| Infer | <p>Why do borders need guarding?</p> <p>Why is Tom nervous?</p> <p>Why is the police officer disbelieving?</p> <p>Why did Sergeant Amarri ignore Tom initially?</p> |
| Predict | <p>Predict how Tom will fare in the desert.</p> |
| Explain | <p>How did the end of this chapter make you feel? Why?</p> |
| Retrieve | <p>How long is the Nile?</p> <p>Where is Tom heading?</p> <p>Why do people think Tom is mad for intending to cycle over a desert?</p> <p>What does the officer say is dangerous about Sudan?</p> |
| Summarise | <p>Summarise Tom's time in Africa so far in one word and explain your choice of word.</p> |

Sand and Sudan

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| Vocabulary | What does it mean if something fires your appetite? What are dunes? What is dawn? |
| Infer | Why did the road stop? Why was Tom so frugal with his water? |
| Predict | Predict what the new town will be like. |
| Explain | How does the author use italics in this chapter? |
| Retrieve | What did Tom check around his sleeping bag for? Why does Tom now always check his shoes? How long did it take Tom to reach the small town? |
| Summarise | Summarise Tom's journey across the desert in less than twenty words. |

Into Ethiopia

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| Vocabulary | What is a junction? Why do you think Abai speaks 'shyly'? What is injera? What does it mean when it says Tom's bike took a battering? |
| Infer | How and why have perceptions of Tom changed? Why does Tom cry? Why do the children start to shout at Abai? Why do you think the family was surprised to see Tom? Why does Tom only swim for a short while? |
| Predict | Predict what Ethiopia will have in store for Tom. |
| Explain | What did you learn about Ethiopia in this chapter? Do you think it's important that this information was included? |
| Retrieve | Which city does Tom arrive into? How many children would run alongside Tom? Why can Abai speak English? Why is so much smoke coming from the house? Where do the family sit to eat? What does Tom observe about the Ethiopian food? |
| Summarise | Summarise Tom's experience in Ethiopia in less than thirty words. |

Blood, Milk and Bananas

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| Vocabulary | Find and copy a word that shows the extreme heat. How would a double decker sandwich differ from a normal one? What is a 'sigh of relief'? |
| Infer | Why was Tom sweaty all the time? Why did Tom move slowly to take the picture? Why does Tom think a lion might not want to eat him? |
| Predict | Predict how the story will end. |
| Explain | Would you rather eat the mouse kebab or the fly burger? Explain your decision. |
| Retrieve | Why didn't Tom cycle near the acacia trees? Which animal did Tom see first? How did Tom end up drinking the bowl of blood? What did ladies often give to Tom? What was strange about the car Tom saw? |
| Summarise | Summarise this chapter in less than twenty words. |

The End of Africa

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| Vocabulary | Define 'beckoned'. Define 'steeper'. What does it mean if something is traditional? |
| Infer | Why was the officer amazed? Why does the officer think Tom was very lucky? |
| Predict | Predict what might happen in a sequel to this story. |
| Explain | Why do you think the author capitalises 'not funny'. What is the effect of repetition in this chapter? How did you feel at the end? Did you like this story? Why? |
| Retrieve | What will be the end of Africa? What is the highest road in Africa? Why did Tom put socks on his hands? What was the lady cooking? |
| Summarise | Summarise the whole book in less than 100 words. |