



ABOUT YOU

Answer the questions and compare your ideas.

- 1 Have you ever travelled by boat? If you haven't, would you like to?
- 2 What different kinds of jobs do people do on boats or ships?
- 3 Would you like to visit a desert island? Why / Why not?
- 4 Could you imagine living on a very small island? Why / Why not?

Set in the 1920s, *Red* begins when the captain of a ship goes to a small island in the Pacific Ocean to deliver materials and buy coconuts.

1 Read the text. As you read the text think about this question.

Which colours do you see as you read?

Red
Somerset Maugham

The skipper ate his breakfast and went on deck. The sun shone from a cloudless sky, but in the early morning the air was cool. It was Sunday, and there was a feeling of quietness, a silence as though nature were at rest, which

5 gave him a sense of comfort. He sat, looking at the coast, and felt lazy and well at ease.

"I guess I'll go ashore," he said. "Get the boat out."

Once on land he found a broad creek. There was a bridge across it constructed of single trunks of coconut trees, a dozen of them, placed end to end. You walked on a smooth, round surface and there was no support for the hand. The skipper hesitated. But he saw on the other side, among the trees, a house; he made up his mind and began to walk. It was with relief that he reached the last tree and finally set

15 his feet on the firm ground of the other side. He had been so intent on the difficult crossing that he never noticed anyone was watching him, and it was with surprise that he heard himself spoken to.

"It takes nerve to cross these bridges when you're not used

20 to them."

He looked up and saw a man standing in front of him. He had evidently come out of the house which he had seen.



"I saw you hesitate," the man continued, with a smile on his lips, "and I was watching to see you fall in."

25 "Not on your life," said the captain, who had now recovered his confidence.

"I've fallen in myself before now."

He was a man no longer young, with a small beard, now slightly grey, and a thin face. He wore neither shoes nor socks.

30 "Are you Neilson?" asked the skipper.

"I am."

"I've heard about you. I thought you lived somewhere round here."

The skipper followed his host into the little bungalow and sat down heavily in the chair which the other invited him to take. While Neilson went out to fetch water, he took a look round the room. It filled him with amazement. He had never seen so many books. The shelves reached from floor to ceiling on all four walls, and they were closely packed.

40 There was a grand piano littered with music, and a large table on which books and magazines lay in disorder.

GLOSSARY

skipper	captain
ashore	onto land from the sea
creek	narrow area of water that flows into the land from a sea or river
intent on	very focused and determined
takes nerve	an action requiring the quality of being brave
fall in	suddenly go into the water without intending to or by accident
bungalow	a house that usually has one level
littered	(spread) in a very untidy way
in disorder	in a way that is not organised

2 Read the text again and answer the questions.

- 1 Why doesn't the skipper realise Neilson is watching him?
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.....
- 2 Look at the conversation between the two men who are meeting for the first time. Do you think this is a friendly conversation? Why / Why not?
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.....
- 3 Why do you think the skipper is surprised to see so many books?
.....
.....
- 4 Which character do you want to know more about – the skipper or Neilson?
.....
.....

VOCABULARY

3 Complete the text with the correct word from the box. Change the form of the word if necessary.

ashore bungalow creek fall in skipper

They finally reached a small ¹..... where they could leave the boat. The ²..... told everyone they could spend two hours on the beach to have a rest. It was a beautiful beach, clean and quiet. Once ³....., I explored a bit. I found another creek that looked very deep. I didn't go too close; I can't swim and was afraid of ⁴..... In the distance, I noticed a small ⁵..... with a bright white roof.

4 Rewrite the following sentences using the word in brackets.

- 1 She is determined to finish the work by Saturday. (INTENT)
.....
- 2 His clothes, books and magazines were all over the bedroom floor. (LITTERED)
.....
- 3 You have to be very calm to take a penalty. (NERVE)
.....
- 4 There was such a lot of paper on his desk that he couldn't find his pencil. (IN DISORDER)
.....

WRITING

5 Work with a partner. Think of the first time you met a certain person. What did you notice about them? Make a list using the ideas below and your own ideas. Compare your list with your partner's.

- 1 Where were you?
- 2 What time of year was it?
- 3 What was the weather like?
- 4 What did they look like?
- 5 What did you feel about the other person?
- 6 What kind of personality did they have?
- 7 What were they wearing?
- 8 Did you notice anything about their voice?
- 9 What did you talk about?

Using a real or invented experience, describe meeting someone for the first time. Try to include as much of the information from the questions you discussed as possible. Write about your experience in about 160 words.

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SPEAKING

6 Work in a small group. At the end of the extract the skipper is sitting in the house looking around the room. Neilson has gone to get them a drink. What will they talk about when Neilson comes back? Discuss the following options.

- 1 Why Neilson lives on the island
- 2 What the skipper does in his work
- 3 Books and music
- 4 The weather
- 5 The food
- 6 What kinds of wild animals live on the island
- 7 Life on a ship
- 8 What they want to do in the future

Use these ideas to write a dialogue of about twenty lines – add your own ideas if you like. Then perform your dialogue to another pair.