

Janet Borsbey & Ruth Swan

The Boat Race Mystery

The teams are getting ready. The Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race is only weeks away and Sam's brother is in the team. But what's happening at the boathouse? Why are some people from the team ill? Was the fire at the boathouse an accident? Sam and his friends don't think so, and they need to find out.

In this reader you will find:

- Information about Oxford and Cambridge and The story of the Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race
- Glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension and grammar activities including A1 Movers style exercises and 21st century skills activities
- Final test

Tags

Mystery | Fair Play

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● STAGE 1	600 headwords	Elementary	A1	Movers
STAGE 2	800 headwords	Pre-intermediate	A2	Flyers/Key
STAGE 3	1000 headwords	Intermediate	B1	Preliminary

Original

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ELT
A1

Janet Borsbey & Ruth Swan

The Boat Race Mystery

Stage 1 A1

Readers



Teen

Teen

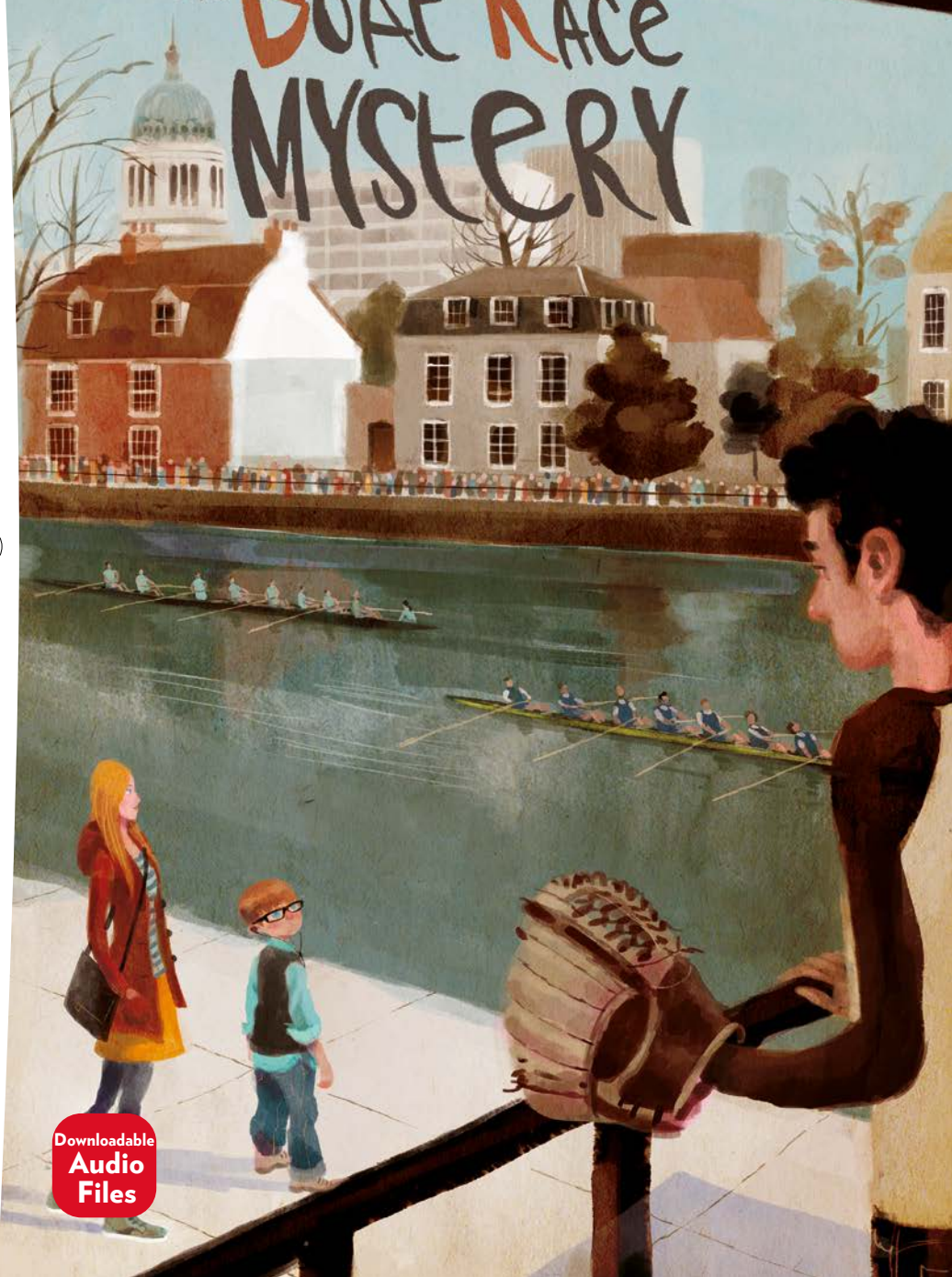


Readers

Original

JANET BORSBEY & RUTH SWAN

The Boat Race MYSTERY



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Book brief

- 1** *The Boat Race Mystery* is an exciting story about the Oxford rowers who are training for the famous Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race.
- 2** Lots of strange things start to happen to the Oxford squad and Shorty has to leave the team.
- 3** Shorty's brother, Sam, and his friends must find out who's trying to sabotage the Oxford crew.
- 4** The story is full of suspense as the reader tries to solve the mystery with Sam and his friends.
- 5** The story also gives the reader an idea of how hard the rowers have to train for this historic race.

Janet Borsbey & Ruth Swan

The Boat Race Mystery

Illustrated by
Thomas Campi

For Review Only

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Main Characters



Sam

*Shorty's younger brother.
With his friends he tries to
understand why so many
strange things are happening
to the Oxford rowing squad.*



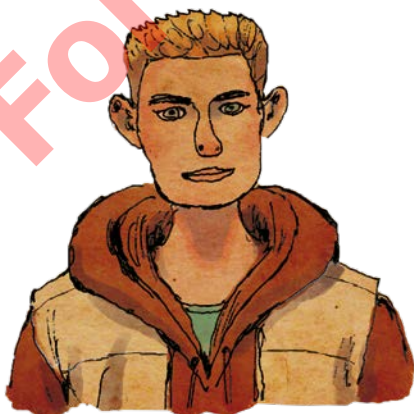
Shorty

*Shorty is very sad when
he has to leave the Oxford
rowing squad.*



The Coach

*He must choose the best
crew for the Boat Race.*



Pete

*He's Shorty's best friend
and wants to row in the
Boat Race for Oxford.*

Max

*He really wants a place
in the Oxford crew for
the Boat Race.*



Jason

*He's very clever and has some
great ideas to help his sister,
Lisa, and Sam.*



Lisa

*She tries to help Sam
discover who's trying to
sabotage the Oxford crew.*



Mr. Pullen

*He's a nice man who
works at the boathouse.*

Before you read

Reading and Writing **MOVERS**

- 1 These words are all in the story. Look at the pictures and choose the correct word for each definition.



train



row



race



jump



win



boathouse



crew



squad

A large number of people who are working to be in a team.

- 1 Use a piece of wood to make a boat go fast.
- 2 The people who are in a water sports team.
- 3 Work very hard to be good at a sport.
- 4 A way to find the best person or team in a sport.
- 5 Be the best in a game or sport.

squad

Speaking

21st
Century
Skills

- 2 This story is about the **Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race**. Work with a partner and go online to answer the questions.

- 1 Where's Oxford?
- 2 Where's Cambridge?
- 3 How often is the Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race?
- 4 Do you like water sports? Why? / Why not?
- 5 What other water sports can you think of?



Vocabulary

- 3 Put the adjectives into the right sentences. Use your dictionary to help you.

afraid ~~angry~~ lucky proud sure ill

Teachers sometimes shout when they're angry.

- 1 Some people are _____ of flying.
- 2 In some countries it's _____ to see a black cat.
- 3 When you have a cold, you feel _____.
- 4 'I can't find my pen! I'm _____ I put it on the table.'
- 5 You feel _____ when you do something well.

Reading and Vocabulary

- 4 Read this information about rowing in Oxford. Use your English-English dictionary to help you, then write the translation in your language of the words in red.

This book is about three young people who live in Oxford, an old university city in the UK. Oxford is famous for its beautiful university colleges and is on the River Thames. There are two exciting college boat races in Oxford every year: Torpids and Eights. The boats start at the same time, about 28 m apart. Each boat has to overtake the boat in front of it. The river isn't straight and sometimes the boats have to turn to go around a corner. People stand on the paths by the river and on the bridges over the river to watch their college boats.

- 1 a college _____
- 2 in front of _____
- 3 to turn _____
- 4 a corner _____
- 5 around _____
- 6 a path _____
- 7 a bridge _____

Chapter 1

Shorty Comes Home

► 2 'I didn't do it! I didn't do it, Coach!'

'I'm sorry, Shorty,' said the coach in a quiet voice², 'but I can't help you. I don't want you in the squad any more.'

The coach says Shorty must leave the squad. Shorty says he didn't do anything. His best friend Pete doesn't say or do anything to help him.

The coach opened the door and left the Oxford boathouse. Shorty, the tallest person in the squad, looked at the other rowers. No one said anything.

'I didn't do anything,' said Shorty. He looked at his best friend. 'Pete?'

Pete didn't look up.

'You heard the coach, Shorty, now go,' someone said.

'You're not the coach, Max,' said one of the Australians. 'Come with me, Shorty, come outside.'

The two young men left the room. Someone laughed³. Shorty was sure it was Max.

Back inside the boathouse, three of the rowers were angry. 'Why didn't you say anything, Pete?' asked one of the Canadians. 'He's your best friend! Why didn't you go with him?'

¹ **coach** someone who teaches people to play a sport better

² **voice** you use your voice when you speak. Your voice makes the noise

³ **laugh** when you think something is funny, you often laugh. You make a noise because you're happy

The Boat Race Mystery

Pete didn't answer; he looked at his feet.

Max, of course, had a lot to say. 'Pete's afraid! He wants to stay in the squad. Coach is right; Shorty's the problem. We can't row with someone like¹ him.'

• • •

It was a long bike ride from the river to Shorty's parents' house past all the colleges. Shorty didn't know what to do. He didn't know how to tell his parents. They were very proud of him. They were proud of him because he was a student at the famous university; and they were proud of him because he had a place in the Oxford rowing squad. He rode slowly, thinking about his parents and then he remembered Sam. Sam! Shorty went around the corner into his street and there he was, his brother Sam, in the garden, playing baseball with that funny girl.

Shorty doesn't know how to tell his parents that he isn't in the Oxford rowing squad anymore. He's worried and angry. He doesn't even want to speak to his brother.

'Shorty!' shouted² Sam. 'How was training? How's my famous brother?'

'Shut up³,' said Shorty, getting off⁴ his bike. 'Are Mum and Dad home?'

'Dad's in the garden, Mum's at work.'

¹ **like** the same as

² **shout** when someone can't hear you, you make a lot of noise when you speak

³ **shut up** be quiet, don't speak

⁴ **get off** when you get off your bike, you stop riding it. You walk or run

Sam tells Lisa to shut up because she says something bad about his brother, Shorty. His brother and father are talking in the garden. Then his mum comes home and Sam sees that Shorty is crying.

Everyone thinks Shorty took money from the boathouse because it was in his bag. That's why he isn't in the squad anymore, but he says he didn't do it.

Shorty walked past his brother and into the house. Sam and Lisa looked at each other.

'What's wrong with him?' said Lisa. 'Is he too important to speak to his little brother?'

'Shut up!' shouted Sam, and he ran into the house.

From the kitchen window, Sam could see his brother and his father in the back garden, but he couldn't hear them. He decided¹ not to go outside. He watched for a long time. Then, he heard the door open and his mother walked into the kitchen. 'Hello, Sam,' she said. 'Good day at school? Where's your father?'

'In the garden. He's talking to Shorty.'

'Your brother's home early,' said Sam's mum.

'I know and he isn't very happy.'

'What's wrong, Sam?' Sam's mum was afraid.

Then, Shorty looked up. He saw his mum and brother at the kitchen window.

'Shorty's crying² like a baby!' said Sam. 'Why's he crying?'

A short time later, they understood why.

'Someone took some money from the boathouse,' said Shorty. 'Everyone thinks it was me. The money was in my bag, but I didn't take it; someone put it there. It wasn't me.'

¹ **decide** when you think about doing something then you do it

² **cry** people cry when they're sad and babies cry when they're hungry



The coach is angry with Shorty. He thinks he took some money from the boathouse because they found it in Shorty's bag. He says Shorty can't stay in the squad.



‘But why did someone do that?’ asked his father.

‘I don’t know. But I’m not in the squad any more and everyone thinks I took the money.’

‘Of course you didn’t!’ said Sam. ‘There’s an answer to this. Don’t worry.’

• • •

Sam can’t sleep because he’s worried about his brother. He’s sure Shorty didn’t take the money but he needs to know who put the money in his brother’s bag.

Sam couldn’t sleep that night. *What’s the problem at the boathouse? Why did someone put the money in Shorty’s bag?* he thought. *Why does everyone think it was my brother? Shorty doesn’t cry.*

At about four o’clock in the morning, he turned on the light¹. *I need to make a plan²*, he thought. *It’s Saturday tomorrow. I need to talk to Lisa. We need to know who took the money and who put it in Shorty’s bag.*

Sam meets Lisa the next morning and tells her everything. They decide to start at the boathouse.

The next morning, Sam had breakfast very early. He put on his jacket and got his baseball things. ‘We’ve got a game, see you later,’ he said to his father as he ran outside.

It was half-past eight when Sam arrived³ at Lisa’s house. It was very quiet. He decided to send a message.

Meet me outside now with your baseball things.

Five minutes later, Lisa came outside.

¹ **light** when a room is dark you need a light to see

² **make a plan** a plan helps you to know what to do

³ **arrive** you arrive at school in the morning and you leave school in the afternoon

The Boat Race Mystery

‘I’m sorry that I shouted at you, yesterday,’ said Sam in a quiet voice.

‘That’s OK. What’s wrong?’ she asked. ‘Is it Shorty?’

Sam told Lisa everything.

‘We must start at the boathouse,’ she said. ‘The answer is at the boathouse.’

‘LISA JANE HARTLEY! Come back here!’ they heard from Lisa’s house. ‘Take Jason with you this morning.’

‘MUM! I’m playing baseball this morning. He’s too young!’ Then she said to Sam, ‘Aren’t we lucky? We’re fourteen and he’s eleven!’

‘Don’t worry, your brother’s OK,’ said Sam. ‘Perhaps¹ he can help.’

Jason ran outside. ‘Where are we going?’ he asked. He was very happy.

‘To the river,’ said Sam.

‘Boring,’ said Jason.

• • •

Down at the river, it was very quiet. It was warm for late October. The three friends decided to sit on a wall by the boathouse and make a plan.

‘We need to know about the money. We need to talk to everyone,’ said Lisa.

‘Shh. They’re coming,’ said Sam.

A group of rowers arrived at the boathouse by

Sam and Lisa have to take Lisa’s brother Jason with them. They go to the boathouse and a group of rowers arrive. They hear them talking.

¹ **perhaps** you say ‘perhaps’ when you aren’t sure about something

bike. 'Today's the day!' said one of them.

'Don't!' said one of the others.

'What does he mean?' asked Lisa.

'The coach must decide the crew for the boat race today. Well, the final eight and two others. Everyone else goes into the second boat.'

'Mmm,' said Lisa. 'That's a motive.'

'What does motive mean?' asked Jason.

'It's why you do something. The police always look for a motive. Shh.'

Some more rowers came around the corner, got off their bikes and left them outside the boathouse. They went inside. Then, more rowers arrived with the coach, but no one looked at the three friends on the wall.

Sam, Lisa and Jason waited outside. Jason was bored, and he got off the wall and he started to play with the ball.

An old man in work clothes came outside from a small door in the boathouse. 'Hello, Sam,' he said.

'Hello, Mr Pullen,' said Sam.

'I'm sorry about Shorty,' said Mr Pullen. 'He didn't take that money, I'm sure. And he's a very good rower.'

'Pullen!' Someone shouted from the boathouse.

'Come and help me with this seat!'

'Coming Max,' said Mr Pullen and he walked into the boathouse. ■

The coach has to decide the crew for the boat race. Lisa thinks this is perhaps a motive for what happened to Shorty.

The three friends see Mr Pullen. He says he's sure Shorty didn't take the money.

Think

What do you think Sam and Lisa can do to help Shorty?



Sam, Lisa and Jason are waiting outside the boathouse. Mr Pullen speaks to them. He's sure Shorty didn't take the money.



Reading Comprehension

- 1 Characters.** Complete the sentences with the name and the possessive 's.

Lisa is Mrs Hartley's daughter.

- 1** Lisa is _____ friend.
- 2** Jason is _____ brother.
- 3** Jason is _____ son.
- 4** Shorty is _____ brother.
- 5** Pete is _____ best friend.

Writing

- 2 A** Lisa didn't want her mum to understand her message to Sam. Use the key below. Can you read her message?

EQF NGX EGDZ ZG ZIT KOCTK ZGDGKKGTV?
WKOFU NGXK WQLTWQSS ZIOFUL.

-----?

Q=A	W=B	E=C	R=D	T=E	Y=F	U=G	I=H
O=I	P=J	A=K	S=L	D=M	F=N	G=O	H=P
J=Q	K=R	L=S	Z=T	X=U	C=V	V=W	B=X
N=Y	M=Z						

- 2 B** Can you see how the code works?

The message below will help.

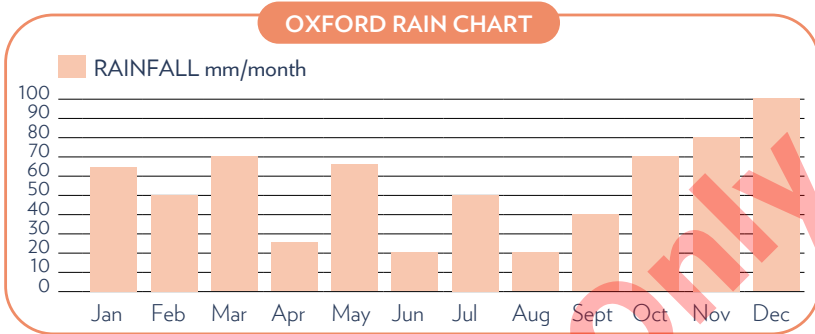
SGGA QZ ZIT STZZTKL GF Q ATNWGQKR.

- 2 C** Work in pairs. Use the key. Write your own message for your partner.

**21st
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Skills**

Vocabulary

- 3 When there is too much rain, people can't row. Look at the Oxford rain chart. Write the months in the sentences.



There was 20 mm more rain in September than in August.

- 1 _____ and _____ were the driest months.
- 2 _____ was the wettest month.
- 3 There was 20 mm less rain in _____ than in December.
- 4 In _____ and _____ there was 10 mm less rain than in November.
- 5 There was the same amount of rain in January and _____.

Before-reading Activity

Reading and Writing

MOVERS

- 4 Look at the picture on page 27. Complete the sentences and answer the questions.

- The boathouse is on _____ fire .
- 1 Who's looking at the fire? _____
 - 2 Lisa has got long blond _____ .
 - 3 What time of day is it? _____
 - 4 What's Jason wearing? _____