

# INTRODUCING THE OXFORD BOOKWORMS LIBRARY



## THE FICTION LIBRARY

*Series Editor: Jennifer Bassett*

### What's in the Fiction Library?

The new edition of the Fiction Library retains the story texts unchanged, and offers a wide choice of fiction:

- over 190 titles, in seven genres
- adaptations of classic and modern fiction
- stories written especially for the series
- collections of short stories at all Stages
- graded at seven language Stages
- many titles suitable for younger learners

### What's in a fiction Bookworm?

Every Bookworm is designed to help the reader get the most out of the reading experience.

#### *The story introduction*

This short text on the first page is designed to draw the reader into the story. It sets the context, introduces the characters, hints at the plot, and leaves the reader wanting more.

#### *The glossary*

Definitions of any vocabulary outside the language syllabus for the level of the story.

#### *Before, While, After Reading Activities*

See page 12 for a description and examples.

#### *About the Author*

A description of the author's life and works.

### How does fiction help learning?

A story creates a new world, an alternative reality, and this in turn creates a rich context for language activities to draw on. Every narrative has hidden texts, for example:

- conversations that were not recorded (*What was said behind those closed doors?*)
- the viewpoint of a character who is not the narrator (*What was she thinking when her son returned after twenty years?*)
- the dramatic event that took place in the past and is not described (*What did Aunt Ada see in the woodshed that day?*)

Stories provide an infinite resource for meaningful language work, and the more students read, the more they will have to talk and write about.

### What makes a good Bookworm story?

Good storytelling. Of course, graded language (using language accessible to the learner) is both necessary and important; but equally necessary and important is good storytelling. The rules of good writing apply just as much to graded readers as to any other kind of literature – achieving a balance between narrative and dialogue, using light and shade in the narrative structure, working in unobtrusive cultural glosses. Bookworms take great care with

- continuity, pace, and balance (no loose ends, clear plot signals)
- density of information (the right amount of detail, not too much, not too little)
- characterisation (characters you can like, sympathize with – or hate!)
- suspense and curiosity (what happens next?)

'Try to leave out the part that readers tend to skip,' wrote Elmore Leonard, a famous crime novelist, in his *Ten Rules of Writing*.

And that's what Bookworms do. They use language economically, within well-constructed narrative frameworks, to tell good stories, which will keep the reader turning the pages.

### The route to success in reading

Enjoyment is the key to success in extensive reading. Once a student has read, understood, and enjoyed one story, they are much more likely to want to go on and read another. Success and enjoyment are strong motivators. Nothing succeeds like success!

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### The Oxford Bookworms Collection

For advanced students able to read ungraded texts, Bookworms offers *The Collection*, volumes of short stories by well-known authors, both classic and modern. Texts are not abridged or adapted in any way, but have been selected to be accessible for language and content. Each volume has notes and questions to help students in their understanding and appreciation.

For full details of this series see the *Oxford Bookworms Library Catalogue*.

## WORLD STORIES

Series Editor: Jennifer Bassett

### What are World Stories?

They are collections of adapted short stories by writers from around the world, wherever English is used as a first language, for example, in Australia, New Zealand, or a second language, for example, in countries in Asia and Africa.

World Stories are the latest addition to the Bookworms Library. Their aim is to bring the best of the world's stories to the English language learner, and to celebrate the use of English for storytelling all around the world.

### The cultures of World Stories

One of the pleasures of reading fiction is the cross-cultural dimension – meeting people and places, contexts and cultures outside one's own world. A new feature in World Stories is that each story has an introduction, which anticipates questions like these in the reader's mind:

- Where are we? (*Which country are we in? In this century? The last century?*)
- Who is the narrator? (*Is the person telling the story female, male, a child, an adult?*)
- What is the context? (*Poverty, marriage, war, jealousy, gratitude, baldness . . .*)

These introductions help students to orientate themselves to the text before they start reading.

### The language of World Stories

English is now a global language, known as

- EIL (*English as an International Language*), or
- ELF (*English as a Lingua Franca*).

There are also many varieties of English in use, and native-speaker models of standard British or American English are often irrelevant. One aim of Bookworms World Stories is to introduce students to different World Englishes, giving them within a graded text a gentle exposure to some elements of variation. For example, in dialogue sometimes non-standard forms are used: leaving out auxiliary verbs such as *am, are, is, do, will*; using *isn't it?* as a universal tag, and so on. There are also words that are only found in a particular variety of English, for example, *kraal* (South African English), or *fullas* (New Zealand English).

### The illustrations of World Stories

Whenever possible, these are drawn by artists from the same continent or culture as the stories themselves. In a volume of African stories, *Dancing with Strangers*, for example, the artists are from Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana.









Illustration by Meshack Asare for *The Rubbish Dump*

## BOOKWORMS CLUB Reading Circles

Editor: Mark Furr

### What are Reading Circles?

Reading Circles are small groups of students who meet in the classroom to talk about stories. Students read the story out of class and prepare their Reading Circle role for classroom discussion. There are usually six roles:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Discussion Leader |  Word Master |
|  Passage Person    |  Summarizer  |
|  Culture Collector |  Connector   |

Role Sheets with notes and questions help students prepare for their discussions.

The students' books are at three levels:

- Bookworms Club Bronze (Stages 1 & 2)
- Bookworms Club Silver (Stages 2 & 3)
- Bookworms Club Gold (Stages 3 & 4)

Each contains seven short stories specially chosen for Reading Circles from other Bookworms. They have different themes, and proven success in generating discussion. In Reading Circles, everyone's ideas are valued: there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers when talking about stories.

The **Teacher's Handbook** contains the Role Sheets and all the necessary information for the teacher. It is also available as a download from [www.oup.com/elt/bookworms](http://www.oup.com/elt/bookworms).

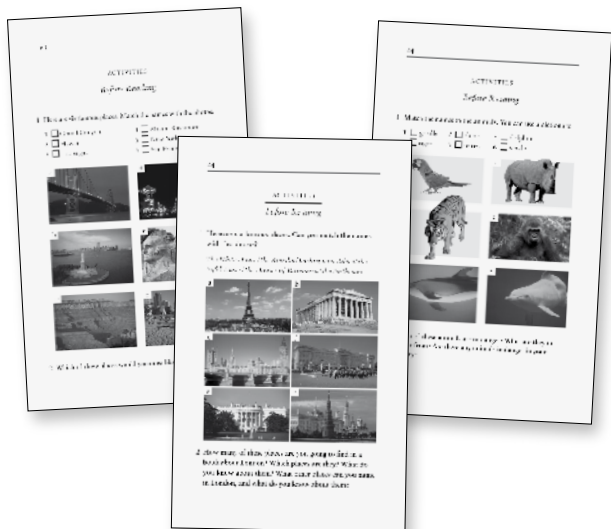
Reading Circles are magic – they really do get students talking in the classroom!

## **f** FACTFILES

*Series Editor: Christine Lindop*

### What are Factfiles?

They are original readers on a range of non-fiction topics, and follow the Stages of the Bookworms syllabus. With high-quality colour photographs and lively texts, Factfiles are ideal for students who enjoy reading non-fiction.



### What's new in Factfiles?

Factfiles have been rewritten for the 2008 edition. Why? Because of reasons like these:

- London now has the London Eye.
- Martin Luther King's wife has died.
- The Asian tsunami joined the list of the world's disasters in 2004.

Times change, and Factfiles need updating with new facts and new photos. These editions also follow the format of the Fiction Library, with

- the same length of text for each Stage
- an introduction, to lead into the topic
- a full glossary
- new Before, While, After Reading activities specially designed for non-fiction topics (see left)
- author information

New Factfiles have audio recordings, and the full range of support material – answers to the activities in the books, activity worksheets, comprehension tests, and multiple-choice tests.

## **🎭** PLAYSRIPTS

*Series Editor: Clare West*

### What are Playscripts?

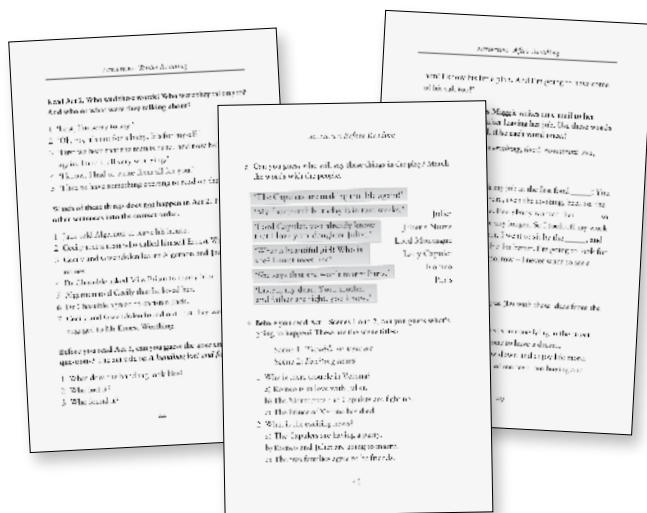
These graded texts of stage plays, both original plays and adaptations of classics, are designed for reading and performance. At Stages 1 or 2 of the Bookworms syllabus, they offer low-level learners the chance to read or perform dramatic works, but can also be used very effectively with higher-level students. They are different from other graded readers in that they

- use only direct speech
- are written to be read aloud or performed
- are good for kinaesthetic learners
- encourage physical activity in the classroom.

By providing an opportunity to focus on spoken language, Playscripts help with many aspects of speaking: stress, intonation, pronunciation, elision, contraction, and fluency. Speeches in the plays are kept as short as possible, to enable memorization. This will also improve reading strategies, helping students to process language in chunks, rather than word by word.

### What do Playscripts offer?

- an introduction, with background to the play
- performance notes, describing scenes, and props and furniture needed
- a cast list of characters
- the playscript, with stage directions
- new Before, While, After Reading activities
- a glossary
- information about the playwright
- audio recordings for every title



# INTRODUCING THE OXFORD BOOKWORMS LIBRARY

## The Bookworms Activities

At the back of every Bookworm are language activities, in three sections: *Before Reading*, *While Reading*, and *After Reading*. They can be used in class, or as homework or holiday tasks by students reading alone. The activities are graded for vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, to the same language level as the story text.

### Why have activities?

Some experts say that extensive reading is best practised without follow-up work, as that can take away students' enjoyment of the reading.

Others say that follow-up work encourages students' interaction with the text and helps to consolidate the subconscious learning that takes place during extensive reading.

### Focus on language as text

In coursebook work, students get a lot of input and practice at word, sentence, and paragraph level, but much less exposure to extended texts. Bookworms Activities often focus on language as text – linking, reference, ellipsis, the many ways sentences combine to form longer texts.

### What are the aims of the Activities?

Bookworms Activities are intended to help the student adopt a normal reader role – to engage with the story, to interpret and to criticize, and to make the text their own. Bookworms activities aim to

- encourage prediction, both before and while reading
- check understanding after reading
- elicit reader responses (oral and written) to the content and themes of the story
- provide language work, within the context of the story, on lexis, structure, and discourse features of extended text.

### Answers for the activities

Answers for all activities, except open-ended discussions, are in the **Teacher's Handbooks**. Bookworms Activities are not tests, and often there are no clear-cut 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Many of the answers given are suggested or model ones only, designed to give guidance to the teacher when evaluating students' work.

