



## **World Words**

### **The Chain**

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# **Student Activities**

## Pre-Listening Activity 1



### 1. Think about .....

Have you read, heard or seen any stories that were so interesting that you couldn't wait to find out what happened next?

What stories that you know would you read or tell to a) a sick child and b) a sick, elderly relative?

### 2. Look at this extract from the story you are about to hear. What is Kate doing? What is dad doing? Where are they?

Now and again a nurse might rush in to give her father an injection or check the machines. But Kate's dad just told her to keep reading. Maybe he really was enjoying the book as much as he said. Maybe it wasn't only to please her. They were sharing something, weren't they? Just the two of them. She had never felt so close to her father as she did when she was sitting reading to him.

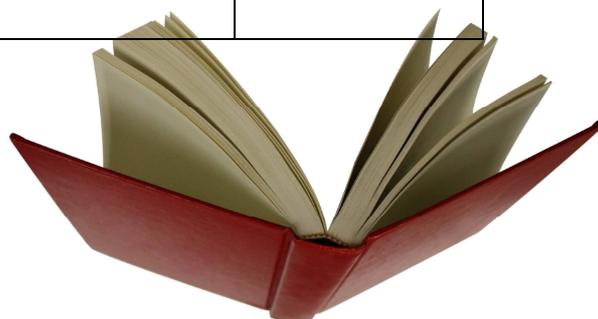
### 3. Now put your answers to 1 and 2 together. What do you think the story is going to be about?

## Pre-listening Activity 2

You will hear the author talking about an extract from his novel, and some students discussing their reaction to it. Read through the following comments which are made in the broadcast and decide first who was speaking - the author or the students - and then decide if they were discussing the **structure** of the book, or perhaps the **message** it contained, or were they talking about the **style** in which it was written? On the other hand, they may have been talking about the audience and **readers** or **books** in general. Then listen to the broadcast to check your answers.

- a. "This extract comes at the very end of the book I wrote, but the book that Kate leaves on the bench is at the very beginning of the chain of people who will eventually read Kate's book."
- b. "The story basically is one of losing a parent, and that's OK.... the world won't end."
- c. "I think I'm writing for me when I was younger. I'm writing for that person who doesn't believe how good books are."
- d. "The book is called 'The Chain' because it's about a chain of people - four different people who read the same book."
- e. "The use of such simple language actually makes the whole piece seem bare and just out there with emotions."
- f. "I've never found a book on a bench unfortunately, but I do admit I have left one or two books on benches."
- g. "It really showed the bond between Kate and her father. I thought it was really touching."
- h. "I noticed throughout the excerpt the writer uses short sentences and it's not very descriptive. So it's, like, the image you create in your mind is not a clear one."
- i. "I think in the next decade or two, more people will start buying new things and I think books will be rarer because people won't be printing books as much."
- j. "I think when she looks at the book one last time she is almost saying goodbye to her father."
- k. "There's not enough technology in the world to make books die out."
- l. "I thought that if I explained too much about how Kate was feeling, if I explained too much about the atmosphere of the room then I'm almost telling the reader how to read this piece."

	<b>structure</b>	<b>message</b>	<b>style</b>	<b>readers &amp; books</b>
<b>The author</b>				
<b>The students</b>				



## After listening

1. In the extract you have heard, Kate thinks that:

Books could make you laugh

What else does Kate think that books can do for you? Make a list. Add your own thoughts – what can books do for you?

2. What does Kate do with the book at the end of the passage you have listened to? What else might she have done with the book?

Let's have a look at how some other people might share books.

## Book swapping

**Book swapping** or **book exchange** is the practice of a swap of books between one person and another. Practiced among book groups, friends and colleagues at work, it provides an inexpensive way for people to exchange books, find out about new books and obtain a new book to read without having to pay. Swaps occur between individuals, without central distribution or warehousing, and so the copyright owner doesn't make a profit.

Adapted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia



Millions of **books** are donated to the charity Oxfam each year. **Second hand books** are great value for money. Buy second hand **books** and support Oxfam's work around the world.

**BookCrossing** is defined as "the practice of leaving a book in a public place to be picked up and read by others, who then do likewise." The term is derived from bookcrossing.com, a free online book club which began in order to encourage the practice, aiming to "make the whole world a library."



The 'crossing' or exchanging of books may take any of a number of forms, including wild releasing books in public, direct swaps with other members of the websites, or "book rings" in which books travel in a set order to participants who want to read a certain book. The community aspect of BookCrossing.com has grown and expanded in ways that were not expected at the outset, in the form of blog or forum discussions, mailing lists and annual conventions throughout the world

3. The title of the complete story is 'The Chain'. The word 'chain' can refer to a series of connected actions. What do you think happens next in the story, or had happened just before?

#### 4. Discussion

In the interview, the students discuss the future - or otherwise - of books. Will people still be reading books in 50 years time?